

Earth Parachute

Item #15477

What Are the Educational Applications?

Fitness, teamwork, and cooperation activities are an important component of any level in Physical Education. When teaching these types of activities, an important component of discussion is communication. By focusing students on work in unison as one, rather than competing against each other, the entire group can feel the sense of accomplishment. Likewise, when students do not work together and argue, it is a life lesson of the value of working well with others. In addition, many of the activities with a parachute require flexibility which students tend not be so fond of, however by creating a positive association through enjoyable activity, students will have less apprehension about doing flexibility-related activity. When teaching these types of activities, an important component of discussion is lifelong fitness and understanding, which exercises strengthen which muscles, as well as the importance of maintaining a level of fitness that reflects a high quality of life.

How Can I Use This Product With My Students?

The Earth Parachute is a piece of equipment that takes you around the world! It is eye-catching with colorful graphics that feature all seven continents and the five oceans. Targets on each continent and ocean reinforce cooperative effort and hand/eye coordination, as participants try to get the ball in a specific hole or perform other challenges. The 19'L x 13'W Earth Parachute also features the FlagHouse patented, "handle-free" SUPERCHUTE™ Grip, designed for easier student handling.

Activity #1 Tricep Extensions and Bicep Curls

This activity works the bicep muscles. Have students hold a handle in each hand with elbows in close to the body. Raise and lower in low numbered sets with a high number of repetitions. A variation is to lift and lower one arm at a time facing either center or standing sideways with the curling arm facing center. To work triceps, turn so back is facing center. Grip edge with palms up and elbows close to ears. Slowly raise and lower in low numbered sets with a high number of repetitions.

Activity #2 Rollup

While standing, have each student take his or her edge of the parachute and roll it inward toward the middle about 2 steps, so chute is about the thickness of a ballet bar. The rolling works fine motor coordination as well as wrist strength. Now, take students through a variety of muscle exercises such as:

-Facing toward the center, balance on toes and slowly raise and lower heels above the floor to strengthen calves. For variety, change toes from parallel to each other to pigeon toes in, or ballet first position toes out.

-With hip facing the center while balancing on inner leg, raise then lower the outside leg to strengthen thigh adductors. Make sure to do even amount of repetitions on both legs.

-Sitting on floor with straight legs under the parachute, do leg lifts and side leg lift raises (works hamstrings and hip flexors).

- Raise parachute upward so arms are parallel to floor then lower (front deltoids).

- Turn to the side so hip faces the parachute. Hold one handle, keeping arm straight and raise parachute to shoulder height then lower (side deltoids).

Activity #3 Geography Roll

This is a great cross-curricular activity to get Social Studies into the gymnasium. Discuss with students North, South, East, West, Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest. Have them try to move a ball through wave shakes around the parachute as you call out different directions.

Discuss the different continents with students: Asia, Africa, Europe, North America, South America, Australia, Antarctica and give fun facts about them. Test knowledge by giving a fact, having students roll the ball into that continent's ball pocket. Some examples of facts you can use for this activity are:

Biggest by size

- #1 Asia - (44,579,000 sq km)
- #2 Africa - (30,065,000 sq km)
- #3 North America - (24,256,000 sq km)
- #4 South America - (17,819,000 sq km)
- #5 Antarctica - (13,209,000 sq km)
- #6 Europe - (9,938,000 sq km)
- #7 Australia/Oceania - (7,687,000 sq km)

Number of countries

- #1 Africa - (53)
- #3 Europe - (46)
- #2 Asia - (44)
- #4 North America - (23)

- #5 Oceania - (14)
- #6 South America - (12)

Discuss the different oceans on the parachute with students and research facts on them as well. Then test student knowledge again by having them cooperatively move to the ball to the designated ocean hole goal.

Another geography activity is to have students decide which hole they want the ball to go into. Have them work cooperatively to accomplish the goal and ask which directions the ball traveled to get to the final destination.

Activity #4 Aerobics

Have students perform the following aerobics steps with chute on floor then while holding the parachute.

- March in place then in different directions
- March in place while doing bicep curls
- Do wide-in and wide-out steps in the same spot while moving the ball to the correct hole
 - March, then step touch forward while moving the ball to the correct hole
 - March then lunge backward while moving the ball to the correct hole
 - March and bicep curl while lunging
 - March with heel-tap-front or back while moving the ball to the correct hole
 - Can-Can kicks while moving the ball to the correct hole

Activity #5 Color Call Out

Using small foam balls, call out a color (red, orange, blue, green, yellow, and purple). When the teacher calls out the color, students should work together as a team to roll the ball into that color's mesh hole. This activity is recommended for the younger grades to promote cooperation and color recognition.

Activity #6 Color Exercise Leader

Using small foam balls (red, orange, blue, green, yellow, and purple), assign different students to different colors. When students roll the ball into that color's mesh hole, the group that was assigned that color gets to pick an exercise for them to do together. Jumping jacks, sit-ups, jogging in place for a certain period of time, and push-ups are great examples of exercises for children to choose from.

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

The wonderful thing about this product is that preschoolers to adults can use it! In addition, it does not require a high physical skill ability level. However, in order to be successful it is imperative the participants work together. Communication is the key to success. Parachute activities help with the social aspect of development on top of the psychomotor aspect. Also, with younger grades only use North, South, East, and West directions.

How Does This Product Relate to Current Educational Thinking?

It is important to give students a well-rounded physical education. Although it is important to teach the basic fundamentals of sports with today's obesity and type 2 diabetes issues, lifetime fitness is a must for all levels. It promotes teamwork and teambuilding. If weight training is introduced in this environment, then when students at the appropriate age transfer to an actual weight there is a positive association with the activity. Cross-curricular activities are also popular in non-traditional physical education because it makes physical education more academic to justify a program.

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.

- Focus is on group success versus individual
- Cross-curricular bridge between Social Studies and Physical Education
- Makes fitness activities fun
- Promotes communication skills
- Does not require sports-related skills
- Appropriate for a variety of age ranges
- Promotes teambuilding
- Can be used indoors and outdoors
- Has no handles which can cause tangles or to limit the number of students who can participate
- Non-threatening use of equipment
- Activities do not require large amount of equipment or set up time

Safety Issues & Concerns

All students must work together to avoid getting tangled in the parachute or stay underneath when directed to come out. It is important that everyone is paying attention and understands directions prior to beginning any maneuvers.



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Please direct your questions or concerns regarding this product to the appropriate office listed below between the hours of 8AM-6PM Eastern Time

In the US: FlagHouse, 601 FlagHouse Drive, Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey 07604-3116 Phone 800.793.7900 201.288.7600 Fax 800.793.7922

In Canada: FlagHouse Canada, 235 Yorkland Blvd., Suite 105, North York, Ontario M2J 4Y8 Phone 800.265.6900 416.495.8262 Fax 800.265.6922

International Customers: FlagHouse, 601 FlagHouse Drive, Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey, 07604-3116 USA Phone 201.288.7600 Fax 201.288.7887