



2015 Southwest Orientation and Mobility (SWOMA) Conference

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Tying Adapted PE, Recreation and Leisure, and
Movement to the Expanded Core Curriculum

November 5, 2015

2:30 PM-3:25 PM and 3:35 PM-4:30 PM

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Typing Adapted PE, Recreation, Leisure and Movement to the Expanded Core Curriculum

Presenter: Mary Kob

In Emily Mather's article Bringing STEM to Physical Activity, it states, "Statistics have shown that using physical activity in classroom and extracurricular activities promotes student cognition."

The CDS has shown that positive associations were found across measures of academic achievement, academic behavior, cognitive skills and attitudes."

The Association Between School-Based Physical Activity, Including Physical Education, and Academic Performance, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Revised Version- July 2010;
http://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/health_and_academics/pdf/pa-pe_paper.pdf

Physical Literacy

The Common Core Learning Standards intent is to promote physical activity.

Physical Literacy is "motivation, confidence, physical competence, and knowledge necessary to pursue physical activity as an integral component of a healthy lifestyle."

Physical Literacy uses the language that you will see in other subject areas like Health and Math (Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance (JOPERD). September 2014, Promoting Physical Activity: Addressing Barriers and Moving Forward, page 25.

Benefits of Physical Activity

Students involved in physical activity have shown improvement in academic learning.

As seen in a NY Times article Put the Physical In Education when students walked or jogged on a treadmill, there was, "marked improvements in math and reading scores after the exercise." Reynolds, Gretchen, Put the Physical In Education, The New York Times, Well section, September 7, 2014, page 18.

Educators define "core curriculum" as the knowledge and skills expected to be learned by a student by high school graduation.

The nine subjects in the Expanded Core Curriculum are:

1. Compensatory or functional academic skills, including communication modes
2. Orientation and Mobility
3. Social interaction skills
4. Independent living skills

5. Recreation and Leisure skills

6. Career Education

7. Use of assistive technology

8. Sensory efficiency skills

9. Self Determination

Recreation and Leisure Skills

Skills in recreation and leisure are seldom offered as a part of the existing core curriculum. Rather, physical education in the form of team games and athletics are the usual way in which physical fitness needs are met for sighted students. Many of the activities in physical education are excellent and appropriate for visually impaired students. In addition, however, these students need to develop activities in recreation and leisure that they can enjoy throughout their adult lives. Most often sighted persons select their recreation and leisure activity repertoire by visually observing activities and choosing those in which they wish to participate. The teaching of recreation and leisure skills to blind and visually impaired students must be planned and deliberately taught, and should focus on the development of life-long skills.

Regular Play Activities

Modify the Rules of the Game

Rules may be modified to accommodate visual limitation but care should be taken not to alter the basic structure of the game if at all possible. (For example, in volleyball, the ball may be permitted to bounce once or the visually impaired student may take one serve before each team begins serving.) The visually impaired child will want the activity to remain as close to its original form as possible.

Use "Special Equipment"

In some cases, special equipment is desirable to facilitate the full participation of the child in a given activity. This equipment can be purchased from a supplier or can be developed by the physical education or recreation specialist. In archery, for instance, an auditory signal can be placed behind the target.

When developing modified equipment, it would be advisable to seek the assistance of the visually impaired child. He or she may or may not want to use a balloon, beach ball, etc.

Suggested Adaptation: Development of Fundamental Skills and Games

Encourage movement exploration. Focus on how the body moves by bending, stretching, turning, swinging, and curling the body, by itself, as well as in relationships to objects and other people. Help students to become aware of their body and the way in which it can move. A good movement vocabulary will help the child to learn new skills more efficiently.

Teach the child to next jump, land, and roll while standing in place, while moving, and while jumping off equipment. This is a good safety skill which will help the children become more confident when knowing that they can handle themselves on a spill.

Go From the Less Difficult To the More Difficult Skills and Breakdown Skills into Their Component Parts

For example, to teach the child to catch a ball, begin by bouncing the ball to the child from a short distance away. Gradually increase the distance. Then decrease the distance again but eliminate the bounce. Finally, increase the distance again. A large, light weight, softer ball would help.

Also, be aware of the child's previous experiences in recreation and other areas. Some visually impaired children have not developed activity skills because they were never given opportunities to participate in play. Thus, the physical education/recreation specialist may need to begin working with basic skills before involving the child in some

Limit Playing Space

Table tennis is an example of a game with a limited area that a child with a narrow visual field may be able to enjoy. Playing games in a small gym or a handball court may facilitate greater involvement for the visually impaired child without greatly distorting the experience for the normally sighted participants.

Slow the Action

For example, instead of a regular ball, a balloon may be used in a game of catch. A child with a field loss - may be able to keep the balloon in the central portion of vision because it is moving with less speed.

Use Larger or Smaller Playing Objects

For example, a beach ball can be used to play volleyball. If the child has an acuity loss he may be able to see the object when he is far away from it if it is larger than regulation size. Also, targets can be made larger or moved closer to the player. If the eye condition has resulted in limited visual field, it may be helpful to use a smaller ball or move the target further away so it can be seen in the field of vision.

Use Proper Lighting and Color Contrast

A ball can be taped with bright yellow/orange fluorescent or black tape, so that it contrasts with the floor and walls. A shuttlecock can be painted a bright color to contrast with a playing court. Colored tape can be used to mark the playing areas. Contrasting colors can also be used for table games.

As previously discussed, find out if the child sees better under certain lighting conditions. It is also helpful to discuss with the child what factors may be visually distracting. - For example, some children are bothered –by stripes, polka-dots, certain plaids or colors, strobe lights, and lights reflecting off glass.

Tag Games

Have the person, "it" wear an elastic band with bells on it and place it on the wrists or ankles, or maintain verbal contact as pursuing the visually impaired student or buddy the visually impaired student with a helper.

Boundaries

Provide a change in floor texture. For example, place rubber carpet runner or tumbling mats next to the wall so that the child knows when he steps onto the changed surface that he is stepping out of bounds. The change in surface is also a warning signal to him that a wall or object is coming up so he needs to put on the brakes. The child will move much more freely if he knows that hazardous objects are not on the playing area.

Throwing and Catching

Before throwing the ball, give the receiver a sound - clue. A bounce pass will be easier to receive than a direct pass. Utilize large heavy balloons to slow down the speed of the ball. The use of yarn balls, fluff balls and nerf balls lessen the impact of a direct hit to the body. These should be used when playing the popular game of dodge ball. When throwing at a target, provide a sound reinforcement (i.e. bells) behind the target. Beepers can be used or just have someone strike the target first.

Striking and Hitting

To practice striking skills, place a ball on a tee or have a ball suspended from the ceiling. If you want the ball to move through space upon hitting it, utilize Velcro. Place Velcro on the end of a rope which is suspended from the ceiling and matching Velcro taped onto a light ball with a bell in it -or attached to the ball. In this way, the child will learn about the projection of the ball as well as learning how to control his hit in determining the power and direction in which the ball will go. The visually impaired student may also use a slow motion ball or large whiffle ball and oversize plastic bat. A ball can be rolled on table or the floor. A large bell or several small bells placed inside a large whiffle ball will make an excellent rolling target.

Running

Partners can provide safe assistance in running. They may hold hands, use brush contact (keep touching hand or forearm to hand, wrist or any part of the arm) or visually impaired student and guide runner each hold the end or loop of a flexible piece of material, (they may also have the loop go over the guide's right wrist and the visually impaired student's left wrist). A visually impaired runner may be able to run to a "caller" for a short run. A student can also run by himself by holding onto a rope stretched out between two points. Provide a warning signal about 8 feet from the end. If tape is wrapped around the rope, the student can quickly turn at that point and continue a shuttle run.

Swimming

When swimming the front crawl along the side of the pool, watch that the student doesn't bump his head against the wall. Teach him to use a delayed arm stroke as he anticipates the upcoming wall. Make the racing lane about 3 feet wide in order to give immediate input to the student about the direction of his stroke in relation to a straight line. When diving, have the student request an "all clear" signal before taking his dive.

Track and Field

Run tandem with a sighted guide (use brush or holding contact with a guide). In high jumping use a one-step approach; some visually impaired students may be able to take more than one step and be successful at clearing the bar. The hop, step, and jump and the long jump can be attempted from a standing start. Provide a sound source from the direction you want the student to move. The discus and shot-put require the use of a sound clue (clap, beeper, or counting) from the direction you want the object released. Some visually impaired students may not need any modification, some may need a visual cue to see the jump board or the bar.

