

FOCUS➤

LEVELS

Grades K-2

Standard 2

The physically literate individual applies knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies and tactics related to movement and performance.

Grade-Level Outcomes

- Travels demonstrating low, middle and high levels (S2.E2.1)
- Combines shapes, levels, and pathways into simple travel, dance, and gymnastics sequences (S2.E2.2)

Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- Identify the three levels of movement
- Travel in general space at the designated level
- Demonstrate changes in levels in a simple sequence of movement

Materials and Equipment

- Drum
- Deflated balloon

Introduction

Identify for the students the three levels of movement:

- High level is above the shoulders, higher than the head.
- Low level is below the knees, close to the floor.
- Middle level is between the two, the space from the knees to the shoulders.

Provide examples of each level within a movement context, such as jumping in the air to catch a ball, executing a gymnastics roll on a mat, and spinning a hoop around the waist.

Levels of movement will be important later in our games, gymnastics, and dance work in physical education.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: LEVELS IN SELF-SPACE

With students standing in self-space, have them explore the three levels of movement.

- High level: Extend arms in all directions above the head—forward, backward, and to the sides.
- Low level: Explore the space at low level, close to the ground or floor. (Imagery: searching for lost coins in muddy water.)
- Middle level: Explore middle level space with eyes closed. (Imagery: in a very dark room, unsure of surroundings.)

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: LEVELS IN GENERAL SPACE

Provide sufficient time for students to explore traveling in general space at the three levels.

- High level (as many body parts as possible at high level): Traveling throughout general space with the trunk stretched and the head high. (Imagery: like a tall giraffe with its head in the clouds.)
- Low level (all body parts at or below knee level): Traveling at low level in many different ways. (Imagery: A snake slithers, a duck waddles, and a turtle crawls.)
- Middle level (as many body parts as possible between high and low levels): Traveling to open spaces in the room—quickly, slowly, quietly. (Imagery: almost invisible.)

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: CHANGING LEVELS

With Designated Beat

Have the students assume a low-level balance, such as jack-in-the box position. On your signal, they rise slowly to middle level and then continue to a high-level balanced position.

- Challenge students to move in response to the designated beat, such as four counts to middle level, pause, four counts to high level, and then reverse from high to low with eight counts.

The gradual rising and sinking movement is difficult for young children; allow several repetitions for practice of a controlled movement.

- Repeat with six beats, four beats, and two beats of the drum. Finally, have students start in a squat position at low level. On your signal (one beat), they jump to a high level and freeze.

With Changes in Tempo

Using a deflated balloon as the visual prop, ask students to assume a position at low level, explaining that their changes in levels will be in response to the inflating and deflating of the balloon.

- Slowly inflate the balloon to half size. Students respond by rising to middle level (continue inflating the balloon) and then rising from middle to high level.
- Vary the tempo of the action—rising and sinking, changing levels quickly, slowly, and in combination of quick and slow.
- Challenge students with combinations of rising and sinking with complete stillness. Thus, they must be able to freeze at any moment in the action.
- As you inflate the balloon to its fullest, students rise to high level.

What will happen if I release the balloon? At what level will it travel? In what pathway? Will it travel quickly or slowly?

Release the balloon as the students travel quickly in general space, with zigzag pathways, collapsing to low level as the balloon descends.

No collisions should occur as students travel; they should use self-space to collapse.

Note: When movement concepts are first introduced, they are the central focus of the lesson. All tasks are centered on helping students understand, in both cognition and performance, the meaning of the concept. In subsequent years, the movement concept is reviewed with a series of tasks and then followed with a developmentally appropriate challenge.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: SEQUENCE OF LOCOMOTORS AND LEVELS (GRADE 2)

Have students travel in general space performing a variety of locomotor movements and demonstrating the three levels as they travel. (The selection of the following tasks depends on the concepts studied by the students before this lesson, that is, pathways and shapes.)

- Students combine locomotors with shapes by traveling in general space with a selected locomotor skill, stopping to create a wide shape (then narrow, curled, twisted) in balance, and then traveling with a different locomotor skill.
- Challenge students with balances at different levels.
- Students explore locomotors, pathways, and levels for travel in general space.

Allow sufficient time for students to create a sequence of locomotors and levels, demonstrating each of the levels in either travel or balances. (Enhance the complexity of the sequence with pathways, shapes, levels, and locomotors, as well as a beginning and ending shape.)

Assessment

Kindergarten

Show students a drawing with hands at high level, medium level, and low level; have them circle a figure in response to your directions.

Grade 1

Select photos from sports magazines showing the various levels; have students match the photo and the designated level.

Grade 2

The sequence of locomotors and levels easily becomes an assessment by having the students record the sequence, memorize it, and perform it.

Closure

- What movement concept did we study today?
- Name the three levels. Define each level.
- Kindergarten: Is a tall basketball player the only person who can reach to high level?
- Grade 2: How are levels used in gymnastics? Name a sport in which levels are important. Why are levels important in that sport?

Reflection

- Do students understand that everyone has a high, middle, and low level regardless of how tall they are?
- Can the children position body parts at different levels?
- Can they travel at each designated level?