

Activity Stones

Item #36646

What Are the Educational Applications?

Activity Stones are an excellent way to enhance coordination, balance, dexterity (agility) and concentration skills. They are great for strengthening arms and legs and can be used in a number of core stability exercises. Activity Stones generate excitement and curiosity across all grade levels because of the colors and unique design (flat on the bottom and nubbed, rounded tops).

How can I Use This Product With My Students?

Set Up:

Activity Stones can be a simple or difficult activity based on students' developmental level and/or your learning objectives. Use the beginner and advanced activities (in the "Activities" section) to choose balance, strength, dexterity, coordination, and/or core stability activities that the students will perform using the Activity Stones.



BEGINNER ACTIVITIES

Balance:

1. Basic Stance: Place two Activity Stones side by side (4" between the stones using the inside of the stones). Step onto the stones with the left foot on the left stone and the right foot on the right stone. Feel the feet moving and the torso contracting in order to find balance.
 - a. Difficult variation: Raise arms overhead.
 - b. More difficult variation: Close eyes.
2. Compressions: From the Basic Stance (above), shift weight from foot to foot keeping the arms out to the side for balance. Keep shoulders and hips straight.
3. Squats: From the Basic Stance (above), bend knees and squat. Keep back straight, the torso up and extend your arms out to the sides help balance. Lower as far as comfortable (but not more than 90 degrees) and push up.
4. One Legged Balance: Using one Activity Stone, balance on the right foot for "X" amount of time while keeping arms out to the sides for balance and the left leg in the air (bent at the knee and close to the body). Step down off the stone. Step back up onto the stone, this time using the left foot. Repeat for "X" number of sets.

Dexterity (Agility)/Coordination:

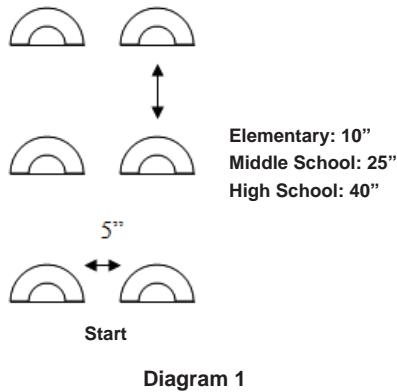
1. Using one Activity Stone, stand to the right side of the stone. Jump onto the stone, placing just the left foot onto the stone. Balance on the stone and keep the right leg in the air. Push up and off the stone with the left foot, land on the right foot, then place the left foot on the ground next to the right. Continue for "X" number of reps before switching to the other side to perform the activity with the right foot onto the stone.
2. Place two Activity Stones side by side approximately these distances from each other:

Elementary	12"
Middle School	21"
High School	31"

Start with the right foot on the right-side stone and keep the left leg up in the air. Keep arms out to the sides for balance. Push off the right stone with the right foot, moving toward the left stone. Left foot should land on the left stone. Keep the right leg up

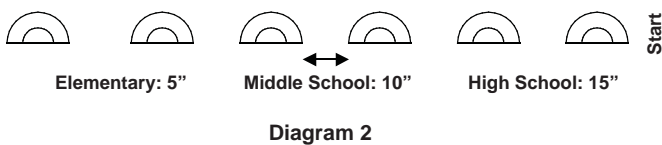
in the air. Continue jumping back and forth laterally between stones for "X" number of reps.

3. Use Diagram 1 to set up all 6 stones.



Students step onto the first set of stones with the right foot on the right-side stone and the left foot on the left-side stone facing toward the stones. Students jump forward from one set of stones to the next.

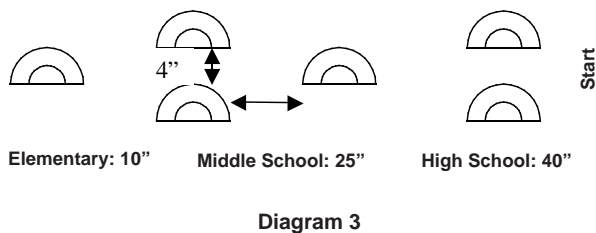
4. Use Diagram 2 to set up all 6 stones.