Wrestling

Use a hand touch start. Whenever body contact is lost, start again in the stance position with the hand touch.

Popular Team Sports

Although the actual game of most team sports can be quite difficult for total involvement of a visually impaired student, most of the fundamental skills of each sport can easily be taught to the student and then modified games played. The game should not be changed so much that it no longer resembles the intended game. More focus on the basic skills of the sport not only benefits the visually impaired

child but also helps improve the sighted child 's skills. Try to find the best position for the visually impaired student to play or the part of the game to become involved.

Basketball

Focus on dribbling skills. Visually impaired children can become very skilled at dribbling a ball in different directions and while supported on different body parts.

Make up short ball-handling and dribbling routines.

During free throws, help position student at free throw line and give a clapping sound clue while standing directly under the basket. With some exploration of trial and error, the student will learn at what angle he must release the ball in order to make a basket. If needed, tap the rim with the ball once or twice. If needed, protect the student from a rebound.

A beeper could be placed at the back rim of the basket and the student could locate the sound source to shoot his basket.

A small carpet square could be stuck to the free throw line and the student could dribble around the court. When he gets to the carpet square, he would then turn to the sound source and shoot.

When playing with a partner or group, be sure to warn the blind student of an upcoming pass. For example, "Hey, Todd ", (get attention), (pause) "Catch" , (then pass the ball).

When passing the ball, the use of a bounce pass gives additional warning.

Visually impaired students can be "special foul shooters."

Baseball/ Softball

Practice hitting a ball off of a tee or from a suspended rope. First use the hand and then practice with a bat.

Playing in the field could be extremely hazardous. A visually impaired student may be able to play the field especially with a good buddy.

A good choice is to be a designated hitter for both teams. Use of foam balls or wiffle balls and a rubber or plastic bat can provide a much safer environment and the game could also be played indoor. Be a designated batter for both teams . Bat off tee if needed, run to the foul side of first if needed. Run with a partner. The partner is on the inside. Get behind the partner or buddy if on third.

Kickball

Run bases with a sighted guide. Avoid having someone else run for the blind child. He needs the running activity.

Kick at a stationary ball if needed. Be a designated kicker for both teams .

A visually impaired student can learn to deliver the ball in a good underhand pitch while the catcher gives him a sound clue. Have defensive player to the side and several feet closer than visually impaired pitcher.

Soccer

If needed a beep soccer ball is available. Use a box about 1-foot square. The child can hear where the box is sliding to; when the sound stops, so has the movement of the box. The child can easily locate the box and kick it again.

A milk carton with bells in it is also a fun item to kick and track. Keep away games can easily be made up with a partner or small group teams.

A tin can with pebbles in it could be utilized when playing outside on an asphalt or concrete surface.

A visually impaired student may be able to play defense by himself, or with a partner side by side, or put the ball into play for both teams, corner kick or take penalty kicks.

Hockey

Make use of the same hitting items as in soccer.

Allow the visually impaired student to use the goalies wider and flatter stick (greater surface area will aid the student in finding the puck or ball).

Volleyball

Practice lead-up skills of volleying with the use of a large, heavy balloon. The slower speed of the balloon gives the partially sighted student a better chance to track the balloon.

This activity could provide more success for sighted children, also.

Modified games could be played with a sponge ball or nerf ball, beach ball or large balloon. Visually impaired players may stay up close to the net or may be able to do everything under ideal or good conditions. Visually impaired students can be a designated server. The team gets their regular serves in addition to the designated serve. A totally blind student should be given a chance to learn all the striking fundamentals with a good toss and a strike command.

Suggested Physical Activities

1. Walking - with a partner - over grass, cement and blacktop, gravel, sand and dirt, uphill downhill, up and down stairs, over rocky terrain, over logs or other obstacles, and terrain which includes bumps and holes. .
2. Jogging - slowly and holding hands with aide.
3. Running - short - while holding hands.
4. Hopping - approximately 60 seconds - try on one foot.

5. Jumping - stand and jump as far as one can.
6. Leaping - take several steps and jump (safe place, probably on mats)
7. Run in place.
8. Skip - with partner (a hop on one foot and a step forward on the other).
9. Slide - quickly take several steps sideways - left and right (with partner).
10. Gallop - a walk/run with same foot leading, back foot is brought up to, but not past the front foot on each gallop (with partner).

On Mats

1. Log roll - flat on back, arms up and roll over and over and over (sideways).
2. Crab walk - sit down, raise up on hands and feet and walk backward, forward and sideways.
3. Bear walk - on hands and feet - stiff - move right arm and right leg, then left arm and left leg.
4. Duck walk - squat - place hands on knees - waddle and quack
5. Seal walk - hands on floor - extend legs backward - walk forward dragging the legs.
6. Inch worm - on hands and feet walk the feet towards the hands then walk the hands forward to stretch out again.
7. Walrus walk - same as seal - point fingers out and move forward by moving both hands forward at same time.

Bouncing, Striking, Throwing

1. Bounce ball and catch -or two hand dribble (sit by table or on floor).
2. Throw to partner and catch (bounce ball to partner).
3. Throwing at object - knock down wastebasket -- hit the door, wall, knock down cartons, etc.
4. Throwing into an object - wastebasket against the wall-- into a large hopper, etc. Move back and forth and try to toss into the target.
5. Bowling or rolling a ball into a goal (change size. of goal and distance), roll down cartons, etc.
6. Strike a ball (puck, etc.) into a goal with a broom, hockey stick, etc. (change size of goal, distance).

7. Batting - from floor - place ball - bat it - try to reach wall. Bat a rolling ball, bat a tossed beach ball or other large, lightweight, slow moving ball.
8. Distance - throw ball to wall from as far away as possible.
9. Punching bag - suspend a balloon and tap it, tie or hold string with hand and punch.
10. Place medicine ball, rolled mat or other suitable item and punch it, karate chop.
11. Create a shuffleboard - sit on floor and slide objects or sit by table and slide objects across.
12. Expose to the various skills that are developed in a physical education class modification may be needed).
13. Try to develop skills that will be needed to participate in games. For example, tossing or striking a ball-to-serve in volleyball/newcomb, kicking a ball for kickball, batting off a tee for softball/whiffle ball.
14. Adapt - play tennis (or pickle ball) with a larger or sound ball on the floor (no net). Play ping pong with same ball on a table without a net. Play badminton with large

Activities for VI Students

- Bounce or throw a ball with 2 hands to a buddy or against a wall or into a low basket.
- Roll a ball and knock down pins/cartons (set up with a ball behind them to retrieve the pins easier and to hear the pins fall over).
- Play floor hockey and use a sound device (radio/beeper) at the goal.
- Bat a round a rolling beach ball or other large ball (tap it, punch it or kick it).
- Play bean bag toss and place a sound cue in the target

Adapted Basketball

- Focus on dribbling skills
- Bounce the ball back and forth
- During free throws, give the student a tactual line on the floor for the free throw line and place a sound cue or have another person stand directly under the net and clap to act as a sound source.

Adapting Gymnastics

- Orient the student to the equipment and let her feel each piece of equipment.
- For mat work:

- log roll (lay with back on mat and stretch arms and legs out straight and roll to the left then to the right).
- crab walk (sit down and place hands behind you with fingers pointing away from your body and raise your bottom off the floor. Walk forward and backward and sideways).
- inch worm (lay on the mat face down and pull your knees forward then reach your arms forward towards the top of the mat, repeat).

Adapting Volleyball

- Have the student 1st practice volleying a large, heavy balloon. The slower speed of the balloon gives the student a better chance to hit the ball.
- The student should be allowed to stand close to the net or be a designated server.

Adapting Hockey

- Let the student use the (wider) goalie stick as their own so that they have more surface area to hit the puck/ball.
- Attach the beeper to the puck with Velcro or tape.

Balance Beam Activities

A regular low balance beam or long narrow 6" to 12 " wide rectangular board supported by two bases, probably several inches high .

- Child learns to walk forward and backward across balance beam by placing one foot in front of the other.
- To walk sideways on beam.
- To crawl across.
- To scoot across (sit down and push self across with arms).
- To walk across with one foot on and one foot off balance beam.
- To straddle balance beam (walk with balance beam between legs with both feet on floor).
- To walk up balance beam used as an inclined plane (one end of beam supported by a box).
- To walk down balance beam used as an inclined plane.

