

# **FLAGHOUSE** Activity Guide

## **AAALF's Inclusion Insight Dance & Aesthetic Activities<sup>1</sup> Middle School Ages: 11 - 13 years**



### **Developmental Background**

Dance and aesthetic activities such as ethnic and creative dance, and gymnastics and rhythmic gymnastics include many different movements that develop over a period of years until the prerequisite skills for these activities are developed. Games and other activities such as obstacle courses, playing instruments, twirling a ribbon, and gliding on a scooter help children learn the concepts of creative dance and gymnastics and such skills as balance, concentration, movement to sound, and creating different shapes with their body. Students with disabilities often have not had the opportunities to develop these skills to age level or the limits of their disabilities prevent them from performing at age level. Below are some indicators of success appropriate for ALL middle school students.

### **Indicators of Success**

1. Student completes appropriate practice of dance and gymnastics skills at a level commensurate with his or her ability.
2. Student completes practice sheet for dance and gymnastics skills with a partner at least six times in a quarter.
3. Six or more practice events are reported with student describing adaptations made to the balance, concentration, movement to sound, and creating of different shapes with their body that is required by the activity.

### **How Do You Teach?**

- Use simpler language—use language that meets the cognitive understanding and ability of the students.
- Give clear examples of things they already know—use concrete visual examples.
- Consider the sequence of tasks—if the student doesn't have the prerequisite skills, back up and teach them.
- Allow time for mastery—once a new skill is learned, give ALL students the opportunity to use it in a variety of ways before moving on to the next.
- Use multiple senses—many students, not just ones with disabilities, can benefit from a variety of sounds, textures, weights, and “feels” of the activity and the equipment used (see the FlagHouse line of hand

weights and ribbon wands/ribbon hoops).

- Build on pre-existing skills; if the student is familiar with an activity, for improvement—reinforce positive skills.

### **Where Do You Teach?**

- Teach in a room with foam padding to provide a safe surface for gymnastics or dance. Have floor or wall padded if necessary (see Deluxe Panel Mats, G9222). The padding should be firm enough to support a wheelchair, crutches, or other appliances, yet soft enough to break a fall. Provide mirrors or, if mirrors are present, use a drape if mirrors become a distraction.
- Eliminate distractions by playing indoors during the learning phase—cover permanent equipment, if necessary, to take them out of the field of vision. Provide structure and routine—some students who are distractible or emotionally disturbed may become disoriented by frequent changes in the class routine. If this is the case, be consistent in the structure and routine of the class each day.
- Vary the class format if all students cannot learn in the same way—for some, one-on-one instruction is needed, so a peer or teacher's aide can accompany the student; others need multiple forms of stimuli, thus a station format might be more successful than full class instruction.
- Design the environment so activity can occur naturally by using equipment that “cues” the student to perform the desired skill.

### **What Do You Teach?— Change The Activity Itself!**

- Assess the student's ability to determine the most appropriate areas where they have the highest level of success. If the student uses a wheelchair or has limited mobility, place the student in a position that doesn't require much movement such as playing instruments or controlling the radio—pressing play and controlling the volume. The student is not limited to being a disc jockey; they can participate with ribbons, tappers, and wands.
- Limit the participation time—students with organic health impairments such as sickle cell anemia, heart conditions, or asthma may need to rest more frequently

<sup>1</sup> Classification systems for sport and physical activities such as the one endorsed by the State of New York, cluster activities in ways that increase the chances of positive transfer of skills from one activity to the next.

than other students. Provide additional rest periods for all involved to discuss rule infractions, strategy, and team play. Players can be rotated in and out of the game or be active and inactive. The time periods of the game can be reduced as well.

- Adapt the skills according to the students' abilities—use bigger mats, play music with a slower tempo, and gradually work to a faster pace.
- Modify the equipment—manufactured equipment is available for some modifications such as a carpeted balance beam (see KiDnastics® Carpeted Balance Beam, G11350).

Unique modifications are still likely to be needed. Have ace bandages, easy-off adhesive tape, stick-on Velcro®, and duct tape on hand to secure implements such as wands or rhythm sticks to their hands, or a

handle to a crutch. A glove may also be worn by the student for more gripping ability or any number of other options depending on the situation. Equipment with handles can also be shortened using tools commonly available in a woodshop—so get creative!

- Rule changes will be needed to accommodate any number of the previous modifications—if possible, try to align rule changes with disability activity organizations. For rules governing school-aged students participating with mixed disabilities, contact the SOI or AAASP.
- Modify the rules for playtime—participants can sit down or lie down instead of standing, walk rather than run, spin rather than walk forward, roll on a scooter, wheelchair, or skates rather than run. Additional trials may be permitted for obstacle courses, dance, and gymnastics skills. Allow a longer time for the facilitation of learning new skills.