Students step onto the first stone and balance on their favorite (dominant) foot facing the stones.

- a. Hop from stone to stone on the same leg. Perform the same activity using the non-dominant leg.
- b. Hop from stone to stone alternating legs.

5. Use Diagram 3 to set up all 6 stones.



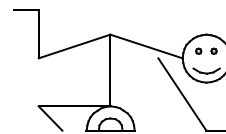
Students step the first set of stones with the right foot on the right-side stone and the left foot on the left-side stone facing toward the stones. Students jump forward and land on the single stone on one foot. They jump to the next set of stones landing with the right foot on the right-side stone and the left foot on the left-side stone.

Strength/Core Stability:

1. Hip Abduction: Place two Activity Stones side by side (4" between the stones using the inside of the stones). Step onto the stones with the left foot on

the left stone and the right foot on the right stone. Bend knees slightly. Bring hands out to the side for balance. Abduct (raise the leg up and out to the side) the right leg while balancing on the left foot. Place the right foot back onto the stone. Abduct the left leg while balancing on the right foot. Perform multiple repetitions on one leg (i.e. 5 times) before performing reps using the other leg.

2. Legs: Using one Activity Stone, place one foot on the stone. Step back with the other foot keeping the foot flat on the floor as a contact point. Bend the knee of the foot on the stone, so the knee is at a right angle to the floor. Bring hands out to the side for balance. Hold the lunge position for a developmentally appropriate amount of time (Refer to "How Do I Make This Product Developmentally Appropriate For My Students" section above) before switching legs. Make the activity easier by moving the back leg closer to the Activity Stone.
3. Hamstrings: Place two Activity Stones side by side (4" between the stones using the inside of the stones) nubbed side contacting the floor. Lie down on your back and place the right foot on the right stone and the left foot on the left stone. Lift hips a few inches off the floor and keep them there as you press on the stones forward and then back.
4. Hip Extensions: Get on all fours with one knee on a stone, keeping the hands on the floor in front of the stone. Lift the opposite leg up to hip level, keeping the knee bent, and press the heel towards the ceiling. Lower and repeat for "X" amount of reps before switching sides.



5. Arms: Place two Activity Stones side by side (4" between the stones using the inside of the stones). Place the right hand on the right stone and the left hand on the left stone. Place the body in a push-up position. Keep the body straight as you bend the elbows and lower into a push-up. Push back up and



repeat.

- a. Easy variation: Perform push-up from a kneeling position.
- b. Difficult variation: Perform push-up putting weight on the toes.

6. Abdominals: Sit on the stone and place hands on the floor behind you. Lean the torso back, keeping back straight and lift the legs up and together keeping the knees bent into a "V" position. Contract abdominal muscles.

- a. Easy variation: Sit on two activity stones.

ADVANCED ACTIVITIES

Balance:

1. Basic Stance: Place two Activity Stones side by side (4" between the stones using the inside of the stones). Step onto the stones with the left foot on the left stone and the right foot on the right stone. By simply standing, feel the feet moving and the torso contracting in order to find balance.
 - a. Difficult variation: Raise arms overhead.
 - b. More difficult variation: Close eyes.
2. Compressions: From the Basic Stance (above), shift weight from foot to foot keeping hands on the hips. Keep shoulders and hips straight.
 - a. Difficult variation: March or run on top of the Activity Stones.
 - b. Easier variation: Keep arms out to the sides for balance.
3. One Legged Balance: Using one Activity Stone, balance on the right foot for "X" amount of time while keeping arms out to the sides for balance and the left leg in the air (bent at the knee and close to the body). Perform one or more of the



challenge activities listed below. Step down off the stone. Step back up onto the stone this time using the left foot. Perform one or more of the challenge activities listed below. Step down off the stone. Repeat for "X" number of sets. Use spotters when performing the activities listed below because the activities are risky and advanced.

