

IT ROCKS™

Item #11472

• **What Are the Educational Applications?**

It Rocks!* is a series of developmental lead up activities for programs that would like to promote traversing, climbing, and or bouldering as part of the Physical Education curriculum (traversing wall NOT NEEDED). The unique design of It Rocks!* enables children of all ages and abilities to participate in group and individual challenges. It Rocks!* promotes individual growth through crossing midline, muscular endurance, flexibility, eye hand /eye foot coordination, spatial awareness, balance, and stability. In addition, It Rocks!* affords children the opportunity to visually plan, communicate, team build, and engage in cognitive strategies with their peers. The simple design of It Rocks makes the activity easy to apply in almost any situation and in almost any environment. All you need is a wall and floor. No dedicated space required as in existing traversing walls. The It Rocks!* concept allows Physical Educators to use the game as an individual warm up station, an ongoing fitness station, a class activity, and most importantly a warm up to the actual activity of traversing. Even if your school does not have an expensive traversing wall, the It Rocks!* concept engages learners at their individual ability level and is adaptable to meet the needs of even the more involved children with disabilities. The It Rocks!* game can be set up on almost any surface – both indoors and out – along bleachers, in corners, and even on wall pads!

What happens when a child stimulates their brain while they stimulate their muscles? Action based learning occurs which is supported by scientific literature that connects movement and learning. For example, the basic movement patterns used during the It Rocks game supports the framework that the brain uses to process, sequence, store, and retrieve similar patterns needed for academic concepts. When the child is working on cross lateralization, static/dynamic balance, coordination, spatial awareness, directionality, and visual accuracy the vestibular system in the brain is stimulated and in turn improves the student's ability to complete cognitive activities such as find letters/words on a page or visually attend to a specific object. The movement patterns reinforced through It Rocks and supported by scientific literature, significantly increase the brains ability to process and encode messages.

• **How Can I Use This Product With My Kids?**

When you first set up and use It Rocks game, start simple and allow the students to get the concept of moving their bodies across the wall and floor surface. Encourage them to reach and stretch farther with each pass across the wall. Remember that the main "rule" is that you must keep at least one hand on the wall at all times. Just like when they will be on a climbing or traversing wall. It is also recommended that the students choose at least 2-3 colors for more advanced movers and for younger learners allow them to use all the colors on the wall. This will increase their success and reinforce the type of movements (cross lateralization, spatial awareness, etc.) that you want the children to work on. The activities provided in this Activity Guide can be used in station format as part of your daily fitness routine or as part of a developmentally appropriate lead up activity for traversing and climbing walls. It Rocks DOES NOT require dedicated space and can be moved around or put up in any open wall space or along folded bleachers in the gym. Consider putting the It Rocks activity in a corner, or across wall mats commonly found in gyms. It Rocks has been set up and played in the hallway, on the playground, on garage doors and in the classroom. Anywhere it is safe for a child to move, the It Rocks game can be set up and used.

***Special note – adhesive backing for the wall spots should only be partially removed so they can be used multiple times.**

• **How difficult is it to set up the IT Rocks Game?**

As stated earlier, the It Rocks game does not require dedicated wall space. It can be set up and taken down within a few minutes. It can also be left up without fear of injury to anyone (unlike existing traversing walls). Select a wall space approximately 18 -20 feet in length. It can be shorter but the number of game pieces provided will accommodate this space. Organize the hand targets by color and size. Start by placing one color and size across the length of your playing space no lower than 1 foot from the floor and no higher than 4 feet. This will ensure that each color can be reached and will be randomly distributed along the wall. Do this for all the colors and sizes (see attached diagram). Next, do the same with the 4" poly spots and randomly distribute them on the floor no closer

than 1-2 feet from the wall and not farther than 4 to 4.5 feet from the wall. This will ensure that all students will be able to reach and lean into the wall.

***Safety Tip** – consider sweeping the floor prior to setting up the activity – dusty gym floors can make poly spots slide!

***Money Saver Set Up Tip** - On the back of each hand target is a Velcro adhesive attachment. Peel the paper partially off then stick the hand target to the wall in the desired location. This will ensure that you can re-use the spots later!

