BASIC MOTOR SKILLS

Movement Focus: Balance
Have students begin on a designated spot (carpet square, polyspot, defined space on the carpet). The goal is to work on body control.

1. On hands and knees, lift one body part off the floor at a time. Try to hold for a count of 3.
2. On hands and knees, lift the right hand and left leg- hold for a 3 count. Do the same with the left. Lift the same arm and leg and hold for a 3 count.
3. In a kneeling position (bottom should be off of the back of the legs)-maintain this position for a 3 count.
4. Balance on 1 knee and 1 foot on the ground. Switch to the other side.
5. In a standing position, balance on 1 foot. You may want to begin with a hand held or holding on to a stationary object. How long can the student balance on 1 foot?
6. In a standing position, balance on 1 foot and close the eyes.

Movement Focus: Moving in space
The main objective is to have students control their body as they move through space. Students may need to be taught how to move and not bump into each other.

1. Begin on their designated spot. Students move SLOWLY from their spot to a designated spot (the end of the gym) without touching anyone. Do this several times reminding them not to touch anyone.
2. Move from their spot to the designated spot in other ways (tiptoes, sideways, heavy like an elephant, light like a feather, like a dog/cat….). Always reminding them not to run into anyone, keep your eyes ahead- don’t look at the floor.
3. Place the student spots in two lines facing each other about 15 feet apart. Have the students stand on their spot. The objective is to move from their spot to the spot across from them without touching anyone. Begin moving with a slow walk and then add any other movements. If a student is unable to control their body, you may try putting them on an end a little further away from next student and continue with verbal reminders as they are moving.

Movement Focus: Gallop
1. A gallop is performed when a student performs a step-close pattern. The lead foot takes a step and the trail foot moves even with the heel of the lead foot. The student's body and lead foot face forward.
2. As the pattern matures, the speed is increased and a lift is added during the movement.
3. Galloping with a beat is helpful, use a drum or tambourine or other music.
4. Have students practice galloping with either foot in the lead position.
5. A slide is a sideways motion with a step-close foot pattern but the difference is with a slide the body faces forward and the feet move to the side. This should be practiced moving to the right and left.
Activities to enhance Galloping:
• Go Horseback Riding- Saddle up your pony and let's ride.
  o Ride in and out of trees (cones set up around the gym).
  o Gallop at different speeds, can you gallop and follow a drum or tambourine?
  o Use a short piece of rope as a lasso and round up cattle. Set up bowling pins for cattle.
• Pretend you hurt your leg and can't use it, walk dragging it behind you (you can also be a lame puppy).
• Use colored circles and place them on the front hip as a headlight. Pretend you are a horse galloping at night.

Movement Focus: Jumping
Jumping is the ability to spring from one or two feet and land on two feet in an even rhythm. Progression of skill development:

1. Jumps down from a low object, there may be little knee bend.
2. Jumps with both feet off the floor, knee bend, little arm movement.
4. Jumps forward or upward and lands on both feet simultaneously. Absorbs shock by bending knees and ankles. Uses arms to assist in jumping.

References: Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development and O.S.U. SIGMA

Activities to enhance Jumping:
• "Pop Goes the Weasel", "Jack be Nimble", "Ring Around the Rosie" rhymes where students are able to jump on cue.
• Jump off a low box, use mats and jump from one end to the other.
• Jump onto or off of polyspots.
• Obstacle course, which includes jumping over items and jumping from one spot to another.
• Jump over a low rope, over a rope that is shaking like a snake and a rope that is slowly moved back and forth.
• Act out the finger play of "Five Little Monkeys".

Movement Focus: Marching
Marching is a locomotor movement using a high knee step. Have students lift one knee up at a time trying to touch their knee to the ceiling. A drum beat or tambourine beat is a good way to develop a rhythm for a march. Some students may need to begin with an exaggerated knee bend in order to understand the motor movement.

Activities to enhance Marching:
1. Have a Flag Day Parade. Each child can have a small flag that they've created; the leader can hold a baton or larger flag and parade around the school. Take turns being the Grand Marshal. Incorporate rhythm instruments and strike up the band.
  • Create Patriotic music makers using the mini-M&M containers. Add some rice, popcorn kernels or other beans inside the container- tape the lid closed
and decorate the outside from paper that has been specially colored for the season.

2. March in different patterns: straight line, large circle, and snake pattern...

**Movement Focus: Hopping**

1. Have each student stand on 1 foot as long as possible.
2. Have the student stand on 1 foot and lift their body off of the floor. Try this with the other foot.
3. Hop in one area; use either foot to hop with.
4. Have the student use their arms to swing and lift their body further off of the floor. Hop from one spot to another, hop on one foot and then the other.
5. Hop in pattern- 3 hops with the right foot and 3 hops with the left foot.

**Activities to enhance Hopping:**

1. Have students hop and on a signal switch feet.
2. Hop in and out of a hoop or use a polyspot.
3. Play hopscotch- use 1 foot hopping and 2 feet jumping patterns.
4. Set up hopping stones (use polyspots to create a pattern and have students hop along the pattern).
5. Bunny Hop

**Movement Focus: Skip**

Skipping is a complex movement pattern. The following is the continuum of levels.