If needed use a strip of rug or carpet, a flat board on the floor - several pieces of carpet for a step on stones effect.

Activities for the Development of Visual Skills

By Angelo Montagnino

Children develop most of the visual skills necessary for play, future recreation and athletics before the age of four. Many visually impaired children do not develop these skills adequately. The special education classroom the physical education class, the recreation facility and the home can all be a source of opportunities to develop these skills through a variety of play activities that are fun. Playing cooperatively, rather than competing, is the main idea. Activities should be adjusted so every child experiences success.

TRACKING

Tracking skills are needed to succeed in activities that involve reacting to moving objects or people. Children should learn to follow a moving object or person with their eyes horizontally, vertically and as they progress even circularly. Possible activities to develop tracking are as follows.

COAL BALL - Stand child with his/her back to a wall and roll a large ball (beach ball or other large colorful ball) towards the wall. Angle it to the left or right of the child. The child tries to move left or right to catch or stop the ball before it touches the wall. The adult or a large box could be the goal for the child to roll at. Slowly move left or right (or move the goal) as the child gets ready to roll the ball.

TETHER BALL - Hang from the ceiling, a large balloon, balloon in a sack, beach ball or other soft, light weight, very visible ball. String, cord, or a combination of string/cord and a long elastic band attached to the mouthpiece end of balloon etc., could be used to suspend the "ball" about chest level. Tap it back and forth with a partner, with several people making a circle around the balloon (about 6 to 9 foot diameter) strike it left, right, or straight ahead, pass the ball around the circle by shoving or tapping it to the person on your right then pass it to the left.

BALLOON KEEP UP - Keep tapping the balloon into the air as long as possible, alternate tapping with a friend alternate using other body parts - tap with hand, then head, hand, knee, hand, shoulder, knee or blow on it to get it up or keep it moving, kick it up etc. Walk, or run to a destination while tapping. Try to keep it from touching a wall or furniture.

BALLOON BADMINTON - Use hands or a large light weight mesh racquet and bat a balloon back and forth over a low net or two tables placed end to end. Balloon can be played if it bounces off the table.

FISHY CATCH THE BAIT - Attach a string or cord of about 3 feet in length to a smooth pole or yardstick. Tie 3 "bait" to the end of the string. The "bait" could be a small whiffle ball or large marshmallow etc. Swing the bait slowly in a circle at face level, back and forth, or side to side. Increase or decrease speed and area of swing but decrease both if needed for success. Size of baits can also provide for challenge or success. Fishes can even try to use mouth instead of hands to catch the bait (if edible).

STOP THE TENNIS GAME - Sit or stand the child facing the middle of a 6 to 10 foot long table. This could also be done on the floor. Two people tap a whiffle (or other ball), or roll it back and forth. The

child follows the ball back and forth with eyes and when someone says stop extends arms or hand to stop the ball. The child can take a turn at rolling and tapping it and could play without the "stopper". Game has become a rolling table tennis.

ANIMAL WATCH - One or more fish in a bowl or small aquarium can provide an excellent tracking experience. Find the fish, point to it, follow with finger as it swims. Following the movements of small pet or classroom animals such as white mice, hamsters or gerbils also provides good "up close" tracking.

SCANNING

Scanning is the ability to visually search for objects. Good scanning requires an increased visual attention span and the ability to shift glance effectively.

BUILDERS AND BULLDOZERS - Scatter small pins (bowling), cones, cartons, etc. around a room. They should all be standing. One or more children are bulldozers and at the signal to go, they travel around and knock down any pins standing. Two or more children (there should be more than the number of bulldozers) serve as builders and they try to stand up any pins that are knocked down. Stop! Standing or knocked over pins could be counted, then change some of the builders and the bulldozers and play another round.

? HUNT ? - Could be peanut, penny, candy, colored or plastic eggs, etc. Scatter or partially hide the items and the search is on.

MUSICAL MATS - Scatter small sitting mats or pieces of rug, bases, taped squares, etc. Either stand or sit on the object or roam around and when the music stops, or a signal to sit or change is given, move quickly to a different object (if already) sitting or if moving quickly find a "mat" and sit/stand. The number of mats could be the same or fewer than the number of people.

FLY AWAY - Blow up balloons and at signal let a go so escaping air propels the balloon into the air. Find the balloon and try again. This can be played with paper airplanes or straws wrapped in paper (tear off one end blow the paper into the air).

SPOT TAG - The game is played in a darkened room. One child at a time will face a blank wall and will look for a spot. With a flashlight, activate and shine a spot somewhere on the wall. The child has to try to find and tag the spot. Give the next child a turn.

CLEAN YOUR HOUSE - Divide a large room or yard in half. Scatter soft, safe lightweight objects (nerfballs, foam discs, cloth objects, beach balls, etc.) At the signal go, toss, roll, kick all objects to the other side. Anyone on the other side is doing the same to you. At the signal stop, look to see if your house is clean. Even up the objects and try again.

VISUAL MOTOR INTEGRATION -

This is the ability to imitate or copy what is seen.

WILDERNESS TRAIL - Make a trail using gym floor tape or even masking tape. This tape trail can go not only on the floor but over benches or other objects, under tables or other objects, around things, up or down wedge mats, etc. Begin to follow the trail by crawling,

CAR - Make a road on the floor with tape (one or 2 strips wide) make curves and lots of right angle turns. Play houses or boxes can represent home, school, store, etc. Each child has a small toy car to push along the road. Make up destinations and stay on the road.

FLASHLIGHT TAG - In a dark room have the children facing a blank wall. One 1)), one have the children chase the spot or light shining on the wall (this is done with a strong flashlight) and touch it. Slow down if needed. Using two flashlights have a child chase your spot with his/her spot. Let the child catch you.

VISUAL DISCRIMINATION

Visual discrimination is the ability to see how things are similar or different. This includes learning to see differences and similarities between objects, pictures, shapes, colors, sizes, and to learn to sort and match.

FRONT-BACK - Using a deck of cards place cards on a table some up some facing down. Have child help turn them all upside down.

RED CARD-BLACK CARD - Scatter cards face up on a table or the floor ask for one or a few or all the red cards. With some red and black cards showing, ask- for one or more black cards. **BIG**

BUTTON LITTLE BUTTON or BIG COIN LITTLE COIN - Using a large container and a small container have the child examine the buttons on a table (half are large, half are small). The game is to put all the little buttons in the little container or jar and all the big buttons in the big jar or container. The game can be played with dimes and nickels or dimes and quarters.

BIG TOY-LITTLE TOY - Show what a big toy is and what a little toy is. If more than one child -take turns finding a big toy and bring to a designated place. Take turns finding a little toy and bring to a designated place. Name all the little toys as the teacher points to each one and do the same with the big toys.

MATCH AND SORT - Invent a variety of games using different size/shape uncooked macaroni. dry beans, crayons, nuts in shells, wins, etc. They could all be on a table or in a large bowl. Choose one and ask the child to find another that is the same. Find all the coins, find all the macaroni or separate different macaroni into matching groups etc.

EYE MIND COORDINATION

This is the ability to visually guide your own movements. Activities requiring reaching for and grasping, placing items, throwing, tossing, or any other targeting play involving pushing, shoving, or rolling objects and of course catching or striking use eye hand coordination. Eye foot coordination falls in this category and is needed in simple tasks such as walking, running, turning jumping, stepping and kicking.

BOWLING AND PIN DOWN - Place several light weight PINS, milk cartons, etc. 4 to 6 feet from the child. possibly space them several feet apart or place together as in bowling. Roll a large ball (even a beach ball) and knock down the pins. Try to spread them and knock down one at a time. This can be done on the floor or a table.

BEAN BAG TOSS - Place a cardboard box or suspend several aluminum pie plates (low) or place them against a wall. Toss bean bags at the targets. If needed position child only a few feet from target.

SHUTTLE RELAY - Place any small but easy to see objects about a foot from a wall. Make a visible tape line about eight feet from the wall. Position students so they can see a demonstration of running from the line to an object pick it up and run back to put it on the line and repeat till all the objects are on the line. One person does this as everyone cheers or gives encouragement.

WIGGLE ROPE - Take an 8 to 10 foot piece of rope, plastic jump rope, etc. and while holding one end wiggle it around the room. Children can pretend they are trying to catch a long worm or a snake and try to capture it by grabbing the rope. The children can pretend the worm or snake may bite, so they have to step on it.