- a. Close eyes.
- b. Lift the non-support leg straight out behind the body.
- c. Play a game of catch (to self or with another student) using a beanbag.
- d. Draw numbers, letters and shapes in the air with non-support foot.
- e. Hold onto a volleyball (easy) or basketball (harder) with both hands in front of the body with elbows bent. Twist to the right, then left.
- f. While standing on the stone, raise heel off stone (a.k.a. toe raises).

4. Lateral Shuffle: Using one Activity Stone, balance on the right foot for "X" amount of time while keeping hands on the hips and the left leg in the air (bent at the knee and close to the body). Jump up in the air off the right foot and land on the stone with the left foot with the right leg in the air. Repeat for "X" number of sets.

- a. Difficult variation: Keep leg in the air straight out to the side (instead of bent at the knee and close to the body).

5. Single Leg Toe Touch: Balance on one stone using the right foot while keeping the left leg in the air. While balancing on the stone, bend forward at the waist (bending the supporting knee is OK) and touch the toes with the fingers. The non-support leg may be kept out straight in order to balance the body.

Dexterity (Agility)/Coordination:

1. Using one Activity Stone, stand to the right side of the stone. Jump onto the stone placing just the left foot onto the stone. Balance on the stone and keep the right leg straight out to the side. Push up and off the stone with the left foot, land on the right foot, then place the left foot on the ground next to the right. Continue for "X" number of reps before switching to the other side to perform the activity with the right foot onto the stone.
2. Place two Activity Stones side by side, approximately these distances from each other:

Elementary	12"
Middle School	21"
High School	31"

Start with the right foot on the right-side stone and keep the left leg up in the air. Keep arms out to the sides for balance. Push off the right stone with the right foot moving toward the left stone. The left foot

should land on the left stone. Keep right leg up in the air. Continue jumping back and forth laterally between stones for "X" number of reps.

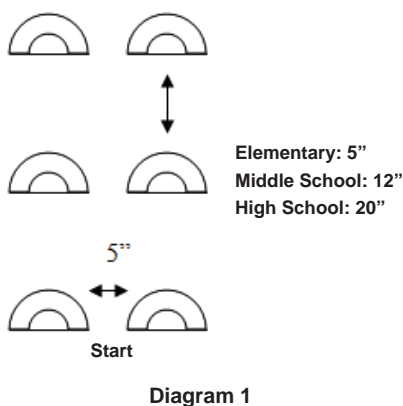
a. Difficult variation: Place hands on hips.

3. Double Toe Taps: Place two Activity Stones side by side, approximately these distances from each other:

Elementary	12"
Middle School	19"
High School	26"

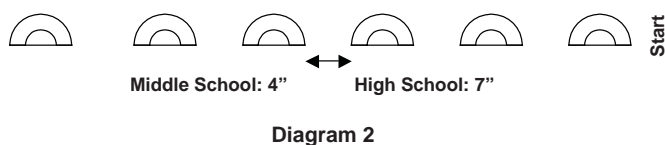
Stand on each of the stones. Bend down and walk the hands out so the body is in a push up position. Supporting the weight on the hands, push both feet up and off the stones at the same time. Feet should land in the empty space between the stones. Supporting the weight on the hands again, push both feet up off the floor back onto the respective stones. Continue in this manner for "X" number of reps.

4. Use Diagram 1 to set up all 6 stones.



Students step onto the first set of stones with the right foot on the right-side stone and the left foot on the left-side stone facing away from the stones. Students jump backwards from one set of stones to the next.

5. Use Diagram 2 to set up all 6 stones.



Students step onto the first stone and balance on their favorite (dominant) foot facing the wall or center of the activity space. Then hop from stone to stone, sideways, on the same leg. Perform the same activity using the non-dominant leg.

a. More difficult variation: Face away from the stones and hop backwards.