It Rocks!* Set Up:

Equipment Kit Includes

- It Rocks!* Traversing Kit
 - 24 Large “hand targets” (6 Blue, 6 Green, 6 Yellow, 6 Red)
 - 24 Small “hand targets” (6 Blue, 6 Green, 6 Yellow, 6 Red)
 - 24 floor spots (6 Blue, 6 Green, 6 Yellow, 6 Red)

Set up

- Find combined floor and wall space (see diagram A) approximately 18-20 feet in length
- At max height of 4’ secure, the wall spots approximately every 3’ using random pattern from floor to max height (4’). (see diagram) For younger children and to make the traversing aspect of the game easier, consider placing more wall spots 3-4’ off the ground than 1-2’ from the ground.
- At max distance from wall (4-5 feet), place the floor spots every 2’ using random pattern from wall to max outer floor edge. Floor spots (description) are 3-4” non slip poly spots in red, green, blue, and yellow.
- Check pattern to make sure there is adequate coverage of all four colors. Be sure that no wall or floor spots are beyond the 4-5 foot height maximum and 2-3 foot floor edge.



The Games/Activities

• **IT Rocks!* Warm Up Games**

• Warm Up Activity (1)

- Warm up activity 1: Begin by having students line up at either end of the It Rocks wall. Ask them to choose at least 2 colors. These will be the colors that they will have to use to move across the wall space. Allow them to move across the wall at their own pace. Be sure to notice if students keep at least ONE hand on the wall at all times! If a student “releases” or “lets go” of the wall with both hands, remind them that they have essentially “fallen” (as if they were climbing a mountain or a vertical wall). During the actual It Rocks game, if a player “falls off the wall” they must re-start the activity from their original starting point. This becomes more and more important when working on team building activity.
- Emphasize and reinforce reaching as well as creative ways to move across the space. Continue this

activity until everyone has had a chance to move across the wall from right to left and return left to right – making sure that the students understand the importance of keeping one hand on the wall.

- **Skills Highlighted:** Students will work on individual stretching, flexibility, strength, and cross lateralization. Students will “warm up” hands and fingers, feet and ankles while engaging students in the beginning stages of the problem solving aspect of the game.
- **Warm Up Activity (2)**
 - This time, ask the students to keep track of how many “touches” it takes to move from one side of the It Rocks wall to the other. For example, every time you touch a new spot on the wall (right or left hand) AND every time you touch a new spot on the floor counts as one. Students who reach farther with both their arms and legs will score lower. The lower the score, the more obvious the teacher knows that the students are stretching, reaching, and working both sides of the body.
 - Ask the students to keep their individual scores using the attached It Rocks data collection sheet (see attached). Individual data can be used as part of a daily fitness station, participation score, or team score.
 - **Skills Highlighted:** Students will work on individual stretching, flexibility, strength, and cross lateralization. In addition, students will be required to use cognitive ability to count and keep track of the number of times or touches it requires them to move across the wall. Each student will write down their individual score (e.g. 21) and the two colors they used (R, G).

- **It Rocks!* Game #1 – ONE WAY!**

The object of this game is to move your team from one side of the It Rocks wall to the other as quickly and efficiently as possible without having one player “fall”. If a player falls, that one player must return to their original starting point and begin again. This continues until all players have completed the task of moving from one side to the other without falling. The “winning” team is the team that successfully moves all players across the wall without a fall and is sitting on the floor.*

- Begin by placing students in teams of 5-6 students (1-2 teams per at either end of the It Rocks wall).
- Instruct the students that only 2 teams will be on the wall at a time. Other teams should be active in warm up or watching to see that no one “falls” off the wall.
- Each team must select two colors (this should be done in a huddle and not shared with the other teams).
- On the instructors mark, both teams start across the wall in opposite directions using only the 2 colors the team had selected in secret. As soon as one player starts and there is room for the second player behind them to get on the wall, player number two can begin and so on until all members are on the wall moving toward the opposite end.
- The “winning” team is the FIRST team that successfully moves all players across the wall without a fall, sits down on the floor and yells “**WE ROCK!**”!
- **For fun movement modifications consider doing the activity in reverse (students must move backward) or with students backs facing the wall.**

Skills Highlighted: Students will work on individual stretching, flexibility, strength, and cross lateralization. In addition, students must cooperate and communicate enhancing team building skills.

Modifications: Consider giving both teams the same two colors. As each team and player “pass through” the other, the degree of difficulty becomes greater creating a sense of urgency and increasing the chance that a player will not have a move. Players “stuck” on the wall or without a move must “fall” and restart the game at their original starting point.

Adaptations for Children with Disabilities: Consider the individual abilities of the child with a disability then modify the activity to enhance their success. For example, the child with cerebral palsy may be able to support their body weight as they lean into the wall. Limit the distance the child has to move or provide them the use of all the colors rather than just two so they can be as successful as possible.