FIT IT IN - Put some long thin objects small no point pencils, straws, paper clips, etc. into a flat box or on a table. Children try to pick up one at a time and put into a tall narrow mouth jar or bottle. Give help if needed.

KICK A GOAL - Place a large, soft ball several feet from a large box or barrel - possibly turn box on side and try to kick the ball so it strikes or goes in.

KICK BACK AND FORTH - Try to kick a large, soft ball back and forth with a partner.

BOUNCE CATCH - Toss back and forth a large, soft ball (air filled plastic or beach ball). Players are several feet to eight feet apart and the ball is tossed underhand and bounces one or more times before being caught.

STEP OVER THE WORMS - Cut several pieces of rope or visible thick yarn and pretend they are large worms or snakes. Place the worms on the floor two or three feet apart and have children walk over the worms without stepping on them.

STEP OVER OR JUMP OVER - Pretend empty milk cartons, pieces of foam, etc. are bricks and build a series of low walls, depending on abilities one, two or three bricks high. Take turns stepping or jumping over the walls. Give assistance where needed and remind children to look at each wall as they walk to it and step or jump.

CROSS THE STREAM - Place small mats, pieces of nonslip rugs or tape squares on the floor, etc. place the pieces close enough for children to step from one to another but not in a straight line. Lots of pieces - all over in zig zag fashion would be good.

Pretend these are rocks in the water and to cross over they have to step on the rocks. Change the game and pretend they are hot rocks and we are barefoot and need to hurry across this stretch of sand and rocks without stepping on the rocks.

BALLOON RELAY - Form a circle and pass an inflated balloon around the circle using hand or head to tap it. Each child can tap it several times if needed. An adult on the outside of the circle can help to bring it back in (tap) if needed. if possible, tap the balloon around the circle more than once.

PARTNER BALLOON KEEP UP - Two children use one inflated balloon and tap it back and forth as many times as possible without it touching the floor.

Adapting Play

by Angelo Montagnino

Enhance the play environment for a visually impaired or blind child by structuring play activities that encourage exploring and learning about the world through touching, listening, tasting, smelling, and seeing. Size, color, and distance of objects are extremely important for the child who has very limited vision. The amount and direction of light can be vital.

Use sound cues, voice, or musical toys to help orient the child during play. Provide a variety of objects and toys with interesting textures, sounds, and odors. Balls, rattles, musical toys, toys that make noise, nesting toys, stacking toys, snap together toys, large piece puzzles, brightly colored, shiny, textured toys, and toys of varied textures and colors can be super for blind children.

Try to present toys at or above chest level to encourage good posture.

Help the child learn that a toy or object exists even when out of reach or out of sight. Encourage the child to search and find a dropped or lost toy. Teach the child to listen and "look" with hands in the direction of the last sound and to examine an area.

MOBILES

Add color, add sound, tie small bells or other sound producers to a mobile and guide the child's hand or foot to demonstrate how to find the mobile and how to produce a sound.

PULL THE TOY

Tie a string to a sound-making toy or a toy with a bell attached. Place it on the floor or at a table near the child and help the child pull the toy nearer.

REACH FOR THE TOY

Same as Pull the Toy but pull in front of and slowly away. Encourage the child to reach for the toy. The toy can be held and slowly moved at head level or above.

WHERE IS THE TOY?

Using a rattle or visible toy, move the toy to the left, right, or all over. Encourage the child to reach for it, grasp it, and play with it. This can be done with two toys. Move or shake one, then repeat with another in a different spot. Ask, "Where is the...?" End with "Here it is!" The game can be played with people—"Where is Joey?" "Here I am!"

BODY PARTS

Point to or touch and name various body parts of the child's body. Say the names, as they are touched and have the child touch the part also. Ask the child to touch body parts as they are said or ask to point to or touch your nose, ear, etc. Have the child choose and identify body parts. Play Say or Show Which Body Part...hears, eats, sees, walks, etc. Play Move Your...foot, hand, arm, fingers, head, etc.

HIDE AND SEEK GAMES

Hide toys or objects very near to the child. They can be on a table under a cloth, in an open box or open paper sack, in or under your hand, under the table, or behind an object. If hiding a person, let part of the person be showing. Have the child hide an object or him/herself. Hide an item that makes noise such as a small radio, kitchen timer, music box, metronome, etc., or easy to see colored items or shapes that stand out.

ROLLING GAMES

Children love to roll down, across and over things. Wedge mats, small grassy hills, a rug, a created slope such as a mat or large piece of cardboard with objects under one end can be used. Rolling up and over or climbing on and rolling down a folded carpet or cylinder mat can be fun and a good learning experience.

If the child needs help, start him on his back, tuck chin to chest, stretch right arm over his head, bend left knee, and give a little push at the hip and roll him. Try another roll with less help. Reverse the process and roll in the opposite direction. Roll from one side of the room or mat to the other. Roll under tables and over different items and textures. Roll to a sound.

CLIMB THE MOUNTAIN

Create a ramp by slanting a mattress off the side of a bed, low table, couch, etc. You may need extra support under the mattress to keep it from sagging. Other materials such as empty boxes, folded rugs, foam scraps, cushions, etc. can be used to build up this mountain or whatever you want it to be.

Help the child examine the mountain, including the very top and the area at the bottom. Crawl up and down, climb down backwards or feet first in a sitting position, or carefully roll down. If needed, keep hands on the child. Later, this mountain concept can become part of a fun obstacle course.

BOWL WITH YOUR BODY

Place cartons, plastic pins, or other soft lightweight targets near the bottom of a hill, your created slope, or on the floor. Make targets visible or tap on them or provide a sound over or behind them. The child can roll down or across and knock down the targets.

STACKING, BUILDING, NESTING GAMES

Build houses, forts, towers, castles, bridges, etc. Invent put in and take out games. Reinforce by encouraging tactile (touching) exploration and if needed, assist by guiding his hands over the objects available for play. Colorful objects with a variety of shapes should be provided.

BALL ACTIVITIES

Balls with rattling beads or bells inside are ideal for early exploration of what a ball is and what it does. This can begin with mobile play. Squeeze one or more bells into a whiffle ball or attach a bell to a soft ball or to the string that suspends the whiffle ball, sturdy balloon or mini beach ball and encourage or show how to push it, open hand strike it, or kick it.

A "bell ball" could be rolled around the tray of a high chair or a tabletop. The child can learn to push it, pick it up, drop it, see or hear it fall to the table or floor. An easy-to-see ball could be used with a child who has vision.

BASIC BALL CONCEPTS

A child can learn to play "catch" by rolling a large ball back and forth with an adult. It may be necessary to have someone behind the child to show how to push the ball away and how to receive it. This can be done on the floor or at a table. When the child can receive the ball by himself, try adding one or more soft bounces as the ball is gently tossed or rolled. Show how to drop and catch the ball on a bounce or just bounce the ball with two hands or if possible one hand.

Eventually, this will become stand up and catch on a bounce or catch the ball tossed onto the palms.

BASKETBALL

The basket could be a box, wastepaper basket, etc. and the ball could be large or small or any object. It could be a beanbag. Show how to drop the ball into the basket. Keeping the basket near to the child, move it from in front of him to his left and right. Encourage him to have his arm cross midline (right arm crosses over to left side and vice versa) to drop the ball in. Gradually move the basket away from the child so the ball will have to be tossed into the basket. Eventually the basket will be placed higher.

KICKING

First attempts at kicking may be best done from a sitting position. Use a low chair and a large ball. Have the child kick to a person. Gradually, the person will back up and ask the child to "Kick it all the way to me." The child may need help with the kicking action. If so, hold his foot and lower leg and guide the leg swing and kick. For a standing kick or a walk up kick, the child may need to hold hands or hold a chair for balance.

KICK TO A PERSON OR TARGET

Stand and kick to a person. Then have the person or target move back or to the left or right. Gradually increase distance. Try kicking a ball that is being rolled to you from the front, from the side. Try to kick as far as you can. The child may have to lean on a sturdy object or hold hands.

RAMP BOWLING

Create a ramp with a large piece of cardboard, plywood, old shelf board, etc. Have fun placing a ball at the top of this slanted board and letting it roll down. Stand up milk cartons, shoeboxes, plastic pins at the bottom and aim the ball at them. Have the child help place the targets.

FLOOR OR TABLE BOWLING

Create an alley or lane by placing boards, broomsticks, boxes on the floor or a table making two straight lines. The lane can be as wide or narrow as needed. Arrange plastic pins or milk cartons, etc., as the targets on one end of the lane. Roll a ball down the lane to knock down as many pins as possible. Make "pins" visible or help with sound.

