

STRUCTURE AND METHODS OF MOVEMENT EDUCATION

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Abstract

In a traditional physical education classes, the activity itself (volleyball, track & field, or folk dance) provides the structural basis for developing a curriculum. Skills within each area are arranged from simple to complex and presented to children according to their maturity and readiness. Movement Education utilizes the media of games, gymnastics, and dance to foster the child's physical and emotional development through the movement concepts described as body awareness, space, qualities, and relationships. These categories of movement become the framework of a Movement Education curriculum. This article will describe the main ingredients of Movement Education and explain how lesson themes are developed.

INTRODUCTION

Movement Education is an approach to teaching physical education that involves an analysis of movement that is based on Rudolf Laban's work. Combined with the movement analysis is a method of instruction that utilizes techniques of "individualization" and "problem solving".

MOVEMENT ANALYSIS

In a traditional physical education classes, the activity itself (volleyball, track & field, or folk dance) provides the structural basis for developing a curriculum. Skills within each area are arranged from simple to complex and presented to children according to their maturity and readiness. Movement Education utilizes the media of games, gymnastics, and dance to foster the child's physical and emotional development through the movement concepts described as *body awareness, space, qualities and*

relationships. These categories of movement become the framework of a Movement Education curriculum.

I. BODY AWARENESS:

What the body can do

A. Axial Movements (Controlling One's Movement) (Non-Locomotor):

These actions can be done with isolated parts of the body or with the whole body.

The actions of twisting, stretching and curling involve the body in a variety of specific shapes, which can be maintained whether the body is still or moving.

1. Bend and stretch. Body parts moving close to or far from one another.
2. Twist and turn. Turning involves rotation of the whole body, while twisting is defined as a rotation of one body part against another.
3. Push and pull. Forceful movement where an object is moved away from or closer to the body.
4. Swing and Sway. A Swing is a circular movement around a stationary center with the axis above body part. A Sway is a circular movement around a stationary center with the axis below the body part.

B. Transferring body weight

1. Transfer of weight can take place from one body part to another. It can take place in a variety of step-like actions or when one body surface receives weight from an adjacent part as in rolling.
2. Locomotor skills: walk, run, hop, skip, gallop, slide, leap, jump
3. Start and Stop
4. Dodge
5. Landing

C. Balancing

Balance skills vary in difficulty according to the number of body parts and the size of the parts that are used in a particular movement. The position of the center of gravity also makes a balance skill more or less difficult. Balanced is enhanced by lowering the center of gravity.

D. Flight

The body can defy gravity in a number of ways. It can jump or leap off the floor. The body can thrust into the air from the feet with the weight received by the hands (as in vaulting). When the body is in the air, it can change shape by changing the positions of the limbs and by turning along several axes. Landing from flight requires "force absorption" skill.

E. Manipulative Skills:

Vertical throw Underhand throw
Overhand throw Catch
Strike

II. SPACE: Where the body moves

A. Personal or Limited Space

The space the body occupies from a fixed position.

B. General Space

The floor area that is available to the children.

C. Directions

Forward

Backward

Sideways

Up and down

D. Levels

High - space above the shoulders

Medium - space between the knees and shoulders

Low - space below the knees

E. Pathways

On the floor and in the air:

Curved

Straight

Combinations of the two.

III. QUALITIES OF MOVEMENT - How the body moves

This category gives expression to movement

a. Time or speed of movement - quick or slow

b. Effort or force of movement - strong or light

c. Flow - "free flow" or "bound flow"

IV. RELATIONSHIPS - the relationships which are found in games, gymnastics and dance are continually changing

a. With apparatus

b. matching movements

c. contrasting movements

d simultaneous movements

The five body actions listed below have direct relevance to the teaching of games, gymnastics, or dance, although the emphasis and intention of the actions will be different.

1. jumping and landing

2. traveling or locomotion

3. twist & turn

4. stretch & bend

5. balancing

In gymnastics we are concerned with the manipulation of the body in a variety of settings; on the floor and with small and large apparatus. The

following categories are added:

1. hanging

2. climbing

3. pushing and pulling

4. swinging

In dance, in addition to the first four categories, add the following:

1. gesture

2. rise and sink

In the games lesson, manipulation of objects are often used. We may emphasize the following:

1. rolling

2. catching

3. throwing

4. bouncing

5. kicking

6. hitting

7. dodging

METHODS OF TEACHING USED IN MOVEMENT EDUCATION

Direct Method

Teacher centered. The teacher structures the lesson, chooses the activities and prescribes what and how each child shall perform. This method has many short-comings with respect to developing initiative and self-direction, however:

1. It allows the teacher to introduce specific skills or rules to all the children at the same time

2. It is recommended to use when teaching safety concepts.

3. It is relatively easy to observe the class for assessment.

Limitation Method

Teacher designs the lesson, however problems are given to the student that may have several correct responses. For example: "Find a way to balance on three body parts". The following advantages seem to support the use of this method in movement education:

1. It allows for some direction to be given by the teacher, yet the inventiveness of the child is not stifled.

2. It provides for differences in physical ability

3. In spite of individual differences, the general response will fall within certain limits for evaluative purposes.

Indirect Method

The child has the opportunity to choose the activity or movement to be practiced. The indirect method:

1. recognizes individual differences in abilities & interests
2. encourages initiative and self-direction.
3. gives the teacher the opportunity to learn about his/her students.

TEACHING BY THEMES

A movement theme may be defined as a concept or an idea which becomes the main focus of the lesson or a series of lessons. Having selected the concept to be stressed, the teacher may add interest and variety by introducing one or two sub-themes. These themes will be devised from the concepts within the movement analysis. To illustrate, the main theme could be flight with an emphasis on jumping and landing. A sub-theme could be shape (the body can assume a variety of shapes when it is in flight). As part of the theme, the five basic jumps, hops and leaps should be explored. Flight can also take place to the hands.

Movement Education Example Themes:

1. Traveling in a variety of ways emphasizing the use of general space, different body parts and change of direction.
2. Traveling in a variety of ways emphasizing change in speed.
3. Traveling in a variety of ways emphasizing the use of the feet.
4. Traveling on different body parts with emphasis on quick, light movements.
5. Traveling with emphasis on contrasting speed.
6. Traveling with emphasis on changing levels of body parts.
7. Traveling with emphasis on changing levels; high to low.
8. Changing relationships with others emphasizing leading with different body parts and traveling in different pathways.
9. Running and dodging with emphasis on change in speed, pathway and direction.
10. Traveling and balancing with emphasis on stretched and curled positions.
11. Jumping and landing.
12. Combining movements of jumping, landing and rolling.
13. Twisting and turning.
14. Manipulating a ball with different body parts.
15. Manipulating a ball with the hands.
16. Manipulating a ball with the hands emphasizing change in speed and catching.
17. Striking a ball with different body parts.
18. Striking a ball with the hand or forearm.
19. Adjusting the body position to strike and catch a ball.
20. Controlling a ball with the feet.

21. Furthering manipulative skills of throwing and catching,
22. On and off balance as applied to catching.
23. Body shape.
24. Movement emphasizing strong and light qualities.
25. Movement emphasizing slow and quick qualities.
26. Controlling the body when landing from a height.
27. Creating and accompanying own movement sequences. Creating and accompanying movement sequences in partners and small groups.
28. Examining relationship of body parts - near and far.

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