

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 support 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 finding letters/words on a page or visually attending to a specific object. The movement patterns reinforced through IT ROCKS!, and supported by scientific literature, significantly increase the brain's ability to process and encode messages.

How Can I Use This Product With My Kids?

When you first set up and use IT ROCKS!, start simple and allow 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 being on a climbing or traversing wall. It is also recommended that students choose at least 2-3 colors for more advanced movers, while younger learners can 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, randomly distributing them on the floor no closer than 1-2 feet from the wall and not farther than 4 to 4.5 feet. 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! Traversing Kit Includes:

- 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)
- 1 IT ROCKS! card deck with 38 movement cards. Each deck includes 4 right-side movement cards in each color, 8 left-side movement cards in each color, 4 free move cards, and 2 freeze/skip movement cards.
- 1 nylon IT ROCKS! storage bag

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 of 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 are 3-4" non-slip poly spots in red, green, blue, and yellow.
- Check the 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.

IT ROCKS! WARM-UP GAMES

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 whether are keeping 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.
- 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" their hands, fingers, feet, and ankles while engaging 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 is it for the teacher to know that the students are stretching, reaching, and working both sides of the body.
- Ask 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 2 colors they used (R, G).

IT ROCKS! GAME #1 – ONE WAY! (GAME CARDS NOT REQUIRED)

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.

Game Directions for IT ROCKS! One Way!

- Begin by placing students in teams of 5-6 students (1-2 teams 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 2 colors (this should be done in a huddle and not shared with the other teams).
- On the instructor's 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 #2 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 2 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 2, so they can be as successful as possible.

IT ROCKS! GAME #2 – WILD CARD (GAME CARDS REQUIRED!)

The object of this game is identical to the first game, except that during this game the level of difficulty is greatly increased! In this activity, the instructor or student uses the deck of cards provided and calls out the color and the Right or Left combination (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 2 times consecutively.

Game Directions for IT ROCKS! Wild Card

- Make sure students are in 2 equal groups (e.g. 6 and 6) and start at opposite 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! colored 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 to make sure that 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 group's 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 opponent's starting point.

- Throughout the game and as the 2 groups approach and pass each other, EACH PLAYER MUST KEEP AT LEAST 2 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 2 POINTS OF CONTACT), THEY MUST "DROP OFF" THE WALL AND RETURN TO THEIR ORIGINAL TEAM'S 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 2 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 2, so they can be as successful as possible.

Other Fun Games and Modifications:

IT ROCKS! High/Low

This game requires that half the players on a team stay low, while the other players 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 actual 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

A classic activity where one person in the group is blindfolded and is guided by the other members of the team. This is typically played 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. 2 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. 3 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.). Use stickers for wall and floor spots to keep kids motivated, staying fit, AND LEARNING!

How Do I Make This Developmentally Appropriate For My Kids?

The activities presented in the IT ROCKS! Activity Guide are 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?

The most exciting thing 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 ability of the brain 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) and 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) have 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 were 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 non-locomotor).

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 Practices

The program includes experiences that encourage students to learn the process of working and cooperating with others to achieve a common goal. Appropriate student behaviors that 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 Practices

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.



IT ROCKS!

Developmental Traversing Activity for All Abilities Self Evaluation Data Collection Sheet

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

Student Name	Color Code	T1	T2	T3
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!"**

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Do you have an idea for a brand new product or a new game idea? We would be happy to speak with you - contact us at <http://www.FlagHouse.com/NewIdeas>

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

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