TETHERBALL

Can be played sitting or standing. Tie or attach a balloon, small beach ball, or lightweight ball to a string or cord and suspend it in front of the child about chin level. Show how to push or strike the ball back and forth to each other.

Possibly use lightweight plastic mesh paddles, cardboard flaps, or tubes from wrapping paper to bat the tetherball back and forth.

PARACHUTE BOUNCE

A small four- to six-foot parachute would be great but an old blanket or sheet will do. All players make a circle around the "chute" and hold the edges. For only three or so players, use a very small blanket or large towel. Place one or more foam balls, balloons, small beach balls, etc., on the chute, lift the chute up and down at the same time and have fun bouncing the ball or balls up and down. See how long the balls stay on. Try to bounce them as high as possible and keep them on.

PASS THE BALL GAMES

All players sit or stand in a circle. The object of the game is to pass the ball around the circle, carefully handing the ball to the next person. A large lightweight, colorful, perhaps jingling ball should be used. A timer could be used to determine how many times the ball was passed around the entire circle. Try again to surpass the original total. Try passing the ball clockwise, then counter clockwise.

Pass the ball to music and have someone control the radio or tape deck. When the music stops, the person holding the ball has to stop. Begin passing when the music starts. Perhaps see who got "caught" the most or who never got "caught".

JUMP OFF

Stand the child on a piece of rug, pad, mat, etc. Have him feel the edge then stand and if help is needed, help the child jump forward, jumping off the surface. Start with feet on the edge or half off, if needed. The child may need hand support. Stand the child on a low obstacle, a phone book, block, or bottom step of a stairway and jump off.

HIGH HOPS

Hold hands with the child and encourage jumping up and down on both feet trying to jump higher and higher. Try hopping on one foot several times, then the other. Have one or two people hold a broomstick or small piece of rope. Have the child face the support, hold on with two hands and hop.

ANIMAL HOPS

Demonstrate how various animals hop, such as a frog, rabbit, kangaroo, and try to imitate. Have the "animals" hop to music.

HOP OVER

Place very low items such as horizontal milk cartons and hop over them. Give the child support if necessary. Tap the object or provide good color contrast.

FOLLOW THE LEADER - OBSTACLE COURSE

Play follow the leader and travel around obstacles: go under; climb over; go to a wall and turn left or right; step onto and off objects; jump over; go into and out of objects such as a big box; or go through a tunnel made of a long box or a blanket draped over two benches, etc. Be careful, help guide, if needed. Show where objects are or give sound cues, if needed. Use a wide variety of obstacles, such as old tires, tables, benches, boxes, a ladder on its side, etc.

MATERIALS

Almost everything can be used in a way to facilitate safe, enjoyable, beneficial play. Large blocks of styrofoam can be slabs of rock, building blocks, or part of a mountain. An old card table can be a crawl under obstacle or, with an old blanket, rug, etc., draped over it, a tunnel, cave, or wigwam is created. A small cardboard box can be a car, bus, or train. A huge box can be a clubhouse. Carpet sections, or a length of carpet can be a base, stepping-stones across a stream, or a "balance beam." A laundry basket or medium-sized cardboard box can be used to step in, sit on, toss objects in, or get in and be pushed. An old, even bent hula-hoop can be an obstacle to walk around, step in, or jump into and out of, or be passed over the entire body, head to feet, or feet to head, or person to person while holding hands.

A row of benches can be step or climb over hurdles. Old tires and inflated inner tubes can be walked on, stepped into, rolled, stacked, climbed on or through, and of course, jumped on or off.

Beach balls can be kickballs or volleyballs. Large whiffle balls can be table tennis balls. Balloons can be badminton shuttlecocks or tether balls.

A rolled-up blanket can be climbed on or rolled over. Pieces of foam used for filling cushions and sofas can be cut into Frisbee saucers of all sizes or be shoved into sacks or old pillowcases to be used as jump on or jump into pads.

Orientation and Mobility: Preschool Style

By Cecelia Quintana, COMS

Orientation and Mobility is broadly defined as the ability to move safely and efficiently through any environment. At the adult level, this translates into the ability to independently cross streets, to use public transit systems, to go to work, to go shopping, etc. At the preschool level, students need to develop the concepts and skills which make the above mentioned goals attainable later in life.

Several areas of skill development should be included in a preschool O&M program. All individuals should incorporate these skills into the child's daily routine. This allows everyone to be actively involved in the child's growth and development. Parents, caregivers, teachers, related service personnel, as well as Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists will be working on the same, common goal. The ultimate goal of the program is to develop a child into a skilled, age-appropriate traveler who understands basic concepts and can begin to apply learned skills to perform more complex tasks.

Below is a list of skill areas considered to be best practice. These areas should be incorporated into an early childhood O&M program.

- Improve use of visual skills
- Improve use of auditory skills
- Improve use of tactile skills
- Begin learning spatial concepts
- Begin learning environmental concepts
- Improve use of gross motor skills
- Improve use of fine motor skills
- Beginning use of clues and landmarks
- Sighted guide techniques
- Beginning cane techniques
- Limited travel in residential areas

Only a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist should teach the last four items on the above list. Anyone who works with a child with visual impairment is encouraged to incorporate the rest of the skill areas into the child's routine. The following pages are a few games that encourage development of visual, auditory or tactile skills and/or introduce spatial, body, or environmental concepts. Please feel free to use these games as they are, or as a springboard for inventing games of your own. More games will be added as they are invented.

We're On the Move!

O&M Games for the Very Young Child

Presented by
Linda Lyle, M.A. Cecelia Quintana, M.A., COMS
AER International Conference July 14-19, 2000 Denver, CO

Download an RTF version of the games (for printing) - o&m.rtf (257k)

Twins

Skill(s) Targeted:

Visual scanning

What you will need:

- Large squares of brightly colored material (approx. 10 X 10)
- Index cards

To set up:

Determine what positional concepts will be targeted. In the following example we will use, "On" versus "Under". On the index cards write "Find my twin _____". In the blank write things like: "on the desk," "under the chair," "on the shelf", etc. In the door of the room place one piece of material. In the room place the material wherever specified on the card.

How to play the game:

In the door of the room, the student will find the material, and the teacher will read the card to them. They will then visually search the room for the matching material and retrieve it.

Modifications:

For more advanced students, place 2 pieces of the matching material in the room, only one of which is in the proper place. For example, place a piece of material both on and under the chair and they are supposed to determine which one they should take, and which one they should leave.

- Find my twin - Under a chair
- Find my twin - On a chair
- Find my twin - On a desk
- Find my twin - Under a desk
- Find my twin - On a shelf
- Find my twin - Under a window

All of Me

Concept(s) Targeted:

Body Awareness, concept development of orientation words

Ideas:

Body part identification

- Even while your child is very young, you can begin to help him/her become more aware of his/her own body. Children develop this skill in a specific order: his/her nose, another person's nose, a doll or stuffed animal's nose.
- When naming body parts, put your child's name in front of the word. Sherri's nose.
- Touch various parts of your child's body with different textured fabrics or a feather and name them as you do. Let your child do the same to you.
- Play finger and toe games like "This Little Piggy", "Do Your Ears Hang Low" "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes".
- Use a mirror to see your hair, your nose, your eyes, etc.

Adaptations:

- For older child: place a sticker on a body part and let child name it as she pulls the sticker off.
- Use hand puppets to find body parts.
- As child master's body parts on a doll, you can increase the complexity of the task while still reinforcing the identification of body parts. You can ask your child to feed the baby and then wash her face. You can play silly games where you try to feed the baby by putting the bottle in her ear and letting your child correct you.

Positional words

- Just as a child learns her own body parts first, a child first learns about positions (up, under, etc.) in relationship to her own body. It is not possible to give a child too much practice in this area.
- Very young child: Use positional words frequently. "Let's put your sleeper on." "Let's take it off."

Early games:

- peek-a-boo
- Where's the _____? Name a toy in sight and let child reach for it. "Oh, it's beside your leg." or "It's on your shoe."
- Where is Thumbkin?"
- In/Out games: Give child a small container with several objects in it that can be removed. Child will move from dumping to removing one by one. Use out/in often so child will understand the concept.