1. Run/hop/ leap/ gallop. A skip is a step/hop movement done on each side.
2. Skip on one side of the body.
3. Segmented alternate skip- the rhythm and timing may not be fully coordinated.
4. Alternated, coordinated skip.

**Activities to enhance Skipping:**

1. Skip to a drum beat- skip fast and slow.
2. Skip with high knees.
3. Skip and sing, "Skip to my Lou".
4. Skip to different spots in the room.

**Movement Focus: Throwing**

1. Hurls a hand-held ball from a sidearm position in a forward direction. The student may require assistance to throw.
2. Grasp the ball with one hand, release ball in forward direction with arm extended forward as the ball is released. The student is able to independently face the target and throw the ball. A sidearm or two-handed motion is used to throw the ball.
3. Throws a ball from a position in back of the head with rotation of hip and shoulder to a point where the non-dominant side faces a target, feet remains stationary.
4. Throws a ball with a starting position from the back of the head, has body rotation and forward step. A student with a mature throw is able to stand sideways to the
target, draws throwing arm behind ear, shifts weight from rear foot to front foot, swings the throwing arm forward, releases the ball with an outstretched arm, looks at the target and follows through toward the target.

Developed by: L. Farnsworth, T. O'Dea & M. Scales, Clark County School District, Las Vegas, Nevada

**Activities to enhance Throwing:**
1. Beanbag throwing at a target.
2. Sock balls, nerf balls, and various textured balls into a container or through a hoop.
   • Start with the target close to the student to ensure success. Once the student is able to easily hit the target, gradually increase the distance.

**Movement Focus: Catching**
Progression of skill development- the students need to visually focus on the oncoming object. A verbal prompt before throwing the object is recommended to gain students attention.
1. Catches a bounced ball with arms and body, arms stretched forward.
2. Catches bounced ball with hands and chest, scoop pattern with arms.
3. Catches thrown ball with arms and body.
4. Catches bounced ball with both hands.
5. Catches thrown ball with hands and chest.
6. Catches thrown ball with both hands.
7. Catches bounced tennis ball with both hands.

Reference: Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development

**Activities to enhance catching:**
1. Slow moving materials are easier to visually track and catch- scarves, balloons, beach ball, bubbles, punch ball, and newspaper. Have students toss and catch to themselves. Have them verbalize, "I caught it", after a successful catch.
2. Hot Potato- has students seated in a circle and passes a ball very quickly. After success is accomplished with passing, have students move back and toss the ball around the circle.
3. Partner catching activities- begins with partners close to each other. As they are able to make successful catches, one partner can take a step backward and increase the throwing distance.

**Movement Focus: KICKING**
Progression of Skill Development:
1. Have student balance on one foot and swing one leg forward and back. This can also be done from a chair.
2. Have the student kick a stationary ball with and then without assistance.
3. The student should focus visually on the ball while performing a kick.
4. The student is able to swing leg backward and forward with a pendular movement. Sufficient force is applied to the kick and focus is on the ball while kicking.
5. The student walks and kicks a stationary playground ball.
6. The student takes two or more coordinated steps and kicks a playground ball.
7. The student is able to drop kick a ball. A balloon or other lightweight ball should be used when introducing this skill. Have the student drop the ball and swing their leg (instead of trying to toss the ball and kick).

Resource: Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development

Activities to enhance Kicking:
1. Place a ball on a masking tape roll, to allow the ball to remain in a stationary position. Have each student kick the ball off the tape roll.
2. Have students kick the ball as far as possible.
3. Practice kicking between objects (cones, cardboard blocks).
4. Kick a ball and knock down a tower of cardboard boxes.
5. Kick a ball down the length of the room. Try little "tap" kicks and then larger, stronger kicks. Continue kicking while moving.
6. Soccer dribble, using either foot.

Movement Focus: Striking
This skill requires eye-hand coordination. A student needs to visually follow the hand or bat to the object being hit. For a student with a visual impairment, use tactile cues as well as verbal cues.

1. Balloon activities—have students set up balloon challenges or create some other activities. The following are suggestions to begin with.
   • Suspend it on a string and hit it with the hit.
   • Hit a suspended balloon with different body parts.
   • Hit a suspended balloon with a fly swatter.
   • Tap the balloon with your hand 5 times?
   • Tap the balloon with one hand and then the other 10 times?
   • Tap the balloon with a different body part and then with your hand?
   • How many different body parts can you hit the balloon with?
   • Can you hit the balloon with a body part and then catch it?
   • How many times in a row can you hit the balloon?
   • Can you hit the balloon using two body parts and catch it? (elbow, head, catch)
   • How many different body parts can you hit the balloon with and still catch it?
2. Using a batting T, place a lightweight ball on the T and hit it off with the hand.
3. Using a batting T and a short handled bat, hit the ball off the T.
4. Using a batting T, whiffle ball and plastic bat, hit it off a T.