

Abstract

Research has linked physical activity in children to positive outcomes related to cognition, concentration, behavior, and executive function. Oftentimes teachers are at a loss when it comes to designing and implementing specific movement activities in their classrooms that promote these desirable outcomes. Likewise, research notes that the demands placed upon educators in the 21st century classroom have made meeting content standards essential. The purpose of this study is two-fold: (1) to bridge the research to practice gap by providing concrete examples of content-based movement activities that teachers can easily implement in their classrooms and (2) to share data from a lesson plan study that targeted the strategic integration of content standards into movement activities to facilitate knowledge acquisition across disciplines.



Purpose

The lesson plan study utilized movement as the framework for teaching, learning and assessment that promoted content knowledge, made learning more accessible, accommodated students with a wide range of intelligences and abilities, and helped teachers move away from classrooms that were heavily print-based which left far too many students without access to the curriculum.

Lesson plans provided developmentally appropriate ways of teaching alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, oral language, letter knowledge, spelling, print awareness, print motivation, and vocabulary.



Why Movement?

Planned movement activities...

- ❖ have a positive impact on children's acquisition of early literacy competencies
- ❖ facilitate children's executive function (i.e., processes required to select, organize, and properly initiate goal-directed actions)
- ❖ are a great way to differentiate for diverse learners
- ❖ are an effective instructional strategy for promoting content knowledge
- ❖ go hand-in-hand with formative assessment
- ❖ are FUN!

Movement-Based Lesson Plans

FOR THE CLASSROOM

Body Spelling

Print Awareness, Letter Identification, Letter and Sound Identification, Spelling, Phonemic Awareness, Decoding/Reading High Frequency Sight Words, Rhyming Words

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to:
(Select what is appropriate for your students from the list of progressive skills)

- ◆ identify capital letters
- ◆ identify lower case letters
- ◆ produce the primary sounds of the consonants (letter sound identification)
- ◆ associate the long and short sounds with common spellings (graphemes) for the five vowels
- ◆ blend phonemes, and tell what word they make (/p/ /e/ /t/ pet)
- ◆ orally segment and identify phonemes in a single-syllable word (tell the sounds that are in the word (top /t/ /a/ /p/))
- ◆ read common high-frequency words
- ◆ decode words
- ◆ spell content vocabulary

As demonstrated by...

(Select the performance best matched to the content outcome you identified)
... moving their bodies to represent the shapes of the letters
... moving their bodies to represent the shapes of the letters as they say the letters
... moving their bodies to represent the shapes of the letters as they produce letter sounds



Equipment:

capital letters and lower-case letters, spelling words, rhyming words, or high frequency words, personal space, whiteboard, and markers and/or smart-board presentation of words with pictures.

Directions:

Students will stand next to or in front of their desks and listen for the teacher to call out or display a letter or word. Students will then make the letter or spell the word using their body based on the shape of the letter. For tall letters or letters written above the line (b, d, f, h, k, l, t) the students will stretch their arms up over their heads. For medium letters or letters written on the line (a, c, e, i, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x, z) the students will put their hands on their hips. For low letters or letters written below the line (g, j, p, q, y) the students will squat to the ground. Students should say the letters or make the primary letter sound for each letter as they represent the shapes of the letters with their bodies.
◆ Example: Spell the word "dog."
d (hands over head), o (hands on hips), g (hands on ground)
◆ This lesson emphasizes the shapes of letters. As a supplement to this lesson, the teacher can cut around her Word Wall words to show the varying heights of the letters used to make up words.
◆ The teacher can use this activity to introduce new letters/words OR practice letter and sound identification OR review spelling words.
◆ When using verbs, let the students perform/act out the movement. For example, if the spelling word is "jump," have the students jump after they spell the word.

Assessment:

1. Prompt for the outcome
2. Student "body spells"
3. Determine if body spelling/phonemes are correct or not
4. Record student responses



Record Keeping for Assessment:

- ◆ Matrix - list student names vertically, list outcome(s) horizontally, mark all incorrect responses (less recording with this option) or record all correct responses.
- ◆ Student records own responses on an individually designed score sheet

Literacy

Research – What Teachers Said