- Nesting toys; pots and pans; plastic storage containers all help a child begin to understand positional words relative to something other than his/her own body.
- As child grows, toys can be hidden under, over, behind, etc. and a game of hide and seek established. Early successes will probably require that the child's body be the location for hiding under, etc. As the task becomes easy for the child, the toy can then be hidden under an object very close to the child and then, with success, further away.
- The toddler: Once a child begins to crawl and walk, they enjoy putting their own bodies in relationship to other objects. They like to climb on, in, through, around, behind, etc. It is important to continue commenting on the positional relationships that occur between the child and his/her environment. "You're climbing in the box." "The box is around you." "I can't see you. You must be behind the box."

Games:

- Hide and Seek
- "Where's the Thimble" (revisited)
- Looking for objects that have been hidden in the beans, inside play dough, picking chocolate chips or small pieces of candy out of cookie dough.
- Peek-a-boo with a sheet/blanket that covers the whole body

Once a child is truly a confident walker, they are ready to start following simple instructions that require them to move throughout familiar areas.

A simple way to get practice in for a child with some useable vision, is to place preferred toys within sight but just out of reach. This helps strengthen distance vision as well as gives a child an opportunity to begin to use positional words him/herself.

- You can send your child to get a diaper (in a familiar location) or send him/her for shoes that are "under Daddy's chair". This builds independence and continues to provide relevant experience for practicing positional concepts.
- Obstacle courses
- Swing set
- Trampoline
- Follow the String
- Use hand puppets to tell stories filled with positional concepts. (ex: The puppet can hide behind the box and jump out to startle everyone.)
- Ring around the Rosie
- Simon Says
- Big Ball Fun

From Linda Lyle ©

Balloon Bells

Skill(s) Targeted:

Auditory Localization

What you will need:

- 10 - 12 medium-sized balloons
- 5 - 6 small jingle bells
- 10 - 12 pipe cleaners or long twist ties
- String

To set up:

In order to play this game, your ceiling must have some aspect that will allow you to hang the balloons from it. If you have the standard dropped ceiling with the metal runners and the foam-like tiles, the set-up will be easy. Take the pipe cleaners or twist ties and insert them between a tile and the runner, leaving a small loop that a string can fit through. I like to space them about 3-5 feet apart, and 2 balloons to a small room. Insert a small jingle bell in half of the balloons, and inflate all the balloons. Tie a long piece of string to all balloons, run the string through the ceiling loops and pull the string so that the balloon is hanging just below the ceiling. Make sure that one balloon of each pair has a bell, and the other does not have a bell. If there will be other people using the rooms before or between sessions, tape the strings up high on the nearest wall.

How to play the game:

The object of this game is to have the student pull both strings at the same time and be able to tell you which balloon has the bell in it.

Modifications:

If it is too difficult for the student to tell which one has the bell, then have them pull the strings one at a time.

From Cecelia Quintana ©

Find the Timer

Skill(s) Targeted:

Auditory Localization

What you will need:

- One or two kitchen timers that make a ticking sound
- A number of small toys (Optional)

To set up:

Place a number of small toys in various places around your building.

How to play the game:

The object of this game is to have the student find the timer, and thus the accompanying toy. This works best if you have 2 timers, and several different rooms in which to work. Turn on the timer and place it on or next to the small toy. The student must listen for the ticking sound to find the timer and the toy. If you have 2 timers, you may hide the second timer while the child is distracted by looking for the first timer.

Modifications:

If your building is too noisy for a timer to be heard, you may wish to try a metronome, a very small radio or some other sound source. You may also wish to try something such as a talking teddy, so that they have to call out to the teddy and it will echo back the child's voice (which it just recorded). Another option may be one of those gadgets that chirps or beeps when you clap your hands.

From Cecelia Quintana

Alligator Bridge

Concept(s) Targeted:

Auditory localization

What you will need:

- Aluminum foil (18-inch-wide best) or other sound-making surface
- Blindfold
- Sound source (such as a rattle, bells, whistle, etc.)

To set up:

Place several pieces of the aluminum foil on the ground to make a path, which includes several changes of direction.

How to play the game:

One child is chosen to be blindfolded. To set the scene, tell the child who is wearing the blindfold that s/he is returning home after dark, and their only flashlight just broke. Now s/he needs to follow the bridge that goes through the bog (the path of aluminum foil is the bridge) without being able to see it. Although many alligators live in the bog, they will only bother someone if they put one or more feet completely off the bridge. It is completely dark outside, and their only clue for making their way across the bridge is a sound source that leads them in the right direction. The person with the sound source should position himself about 3-4 feet ahead of the child with the blindfold and in such a position that walking directly toward that person will keep the child on the bridge. The teacher and/or the students then sing or chant the following words, which allows the sound-maker enough time to get to the correct position.

"The water's cold, so don't fall in, 'cause that is where the alligators swim."

After one recitation of the words, the child with the sound source makes a sound and the child with the blindfold walks forward directly toward the sound until he can touch it. The process is repeated until the child reaches the end of the "bridge".

Adaptations:

More challenging - You may wish to use 2 sound sources, one which always indicates the proper direction, and one which is always a "decoy", (perhaps it's an alligator who's hungry and trying to drum up some dinner!)

Comments/Suggestions:

This game works better with bare feet, so students can feel the foil as well as hear it.

To involve more students, plant "alligators" at various positions on both sides of the bridge to nip at (tickle) offending toes that may hang over the edge of the bridge.

From Cecelia Quintana

Squeaky Toy Tag

Skill(s) Targeted:

Auditory Localization

What you will need:

- Large, adult-sized sock for each player
- Squeaky toy for each player
- Blindfold for each player

To set up:

Find a large, open area with no furniture, and a level ground surface. If available, one or more large gym mats could be used for a playing surface.

How to play the game:

Two students are blindfolded. Prior to putting on the blindfold the students each put on one of the large socks with a squeaky toy inside positioned directly underneath the foot, so that each time he takes a step, the toy makes a squeak. (You may wish to let your students practice walking around like this before beginning the game.) You will need to have a referee who will help set up the game, signal the start of the game, and watch out for safety during the play of the game. To begin this game the referee will silently position the players somewhere around the edge of the playing area, facing inward. The players may choose to move their squeaky toy for a moment, or the players may choose to crawl to the new location. The referee will say "Start, and the game then progresses as would a normal game of Tag, with one person who is "It" trying to tag the other person. A "Stop" command must be issued when either of the players comes close the edge of the play area. At the signal, the players will freeze, and the referee will reposition the players at the edge of the playing area once again.

Depending on the ability level of the players, you may wish to have a signal that has the players switch roles; so that the player who was "It" is no longer chasing, but being chased.

From Cecelia Quintana ©

The Penny/Nickel Can

Skill(s) Targeted:

Auditory Discrimination/Localization

What you will need:

- A can and lid with a slit in the top
- A street with light to moderate traffic from 2 directions.
- A handful of pennies, and nickels
- A folding chair for each player
- 2 small containers such as margarine tubs

To set up:

Set up your chairs side-by-side on a sidewalk next to a street with light to moderate traffic. One player gets a small container with pennies and the other gets a small container with nickels.

How to play the game:

The players listen (and watch, if appropriate) for traffic coming from a specific direction. For example, the player on the right will listen for cars coming from the right, and the player on the left will listen for cars coming from the left. (You may wish to start using the words "northbound traffic," "eastbound traffic", etc. so that your students begin to hear these directional terms.) Each time a car comes by, a coin is dropped into the can. For example, if the student on the right has the nickels and is listening for cars coming from the right, then he will drop a nickel in the can each time a car from that direction passes by. And, of course, the student on the left will do the same with a penny for each car that comes from the left. After a specified amount of time has passed, the players return inside and can then enjoy separating the coins into their respective groups, and then determine whether there were more cars from the left, or from the right (or northbound vs. southbound).

Modifications:

To make this game a little more complex, you can set up at an intersection and target different concepts, such as: nickels on one street, pennies on the other; nickels for cars that stop, pennies for those that do not stop; nickels for cars that turn the corner, pennies for cars that go straight, etc. This game may also be done under blindfold, if the students are so inclined.

From Cecelia Quintana ©

Let's Get Movin' I

Concept(s) Targeted:

Tactile Stimulation

What you will need:

- large blanket or quilt on which you have sewn a variety of textures

How to play the game:

Remove baby's shoes and socks. Place baby on blanket so that arms and legs are able to come into contact with a variety of textures as baby moves.

Let baby explore on her own.

Occasionally comment, describing the texture she is exploring.

Follow her lead.

Adaptations:

Let baby explore while dressed only in a diaper.

