

FOCUS➤

SKIPPING

Skipping is one of the more difficult locomotor skills for children to master. The progression is normally from a gallop to a skip action on every other foot to a full skipping action.

We have found it best not to overanalyze the skipping action, not to break it down as a step-hop-step-hop; this approach often results in a stiff step-hop action, not a fluid motion. A demonstration by you, repetitive experiences, skipping with music, and skipping with a partner has proved successful in teaching the skill.

Kindergarten and first-grade students should not feel pressure to skip correctly; a mature pattern as a Grade-Level Outcome is appropriate for second grade.

Critical Elements for Skipping

- Step and hop on one foot and then on the other foot.
- Arms move in opposition to feet.
- Arm and leg lift on hopping action.
- Feet alternate lead.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: PARTNER PRACTICE

- Have students travel through general space by skipping with a chosen partner.
- Have students keep a side-by-side relationship with the partner as they skip. (Kindergarteners may choose to gallop or skip.)
- Challenge students to adjust speed to maintain the side-to-side relationship as they travel with a partner.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: FOLLOW THE LEADER

- Have students travel through general space with a chosen partner with one partner as the leader and the other partner as the follower. First graders skip as they travel; kindergarteners may choose to skip or gallop. On your signal, partners switch the leader by turning and traveling in the opposite direction.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: COPY CAT

- Partner A travels by hopping, jumping, jogging, galloping, sliding, or skipping to a new location in general space. Partner B copies the locomotor movement to travel to the same location. Partner B then becomes the leader and chooses a new locomotor and a new location.

(This copycat action can easily become a dance for children by adding a beginning and ending shape; music is an option.)

Assessment

No assessment of skipping until second grade. Teacher observation and encouragement only for grades K and 1.