6. Use Diagram 3 to set up all 6 stones.

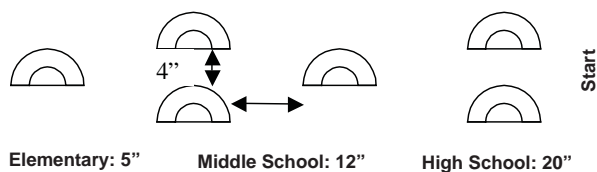


Diagram 3

Students step on the first set of stones with the right foot on the right-side stone and left foot on the left-side stone facing away the stones. Students jump backwards and land on the single stone on one foot. They jump to the next set of stones landing with the right foot on the right-side stone and the left foot on the left-side stone.

Strength/Core Stability:

1. *Hip Abduction:* Place two Activity Stones side by side (4" between the stones using the inside of the stones). Step onto the stones with the left foot on the left stone and the right foot on the right stone. Bend knees slightly. Place hands on the hips. Abduct (raise the leg up and out to the side) the right leg while balancing on the left foot. Place the right foot back onto the stone. Abduct the left leg while balancing on the right foot. Perform repetitions:

- a. Easy variation: Alternating between right and left legs.
- b. More difficult variation: Alternate between right and left legs and add visual affect by turning the head and looking to the same abducted leg side (i.e. turn the head and look to the left when the left leg is abducted).

2. *Legs:* Using one Activity Stone, place one foot on the stone. Step back with the other foot keeping the heel of the back leg lifted so both knees are at right angle to the floor. Place hands on the hips. Hold the lunge position for a developmentally appropriate amount of time (Refer to "How Do I Make This Product Developmentally Appropriate For My Students" section above) before switching legs.

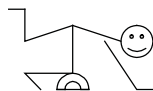
a. Difficult variation: As you press up from the lunge position, jump up and switch legs in the air, landing with the opposite foot on the dome, and the foot that was originally on the stone, is on the floor. Continue jumping and switching legs.

3. *Hip Extensions:* Get on all fours with one knee on a stone keeping the hands on the floor in front of the



stone. Lift the opposite leg up to hip level keeping the knee bent, and press the heel towards the ceiling. Alternate between right and left legs for "X" amount of sets/ reps.

- a. Difficult variation: Hold a light weight behind the knee.



4. *Arms*: Place two Activity Stones side by side (4" between the stones using the inside of the stones). Place the right foot on the right stone and the left foot on the left stone. Place the body in a push-up position. Keep body straight as you bend the elbows and lower into a push-up. Push back up and repeat.

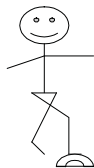
- a. Easy variation: Perform push-up with the knees resting on the stones instead of the toes.

5. *Abdominals*: Sit on the stone and place hands on the floor behind you. Lean the torso back, keeping back straight and lift the legs up keeping them straight and together, into a "V" position. Contract abdominal muscles. Lift arms out to the side or in front of the body toward the feet.

- a. Difficult variation: Perform crunches.

6. *Legs*: Stand to the right side and slightly behind of an Activity Stone. Raise right foot, push off the left foot and land on the stone with the right foot (Right leg is crossing over the left leg since you are starting on the right side). Balance on the stone, keeping the arms out to the sides for balance. Push off the stone with the right foot and land on both feet slightly behind and to the left of the stone. Raise the left foot in the air, push off the right foot and land on the stone with the left foot. Balance on the stone, keeping the arms out to the sides for balance. Push off the stone with the left foot and land on both feet slightly behind and to the right of the stone.

- a. Difficult variation: Place hands on hips.



How Do I Make This Product Developmentally Appropriate For My Students?

1. Choose Appropriate Movement Activities:

Decide whether students will perform easy balancing, strength, dexterity activities and/ or core stability exercises (great for beginner students) and/ or difficult balancing, strength, dexterity activities and/ or core stability exercises (great for experienced students). Refer to the "Activities" Section for more information and descriptions.

2. Perform the Proper Number of Repetitions and Sets:

There are two variables in training: repetitions and sets. If either is too high, injury or decreased strength may result. If either is too little, there will be little to no improvement. For the purpose of this activity guide definitions for reps and sets are as follows:

- a. Repetitions indicate the number of times an activity is performed. The number of repetitions in a set can range from 1 and up.
- b. Sets are simply a grouping of repetitions for the same exercise completed in one effort without stopping, separated by a brief rest period.