Use blanket when working with baby on rolling.

Rub baby's body with different parts of the quilt, describing the activity with concept and comparison words (soft, rough, light).

On warm days, move blanket out under the trees so baby can enjoy outdoor play on her blanket.

Comments/Suggestions:

Blanket can be made in squares or strips that are sewn together. As baby grows, additional pieces can be sewn on to increase the blanket's size.

If baby shows a strong preference/dislike for certain textures, this can be reflected in the amount of texture on the blanket or in its pattern. For instance, a narrow piece of burlap can be sewn between two larger, more favored textures. In order to reach the preferred textures, baby must encounter the less preferred. The drive to reach a favored texture can be used to encourage touching a less favored one.

From Linda Lyle ©

Let's Get Movin' II

Concept(s) Targeted:

Tactile stimulation; independent moving and exploration

What you will need:

- A box, slightly larger in length than your child (Parents report that plastic boxes designed to hold Christmas decorations work very well, are inexpensive, and last longer than cardboard.)

To set up:

Fill the box about half full of uncooked pinto beans

How to play the game: Introduce beans to child slowly (ex: place her feet in them, or let her explore with her hands.) When she is comfortable, place the child on her back in the beans. Let her explore the way her body feels and the sounds that are made when she moves in this bean pool.

Like water, a child should never be left alone when playing in a bean pool.

Adaptations:

As the baby grows, small toys can be hidden in the beans; a child can learn to measure, pour, place things in and take out of containers while seated in the bean pool.

Substitute rice, bird seed, plastic balls, leaves for the beans.

From Linda Lyle ©

Let's Get Movin' III

Concept(s) Targeted:

Exploration, tactile stimulation

What you will need:

- A heavy piece of cloth (ribbon will do) 2-3 yards long and 1 inch wide (exact dimensions are not necessary);
- Sew a variety of textures onto this strip of cloth (feathers, velvet, pom-poms, ric-rac, bells, etc.) Sew them on well!
- Connect the textures so that there is a continuous flow of textured items along the strip.

To set up:

Place your baby in a position where he/she is well supported and is able to freely use her arms (a highchair with a tray works well).

How to play the game:

Stretch the strip across the tray so that your baby can touch the strip in front of her. With her hands on the strip, gently pull so that the strip moves slowly under her hands. Comment occasionally on the textures that get a response from her. Move the strip over, under, around her arms and hands.

Adaptations:

Vary the movement (sometimes pull, then stop and wait; see what she does with the fabric. Does she look for a favorite part? Does she reach for something on it that she wants? Do her fingers scratch, poke, etc.?)

Other long, narrow items can be used in the same way (ex: hose from the vacuum cleaner, belt, a piece of chain)

For children with some useable vision, consider the things they are able to see and incorporate them into the strip. Consider high contrasting colors (blue/yellow; black/white; red/yellow). For instance, sew red pom-poms onto a strip of bright yellow felt.

From Linda Lyle ©

Other Ways to Get Movin'

Concept(s) Targeted:

Tactile discrimination, exploration

Ideas:

Mobiles: What to use/Where to hang them

Very young infants lay with their heads turned to the side and one arm out. At this age, a mobile can be hung to the side and very low so that the child can use her vision to see the movement of the mobile. The very young child with some vision may notice the high contrast of black/white or black/white/red mobiles.

Over the course of 2-4 months, the mobile can be moved so that it is more directly over the baby's head. Again, placing it very low in the crib encourages vision use and will encourage early swiping at the mobile (early arm/hand use and mid-line play).

Adaptations:

Consider using reflective balls or beads (from a Christmas tree); high contrasting colors.

If you notice your baby has a preference for a certain color, use that color (along with others) as a way to attract her visual attention.

Look for a mobile that can be wound up to make music. The music can attract her attention as well. If the music component is above the mobile, it can usually be separated from the mobile when she outgrows the toy and a different kind of mobile can be used.

Wind chimes make good mobiles.

Real objects that your child will need to learn about make excellent mobile toys (ex: measuring spoons, an infant spoon and cup, a pacifier, a favorite rattle).

If your child notices light, you can wind a string of Christmas tree lights around the mobile to attract her attention.

Jungle gym toys

Many of these are commercially available and are not expensive. Before purchasing one, it is helpful to consider whether you will be able to adapt the toy in order to get the toys close enough to your child for successful play.

If not, it may be easier to make a frame. To make a jungle gym, you can use a piece of PVC pipe, to make a frame. Instructions can be found on page

Some parents have reported success using a heavy cardboard box. They have hung toys from the ceiling of the box and the baby lays on her back in the box for play.

Lilli Nielsen has designed a box called a Little Room that provides this type of play space as well.

Toys can be hung using pieces of elastic. As your baby becomes more skilled at reaching, she can hold a toy and the elastic permits her to pull the toy toward her for more exploration. When she lets go, it returns to its place and she can find it again (early object permanence).

Adaptations:

It is a good idea to vary your child's position when playing with these toys. In addition to her back, she can lie on her side, sit in her car seat or another seating system, and even play with them while on her stomach.

Keeping things close!

Pin interesting textures such as pieces of ribbon, bells to your child's shirt in the center front. Her little hands can begin exploring at mid-line as she plays with these toys.

Bright colored socks with a bell sewn on them can be used to encourage looking at feet as well as pulling legs up to reach with hands.

Hang a crib-safe mirror in your baby's crib and place her close enough to it that she can see herself.

Learning to like movement

Not all babies enjoy movement in the beginning. For some, the experience stresses their sensory system. For many, because of their low vision or blindness, they do not recognize the signs that they are about to be moved and are caught off-guard. This makes the experience frightening for them. For the baby who cries each time she is moved, the following may be helpful:

Give her information before any movement happens. Touch her body with your hands in the places where you touch her to pick her up. (Most babies appreciate a firm touch.) Tell her what you are going to do. Give her a few seconds to process the information. You will be surprised how quickly she learns that this touch means "up" and responds to it by shifting her body to say she is ready for the move.

Babies generally feel safer when moving in their parents' arms. Gentle rocking and swaying can be used in the early days to help her adjust to the feel of her body moving in space.

Other movement sources:

- Baby swing
- Vibrating baby seat
- Water bed (Never leave a child unattended on a waterbed).
- Baby hammock
- Swinging in a blanket held by two adults (6 months or older)
- A ride in the family car

From Linda Lyle ©

Tactile Signs

Skill(s) Targeted:

Environmental awareness, signs, tactile skills, fine motor skills

What you will need:

- 4-5 rooms where a small activity can be set up
- 4-5 small containers
- 4-5 activities which have several parts
- 4-5 materials of different texture
- Blindfold for each player
- Rubber cement or other removable adhesive

To set up:

Cut each of your pieces of material into 2 pieces. Affix one piece of material to the right side of the doorjamb, where a sign would be placed, or at about shoulder level for the little guys. (I have found that rubber cement is quick, easy to use, effective, and is easily removed from most surfaces including painted walls, paneling, and metal.) Place one part of an activity in that room. Affix the matching piece of material to the lid of one container. In that container, place the matching parts of the activity in that room.

For example:

- In the room place a shape sorter--in the container, place the shape pieces.
- In the room, there is a metal file cabinet--in the container, magnetic letters/numbers.

How to play the game:

The student travels to the door with whatever mode of travel is appropriate for him, then independently locates the piece of material. He then scans the lids of the containers to find the matching material. He is then taken or directed to the area where the activity is set up, and completes the task.

From Cecelia Quintana ©

Follow the String

Concept(s) Targeted:

Depth perception, positional concepts

What you will need:

- A long piece of string (5-10 yards);
- high contrast with the flooring if needed;
- a toy with wheels that can be pushed along the string; barriers (blocks, pillows, etc.)

To set up:

Spread the string across the floor; place several barriers across the string.

How to play the game:

Explain that the string is a road and we are going to drive our cars on the road. Follow the path of the string, going over or around the barriers. Use positional words related to the action taken around the barrier.

Adaptations:

To increase difficulty:

- Spread the string out in a way so that the child has to travel under, over, behind furniture in order to push the car along the string.
- Together, create a path with building blocks and drive cars along the blocks. Barriers can be made with blocks as well.
- Include a step or other changes in surface area when spreading string.
- Use a raised surface like a balance beam.
- Make a line in sand with your fingers and try to follow it.
- Use the string to make wiggly lines.
- For the child with depth perception problems:
- Provide additional time to explore all changes in texture, surface area, etc.
- Use solid barriers that cannot be moved (ex: the edge of a step, a couch leg) so that child can tactually experience and confirm the differences she is seeing.
- Tape high contrast paper to the floor and let the child push a shopping cart along it. Let him/her crawl, pushing a ball along the paper.