- **It Rocks!* Game #2 – WILD CARD!**

The object of this game is identical to the first game except that during this game, however the level of difficulty is greatly increased! In this activity, the instructor or student uses 4 color “cards” or papers (red/yellow/blue/green) and calls out the color while choosing which combination of Right or Left they want the student to move (e.g. RIGHT/RED). Students must CHOOSE whether to move a right hand or right foot to the color red. If they do not have a move, they can choose to NOT MOVE (and hold up team members behind them) however, a player is NOT

ALLOWED to make this choice two times consecutively.

Game Directions It Rocks!* Wild Card (*Cards are simply Red/Yellow/Blue/Green pieces of paper)

- Make sure students are in two equal groups (e.g. 6 and 6) and start at opposites ends of the game wall. Be sure to place a marker or floor tape to designate a starting and end point at either end of the wall.
- Using the It Rocks!* color cards, the instructor or student calls out the color and Right/Left combination. Encourage students to reach high and low as they problem solve (moving around other students!) and move in the desired direction without letting go of the wall. Remember - make sure that the students keep at least one hand in contact with the wall at all times. If a student “releases” both hands from the wall, they have essentially “fallen” and must start the game from their original starting point.
- **As room allows, new players “climb on” to the wall with each new call from the deck. Remember that the goal is to move your entire team across the wall as quickly and efficiently as possible without falling!**
- Make sure all students start behind their groups starting point. With each new command called out from the It Rocks!* card deck, a new player can advance onto the game wall. To exit the wall, a player must be able to LEAP off the wall and over the end line. If a player LEAPS off the wall and lands short of the end line, they must start over at their original starting point.
- Ask players to decide who and in what order they will begin playing It Rocks!* Hint – plan for taller players first or for those who have a longer reach!
- Begin calling out colors and codes from the It Rocks!* card deck. The speed at which the teacher calls out the cards should be gauged by the ability and age of the players. Slow down if players are having difficulty processing the commands.
- With each new call, another team member enters the wall and begins moving toward their opponents starting point.
- Throughout the game and as the two groups approach and pass each other, EACH PLAYER MUST KEEP AT LEAST TWO POINTS OF CONTACT (ONE WALL – ONE FLOOR). IF ANY PLAYER RELEASES FROM THE WALL OR CAN NO LONGER REACH A WALL OR FLOOR SPOT (FORWARD OR BACK WHILE MAINTAINING AT LEAST TWO POINTS OF CONTACT) THEY MUST “DROP OFF” THE WALL AND RETURN TO THEIR ORIGINAL TEAMS STARTING POINT.
- The “winning” team is the FIRST team that successfully moves all players across the wall without a fall, sits down on the floor and yells “**WE ROCK!**”!
- **Consider each student keeping track of the total number of touches then adding them all together to get a “team total”. Team totals as well as speed can be considered as success indicators.**

Skills Highlighted: Students will work on individual stretching, flexibility, strength, and cross lateralization. In addition, students must cooperate and communicate enhancing team building skills.

Modifications: Consider giving both teams the same two colors. As each team and player “pass through” the other, the degree of difficulty becomes greater creating a sense of urgency and increasing the chance that a player will not have a move. Players “stuck” on the wall or without a move must “fall” and restart the game at their original starting point.

Adaptations for Children with Disabilities: Consider the individual abilities of the child with a disability then modify the activity to enhance their success. For example, the child with cerebral palsy may be able to support their body weight as they lean into the wall. Limit the distance the child has to move or provide them the use of all the colors rather than just two so they can be as successful as possible.

• **Other Fun Games and Modifications: No Cards Needed!**

- **It Rocks!* High/Low**
This game requires that half the players on a team must stay low while the other players must stay high. On the return trip to the starting point the group switches high/low.
- **It Rocks!* Trango Trio – 3 vs 3 Roped**
My personal favorite! Trango Trio was developed to simulate a climbing “team” roped together on an actual climb! Three players are roped together prior to the start of the game. As Team A advances toward Team B, both teams must be sure to keep an eye out on the position of the others and their rope. If the ropes are tangled as the players move, both teams “fall” and must restart the activity!
- **It Rocks!* Tangled Four – 4 vs 4 Roped**
A great cooperative activity! Tangled Four was developed to simulate a climbing “team” roped together on

an actually climb! Four players are roped together prior to the start of the game. Collectively, they must move across the wall in the least amount of touches possible. Get creative with this one and consider new strategies on reducing the number of touches per team!

- **It Rocks!* Blind**

Classic activity where one person in the group is blindfolded and is guided by the other members of the team. This is played typically as an advanced activity where the focus is on communication within the team.

