

Disc Activities

Item #7707

What Are The Educational Applications?

Disc activities consist of throwing and catching a saucer shaped object such as a Frisbee, Flying Saucer, or High Flyer. Discs are relatively inexpensive and offer a variety of applications in a physical education class. Listed below are several ways that disc activities can be used to enhance a physical education program.

- Disc activities can be used to develop individual skills or team skills (motor development and sport strategy).
- Coordination, concentration and execution are required for successful disc play (motor development and sport strategy education).
- Disc activities can be varied to provide either a strenuous or light workout (fitness education).
- Disc activities are adaptable for indoor/outdoor play (safety).
- Due to the low cost of the disc, it is feasible to provide at least one disc per two students (equipment).
- Disc activities have carry-over potential as a home recreational activity for the entire family (school-to-home connections).
- Discs are an excellent tool for learning about science concepts related to flight (subject integration).

The concept of lift is an excellent starting point for exploring the scientific side of disc activities. Lift keeps the disc airborne. The disc has a slightly curved top that breaks the airflow into two different paths. The break in airflow creates a difference in air pressure between the top and bottom of the disc and lift is the result. This is the same basic principal that keeps an aircraft airborne. The faster the disc travels through the air, the more lift it will generate and the greater the duration of flight. Finding a speed and throwing position that will keep the disc airborne as long as possible (increasing the distance traveled) is an important concept in many disc activities/games. Here are a few activities to illustrate this point with your students.

Student Experiment #1—Throw the disc using a light force.

What should happen: The disc should travel for a short distance.

Student Experiment #2—Throw the disc using a heavier force.

What should happen: This disc should travel a longer distance.

Something else to do and discuss: Using more of the body than just the wrist and arm will generate a more powerful (faster) throw.

Student Experiment #3—Throw the disc parallel to the ground. Watch how high it goes and where it lands.

What should happen: Throwing the disc parallel to the ground will result in long, flat throws.

Student Experiment #4—Throw the disc so that the front edge is higher than the back edge (throw with a tilt). Watch how high it goes and where it lands.

What should happen: Raising the front rim of the disc will result in high, arching throws.

Something else to do and discuss: Explore using different angles of tilt. What is different about the flight path? What angle of tilt goes farthest?

Spin, altitude, direction and force are a few of the other science concepts that can be studied through the use of disc activities.

There are several other products offered in the FlagHouse catalog that can be used during a unit of disc activities:

- Softer Saucer Set—foam saucers provide a slower, easier-to-track flight.

- SpinJammer 100—spin cone makes it easy to spin the disc on the fingertip. Learn some fancy tricks.
- Woosh Ring—uses lightweight nylon cloth stretched over a flexible ring.

How Can I Use This Product With My Kids?

Activity #1—Throw, Run and Catch (Distance)

This is a distance event. The player throws the disc into the air and then runs to catch it in one hand before it touches the ground. The distance is measured from the point of release to the point of first contact in the catching attempt.

Activity #2—Maximum Time Aloft (Height in Air)

This is a timed event. The player throws the disc up into the air and then catches it in one hand before the disc touches the ground. Time is measured from the release of the disc to the first contact of catching attempt.

Activity #3—Speed Flow (Accuracy)

Partners throw the disc back and forth 30 times as quickly as possible. All partner sets stand in a line across from one another; begin game play at the same time and count out loud the number of each throw. The disc may be missed; however, the receiver must pick up the disc and return to the line to begin play again. Partners sit down on the line after completing 30 throws.

Activity #4—Speed Doubles (Accuracy)

Two players each throw a disc simultaneously to each other. Begin the game with slow throws and increase the speed. Remember, overly exceeding your ability will result in a game with frequent misses and very little practice of throwing and catching skills. Players can decide their own scoring system based on a cooperative model (accumulated points for consecutive catches between partners) or a competitive model (loss of points for missed catch/poor throw).

Activity #5—The Big Tunnel (Accuracy)

Working in groups of four players, two players hold their hands together making a two-person hoop. The other two players attempt to throw and catch the disc back and forth between the hoop. Have students alternate player positions. Need a challenge? How many arm hoops can you throw and catch a disc through?

Activity #6—Disc History (Subject Integration)

Trace the history of disc activities. Here are some fun facts to get your students started.

- Prehistoric Aborigines of Australia used “kylies” (wooden throwing sticks) carved in the shape of a curved airfoil more than 30,000 years ago. These sticks were used to hunt small game, the poorly carved sticks led to the development of the boomerang.
- Boomerangs have been found by archaeologists in Egypt, North America and Europe.
- During the 1920s-40s, college students used Frisbee Pie-tins for pie tin tossing. In 1948, Fred Morrison began working on a method to improve the flight of the pie tins.

His first design was the Flyin’ Saucer and was made from polyethylene plastic. In 1951 he redesigned the Flyin’ Saucer and renamed it the Pluto Platter. Wham-o® purchased the rights and the mold from Morrison in 1955. Following this, the name was changed to Frisbee and trade-marked.

Activity #7—Subject Integration

There are many styles and sizes of discs used for disc activities/games. Competitive disc players often prefer certain models for specific games and competitions. Create your own informational display of discs. Identify

the name of the disc, the year it was developed, and use of the disc to create a museum-like display. Students may even wish to bring discs from home. The students must provide the research information for their contribution in order for it to be included in the display.

How Do I Make This Developmentally Appropriate For My Kids?

The majority of activities in this guide are designed for upper elementary/middle school students. Modifications and adaptations can be made in order to create an activity that is appropriate for a variety of class settings. The following list of strategies are suggested as activity modifications/adaptations.

- Select discs constructed from softer materials. This modification is extremely beneficial for students afraid of catching an oncoming object. The softness reduces the fear of getting hurt and slows the speed of flight.
- Choose brightly colored discs which will make it easier for the student to track the disc as it travels in the air.
- Make accuracy activities easier by using large targets and placing the student close to the target.
- Provide Aerobie Rings and SpinJammers for students with advanced skills.
- Introduce your more advanced students to the skills of tipping and airbrushing.

How Does This Product Relate To Current Educational Thinking?

The Council on Physical Education for Children (COPEC) developed the position statement, Developmentally Appropriate Physical Education Practices for Children. Twenty-six of a physical education program have been identified and developmentally appropriate and inappropriate examples are provided as guidelines for recognizing the best practices (appropriate) and counterproductive practices (inappropriate). These guidelines are useful as a decision-making tool for developing quality physical education programs. The inclusion of disc activities in the physical education program are supported by the following appropriate practices.

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, nonlocomotor and manipulative).

Cognitive Development—Appropriate Practices

- Physical education activities are designed with both the physical and the cognitive development of children in mind.
- Teachers provide experiences that encourage children to question, integrate, analyze, communicate, apply cognitive concepts, and gain a wide multicultural view of the world, thus making physical education a part of the total education experience.

Equipment—Appropriate Practices

- Enough equipment is available so that each child benefits from maximum participation. For example, every child in a class would have a ball (disc).

*Equipment is matched to the size, confidence and skill level of the children so that they are motivated to actively participate in physical education classes.

The Developmentally Appropriate Physical Education Practices for Children publication can be purchased from the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance at 1-800-213-7193.



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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

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