## DEVELOPING SKILLS FOR DANCE AND AESTHETIC ACTIVITIES

Advanced – More Skills

- Gym Tramp can be used to practice vaulting and tumbling. It can also be used to jump and gain overall fitness. (G3777)
- Beaded Skip Ropes let the student jump rope to music or hand clapping. Pictures and obstacle courses can be used with the ropes. (G77)
- Ribbon Dance Set allows the participant to see what beautiful shapes can be made from the ribbon while moving their arm or wrist. (G57)
- Rainbow Hoops are on a ring and contain a multitude of ribbons that are shorter so ribbons won't get tangled in wheelchair wheels or scooter wheels. (G22718, G22867)
- Activity Wands can serve as a precursor to twirling batons. They are lightweight and easier to practice with. The student can also pretend to be a magician. (G1595)
- Roller Skates can prepare the student for in-line skates. The participant can also learn to be creative with music and rolling at the same time. (G2328, G2293)

- Classic Balance Beam (G11370), Parallel Bars (G602), Vaulting and Pommel Horses (G767) are all used for the experienced gymnast.
- Portable Ballet Bars are used for classical ballet warm up or to balance self while learning a new skill. Note that the bars cannot support all the weight of the person; so use caution. The bars are mobile and can be moved from room to room. (G4556)
- Teaching Movement and Dance (G10974), All-Time Favorite Dances (G7795), Teaching Folk Dance Video (G10813), Rhythmically Moving CD's (G10978, G10982) can all be used to get ideas for teaching creative dance and gymnastics.
- In-Line Skates are used the same as roller skates stated in the upper left quadrant but only after the skill of moving on roller skates has been successfully mastered. (G7678, G7679)

← Easier

More Difficult →

- Deluxe Panel Mat can be used as a landing pad for gymnastics. It is very versatile and can be used anywhere and with anything. (G9222)
- KiDnastics® Carpeted Balance Beam includes carpet and foam. Provides a good apparatus for learning how to use the balance beam. (G11350)
- Sparkle Hoops are used in rhythmic gymnastics, in an obstacle course, or in creative dance. (G9474, G9475)
- Rhythm Sets make music or sounds with various instruments. Use in dance and gymnastics. So simple that anyone can use them! (G1404, G1405)
- Impact Lightning Balls are plastic balls that light up when they bounce. Good to use for those with hearing disabilities or attention deficits. (G34546)

- Ultimate Balance Board has 3 snap-on fulcrums making this board the most flexible board available for accommodating a range of abilities. (G12071)
- KiDnastics® Cartwheel Mat helps teach placement of hands and feet when learning the basic tumbling skill—cartwheels. (G8282)
- Hand/Foot Tappers can be used on the hands by students with limited mobility or on the feet by students who can really “strut their stuff”. (G8994)
- Colored Rhythm Stick Kit challenges hand/eye coordination as well as rhythmic ability. (G9883)
- Multicultural Rhythm Stick Fun Music cassette adds even more diversity to your lesson with folk tunes from around the world. (G7518)
- KiDnastics® Personal Balance Beam allows all students, no matter what their skill level, to perform basic to advanced balancing stunts (comes in 4" G11432 and 6" G11427 widths).

Novice – Less Skilled

## The Solutions You Need...

The matrix can be used to identify where, on a two-dimensional continuum, students in your class fit so you can provide the most suitable equipment and supports for their success. The matrix is arranged so that the easier, novice-level activities/skills are identified in the lower left-hand quadrant of the matrix. There, you can see to some extent, a developmental sequence of dance and aesthetic activities with recommended equipment appropriate at each level. Implications for the most difficult and advanced skills featuring the standard equipment used in any physical education class are found in the upper right-hand quadrant. You would be surprised that, if given an option, many students will choose to use the equipment that gives them a greater chance for success. If the environment in the class is such that these choices are "okay", ALL students will learn, find success, and perhaps learn to enjoy an activity they can incorporate into an active lifestyle throughout their life span.

## Resources

### American Association for Active Lifestyles and Fitness (AAALF/AAHPERD)

*Adapted Physical Activity Council*  
1900 Association Drive  
Reston, VA 20191  
<http://www.aahperd.org/aaalf/>  
800-213-7193 X430

*Making Connections: From Theory to Practice in Adapted Physical Education.* (2003)

Available through FlagHouse

### National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE/AAHPERD)

1900 Association Drive  
Reston, VA 20191  
<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/>  
800-213-7193 x410

*Moving Into the Future: National Standards for Physical Education.* (1995). Dubuque, IA: WCB McGraw-Hill.  
800-321-0789

### National Dance Association (NDA/AAHPERD)

1900 Association Drive  
Reston, VA 20191  
<http://www.aahperd.org/nda/>  
800-213-7193 x464

*National Standards for Dance Education*, AAHPERD Publications  
800-321-0789

### PE Central—Adapted Physical Education

<http://www.pecentral.org/adapted/adaptedmenu.html>

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