Determining how many repetitions and sets should be performed depends on your goals. Beginners should perform 2 to 3 sets of an exercise with a high number of repetitions (between 12-25 depending on class time and developmental level). This helps create muscle stamina (endurance). If the goal is to increase strength, complete 5 to 10 sets of 1 to 5 repetitions with 3 to 5 minutes between sets. Total volume for each exercise falls between 12 to 24 total repetitions. If agility or endurance is the goal, complete 2 to 3 sets of 12 to 25 repetitions with 30 to 60 seconds between sets. Total volume per exercise is 30 to 75 repetitions.

3. Combine Movement Activities to Create Routines:

Once students have practiced the movement activity skills individually, combine the movements to create routines. Allow advanced students to create their own routine based on the skills taught in class.

4. Create Two Different Balance Challenges:

Use either the flat bottom or the nubbed, rounded tops of the Activity Stones.

How Does This Product Relate to Current Educational Thinking?

Depending on the developmental level of your students, use one or more of the following items to assess student learning at the end of the class or at the completion of the activity.

1. Have students comment (either written or verbally):
 - a. What did participating in this activity teach them about coordination, balance, and/ or strength skills?
 - b. Allow them to create a picture of what they did or learned. Display pictures on a bulletin board for all to see.
2. Take Polaroid/Digital and/ or video pictures of the students in action during the lesson. At the end of the lesson, show the students the photographs/ video and compare what you see to what they see.

3. Have students create their own Activity Stone activity. The best learning environment is one where students are involved in the learning process. Students learn best when they are allowed to make choices and are given numerous opportunities for cooperative learning. Help students learn and assert their individualism and use higher order thinking skills by having them create their own Activity Stone activity. In doing this, you are introducing the teaching/ educational philosophy known as progressivism. Progressivism allows students to come together and explore a problem in terms of how it relates to their own experiences and ideas as well as those of their group members. Students will take the knowledge from the groups' discussions on game development and create something uniquely their own based on the groups' abilities.

students from easier to more difficult activities keeps them motivated and interested in the task. It also allows them to be successful before moving onto something more difficult before they are ready.

3. Set up the activity BEFORE students enter the activity space. If you set up after the class gets there, that dead time is both a waste of your precious PE time and an invitation for trouble to start.
4. Supervise students as they participate in the activity. Make sure they are on task and adhering to the classroom and game rules.
5. Give positive reinforcement and feedback to students as they participate in the activity. This motivates them and lets them know you are watching and paying attention to their hard work.
6. Demonstrate what you want students to do before they are told to participate in the activity. Some children are auditory learners, many are visual learners. Give them both. Be sure to demonstrate exactly what you want them to do.
7. Check for student understanding of how to participate in the activity and the rules before allowing them to participate in the activity.
8. Stand where everyone can hear when you talk. It will save having to repeat yourself. It will eliminate confusion when the activity begins (confusion is breeding ground for misbehavior). If you have a quiet voice, or prefer not to shout, allow students to sit close to you in a semi circle formation when you need to say something.

In view of COPEC'S (Council on Physical Education of Children) position that all activities have both appropriate and inappropriate practices, please list and describe a few appropriate practices regarding how this item or these activities are valuable to a physical education program.

1. When first introducing an Activity Stone activity to young and/or beginner learners, allow them to individually play with the Activity Stone. Doing so gives them practice time before they participate in the actual activity. It also allows the teacher to visually observe the students to see if which students are skilled at balancing, concentration, etc. and which students may need extra practice time or help and care when participating in the activity.
2. Students move through each game in sequence. They should participate and be successful with the beginner activities before moving onto advanced activities. Progressively moving

Safety Issues & Concerns

1. To decrease the likelihood of students twisting their ankles while participating in the activity, perform ankle warm-up exercises prior to starting activities on the Stones.
2. Practice all activities (easy and difficult) on the floor first before moving to the Activity Stones.

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