- **Additional It Rocks!* Game Variations**

- Try setting the game up in a **corner!**
- Play more than one game at a time (e.g. two sides of the gym or in 4 corners of the gym)
- Minimize or maximize the “points of contact” rule
- Skip colors or change the “wild card” to allow more than one move per color. In addition, consider eliminating a color minimizing the amount of color options available on the wall or floor.
- Using the card deck, call out multiple moves (e.g. three cards at a time) to challenge memory, processing skills, and to stimulate the brain!
- Add words, letters, and or numbers to the colored discs increasing visual stimulation and cognitive connections.

- **What about PRE K and Kindergarten?**

It Rocks!* is a great game for young children ages 3-5 years! Preschoolers can work on cross laterality, color and shape identification, right and left handedness, listening skills and cooperation!

- **IT ROCKS!* Big and Little!**

It Rocks Big and Little combines the skill of traversing with size and color recognition. Using different size color spots on the floor and the wall, call out “Big Red” – or “Little Yellow”. Add the concept of Right and Left as the kids improve their listening skills!

- **IT ROCKS!* Fun Themes!**

It Rocks Fun Themes combines the skill of bouldering with cool stickers (e.g. Kim Possible, Blues Clues, Finding Nemo, Numbers, Letters etc.). Using stickers as wall and floor spots keep kids motivated fit!

- **How Do I Make This Developmentally Appropriate For My Kids?**

The activities presented in the It Rocks Activity Guide were designed to address a wide variety of ages and abilities. With each new game or activity, the level of difficulty increases making the game more challenging for the students. It Rocks can be used as an individual activity allowing the student to gain personal feedback on their performance. It Rocks can also be used as a team game activity where the success indicators are measured by the level of communication and problem solving observed.

- **How Does This Product Relate To Current Educational Thinking?**

Most exciting about It Rocks is the application of Action Based Learning based upon current brain research. There is great evidence to support the link between movement and learning. In fact, the brains ability to move and the learning (sensory input) systems within the body are not only interdependent, they are interactive. When pathways in the brain are stimulated through increased sensory input (e.g. weight on the hands, crossing midline, auditory cues for movement direction) the brain responds by creating stronger synaptic junctions or connections. The more a student practices – the stronger the pathway – increasing learning. Connect reading (word identification), math (counting and addition), with visual identification of symbols (colors, shapes, etc.) while MOVING through the IT Rocks game and you can readily see how It Rocks becomes a “concept” that can be applied to reach a wide variety of learners.

- **How Does This Product Address Current Educational Standards and Best Practice?**

The Council on Physical Education for Children (COPEC) and the Middle and Secondary School Physical Education Council (MASSPEC) has developed position statements related to appropriate practices. In each of the documents, components of a physical education program were identified, and developmentally appropriate and inappropriate examples provided as guidelines for recognizing best practices (appropriate) and counterproductive practices (inappropriate). These guidelines are useful as a decision-making tool for developing quality physical education programs. When using the It Rocks game concept, the following document guidelines are helpful.

- **COPEC Document Guidelines**

Development of movement concepts and motor skills –Appropriate Practices

Children are provided with frequent and meaningful age-appropriate practice opportunities that enable individuals to develop a functional understanding of movement concepts (body awareness, space awareness, effort, and relationships) and build competence and confidence in their ability to perform a variety of motor skills (locomotor and nonlocomotor)

Games-Appropriate Practices

Games are selected, designed, sequenced, and modified by teachers and/or children to maximize the learning and enjoyment of children.

Rules governing game play - Appropriate Practices

Teachers and/or children modify official rules, regulations, equipment, and playing space of adult sports to match the varying abilities of the children.

• **MASSPEC Document Guidelines**

Cooperative Play - Appropriate Practice

The program includes experiences which encourage students to learn the process of working and cooperating with others to achieve a common goal. Appropriate student behaviors which make goal attainment possible include communicating effectively, accepting individual differences, cooperative problem solving, and working within the framework of rules.

Team and Individual Activities - Appropriate Practice

The program includes a wide variety of team and individual activities with ample practice time provided to ensure a sense of student accomplishment. Lead-up and modified versions of the game as well as the game itself are all used.

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IT ROCKS™

Developmental Traversing Activity for All Abilities

Self Evaluation Data Collection Sheet

Directions: List student names, select colors for game, record total number of touches (hand plus foot).

<u>Student Name</u>	<u>Student Name</u>	<u>T1</u>	<u>T2</u>	<u>T3</u>
1. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
6. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
7. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
8. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
9. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
10. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
11. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
12. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
13. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
14. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____
15. _____	R Y B G	_____	_____	_____

What do kids have to say
“WOW, this game ... IT ROCKS!”

IT ROCKS™

Set Up Diagram

