

Physical Education KINDERGARTEN: Emphasis: How I Move in My Environment

Background

Children at this stage are solo learners. They focus primarily on moving within space, including the general space around them and their own personal space. Nonlocomotor skills include how the body moves on its axis, and locomotor skills include moving in general space. Once the children are able to move effectively in their space, they focus on objects—for example, equipment, supplies, and materials. They also learn about and interpret their environment through play. They should move in a safe environment that helps them look forward to positive experiences in physical education.

Movement Skills and Movement Knowledge

At this stage children can be guided to move in their environment for the sheer enjoyment of exploring space and controlling their bodies. They learn basic movement skills, including creeping, crawling, walking, hopping, and galloping on the preferred foot, playing rhythmic games and song games, and participating in circle or partner walks and marches. Nonlocomotor movement experiences include balancing, bending and stretching, twisting and turning, beating and shaking, tensing and relaxing, pushing and pulling, rising and falling, and participating in rhythmic and play activities that require those movements. Children in kindergarten also learn the concept of static stability by experiencing various balances that position the center of gravity over the base of support. They learn that the body is in a stable, balanced position when the center of gravity is directly over the base of support and that improvement occurs when a skill is practiced many times. Object manipulation includes opportunities to manipulate and play with a wide variety of objects: lightweight balls, soft objects, beanbags, ribbons, hoops, and such student-made objects as sock balls, for example. At this stage students also perform free exploratory movement to rhythmic or musical accompaniment that is prerecorded or provided by the teacher or other students. The kindergarten experience begins with the expansion of knowledge of the physical self through identification of body parts—both external (e.g., arms, legs, head, and facial features) and internal (e.g., heart and lungs). The kindergarten child's energy level and readiness to move contribute to a willingness to participate in aerobic-type activities. Through these activities students discover that the heart beats faster and breathing accelerates as they move their bodies. Learning about the importance of nutrition can begin at this level with instruction on selecting nutritious snack foods.

Self-Image and Personal Development

As kindergartners use their bodies to perform varied movements, they develop their own body image. Because self-image can be enhanced through movement experiences in physical education, children at this stage need many opportunities to experience personal feelings of success and achievement through movement.

Social Development

Basically ego-oriented, children in kindergarten tend to play alone in their own space. They are focused on themselves in the present. However, they also begin to recognize the concept of self and others; acknowledge that others may occupy their space; learn to move about in their space without interfering with others; and begin to learn to take turns and share in interaction with others. Children at this stage generally do not understand the purpose of rules but will follow rules delivered by adults.

At this stage children can be guided to move in their environment for the sheer enjoyment of exploring space and controlling their bodies.

Sample Expectations

The student will be able to:

- Travel in different ways in a large group without bumping into others or falling.
- Balance while bending, twisting, or stretching.
- Strike a stationary ball with any part of the body.
- Identify various parts of the body and their location—for example, arms, legs, and hands.
- Recognize changes in heart rate.
- Follow adult-delivered rules.