From Linda Lyle ©

More Fun with String

Concept(s) Targeted:

Object permanence, follow directions, memory

What you will need:

- A favorite toy or small treat,
- a long piece of string

To set up:

Tie one end of the string to a favorite toy or small treat

Hide the toy out of sight

Weave the string around the furniture in a way that the child can follow it.

How to play the game:

Give child the end of the string and have them follow it to find a surprise at the other end.

Adaptations:

If child has language capacity, have them provide a running commentary of their actions, as if he/she were a news announcer on television. "Now I am going around the chair; I am climbing over the pillow, etc."

Have the child move in the direction the string is taking him/her and have them predict where they are going. "I think I am going to have to go to the chair next."

From Linda Lyle ©

Wall Pockets

Skill(s):

Positional concepts

What you will need:

- Several pieces of scrap paper
- Rubber cement
- Several pictures and matching-sized blank paper, or
- Several strips of Braille paper, some with Braille, some without Braille
- Post-it notes

To set up:

Use the rubber cement to affix sets of 2 pieces of scrap paper to the wall, one above the other. Only use the cement on 3 sides, leaving the top side open, so that you have a pocket. (You may wish to test your walls to see if the rubber cement will come off. In most cases, I believe it will.) In each pocket you will place a piece of paper with the top sticking out. For each set, one pocket will have a picture or Braille, and the other will have a blank piece of paper. Next to each set, leave yourself a Post-it note that says which pocket has the picture or Braille in it, either the top or the bottom.

How to play the game: The object of this game is for the student to find the picture on the first try, after the teacher tells them which pocket contains the picture or Braille, either the "top" pocket, or the "bottom" pocket. They get to take home the pictures or a small toy after the lesson.

Modifications:

You may wish to change the positional concept to "left" and "right", or "high" and "low", or even "north" and "south" (with north being on the top, as it would be on a map).

From Cecelia Quintana ©

Positional Racetrack Builders

Skill(s) Targeted:

Positional concepts, visual scanning

What you will need:

- Multiple pieces of a car or train track
- A vehicle which can travel on that track
- Index cards

To set up:

Determine which positional concepts will be targeted. In the following example we will use, "On" versus "Under". On the index cards write "We are resting _____". In the blank write things like: "on the desks," "under the chairs," "on the shelves", etc. Also include a number on the cards (a number between 1 and 5 works best). Place a card on the floor of the doorway of each room used for the game. Place the correct number of pieces of the racetrack in the rooms in the places specified by the card.

How to play the game:

In the door of the room, the student will find the card, and the teacher will read it. The student will then use the clue given to find the pieces of racetrack hidden in the room.

Once all of the pieces have been collected, the student then gets to assemble them and play with the racetrack for a while.

Modifications:

If the student prefers to build puzzles, the pieces of a puzzle may be hidden in the rooms. Or multiple pieces of a single game may be hidden in different rooms.

From Cecelia Quintana ©

Eastern Star, Western Sun

Skill(s):

Cardinal directions, matching

What you will need:

- A number of small toys
- Envelopes
- A large, simple picture of a star
- A large, simple picture of a sun
- Several sets of smaller matching pictures of the star and sun
- 2 small boxes

To set up:

Affix the picture of the star to one of the boxes and place the box on the eastern end of a large table or on the eastern side of the room. Place the picture of the sun on the other box and place it on the western end of a large table or on the western side of the room. Place a toy and one of the small pictures in each envelope.

How to play the game:

The object of this game is for the student to identify the picture and place both the picture and the toy in the box with the matching picture. (At the end of the game, you may wish to let the student choose one toy from each box to take home.) The teacher's job is to reinforce the use of the words "Eastern" and "Western". Eventually, the pictures will be replaced with an "E" for East and a "W" for West.

Modifications:

For the student with no vision, use textures or shapes, rather than the pictures.

From Cecelia Quintana ©

Boat Dock Shuttle

Skill(s) Targeted:

Cardinal Directions

What you will need:

- A large bowl or small tub with water
- A medium sized plastic lid that will float on water
- A toy phone or real disconnected phone
- A toy bus or car
- A dozen or more small, light-weight toys
- A small sign for each of the cardinal directions - "north", "south", "east", and "west"

To set up:

Set up your signs in the appropriate places, either around a large table, or in a moderate-sized uncluttered area. With each sign place an equal number of the toys. Fill the bowl or tub with water and place the lid so that it floats on the water. (This is the boat and the loading dock.) Place your phone and the bus or car (this is the shuttle) near the loading dock.

How to play the game: The student is the shuttle driver, and the teacher plays the role of the passengers. The teacher "calls" the student on the toy phone and asks to be picked up at one of the shuttle stations (north, south, east, or west). The student then takes his shuttle to the correct location, picks up one of the toys, and takes it to the boat dock, where he "loads the passenger" by placing the toy on the floating lid. This procedure is repeated until all of the passengers have been delivered to and loaded onto the boat.

Modifications

If the student is not yet ready for all of the directions, use only 2 or 3 stations. If this is still too difficult, place a different colored piece of cloth at each station. This way the teacher can ask, for example, to be picked up "at the north station with the pink parking lot" or the "west station with the striped parking lot".

From Cecelia Quintana ©

Directional Squares

Skill(s) Targeted:

Cardinal directions

What you will need:

- 25 of any one of the following items: carpet squares, or chairs, or towels, or cafeteria trays or any other item that can clearly mark a small area.
- 24 index cards, 3 copies of each of the following phrases:
 - o Move 1 space north
 - o Move 1 space south
 - o Move 1 space east
 - o Move 1 space west
 - o Move 2 spaces north
 - o Move 2 spaces south
 - o Move 2 spaces east
 - o Move 2 spaces west

To set up:

Align the carpet squares (or whatever you are using) in a 5 X 5 grid pattern, (see the diagram below) with enough space between the squares to clearly separate them from one another, but close enough so that one can reach out and touch the surrounding squares.

Diagram 1 : Pattern of squares showing 5 rows and 5 columns.

How to play:

This is a gross motor adaptation of "Directional Checkers" from Simon Says Is Not the Only Game, page 31, (Leary & Schneden, American Foundation for the Blind, 1982). Each child begins in the exact center of the grid. Whoever has been selected to be the "caller" (the person who will be reading the cards) selects an index card from the top of the deck. The caller reads the card and the child moves the appropriate number of spaces in the correct direction. The first person that gets a card where the correct execution of the directions makes them move off of the grid is the winner.

Adaptations:

More challenging - it is possible to separate the cards into 2 piles: the north-south pile and the east-west pile, and then have the caller draw 2 cards. This will result in secondary directions (such as northeast, southwest, etc.), thereby requiring the students to identify 2 directions and move in a diagonal direction.

From Cecelia Quintana ©

Sniff 'n' Turn

Skill(s) Targeted:

Olfactory

What you will need:

- 2 distinctly different scents
- Change of direction indicators (self-adhesive colored dots do well)
- Route directions (for the teacher)

To set up:

Set-up and preparation for this game takes much longer than the actual playing time. The teacher must decide on a route and write out the directions as detailed below.

How to play the game:

This game involves executing a route based upon scents provided. You may choose to use easily available scents such as spices and extracts. The extracts work well if you soak a cotton ball in the extract, and then wrap it in foil; the spices may be left in their original containers, with the label masked. Each scent indicates a change of direction. For example, oregano could mean "execute a left turn", and cinnamon "execute a right turn". (You could choose to use 3 scents. Then one of the scents indicates that the student should continue in the same direction. However, then you may be risking "sniffer burn-out")

The instructor will need to plan a route that includes several changes of direction. At each change of direction, some kind of marker will need to be placed on the floor (we will call this a Station). For particularly long stretches, you may wish to include a station where you continue on straight. Fluorescent Color Coding Labels which may be purchased at most grocery and/or "super" stores, are self-adhesive, easy to remove, and come in a variety of colors so that it will be fairly easy to find a color to contrast almost any floor color. The teacher should have a route card that indicates each change of direction. It may read something like this: "Station 1 - Lobby - right turn - cinnamon" The student will need a the teacher or another partner who will let him know when he has reached a station (if residual vision is not appropriate for the task) and present him with the appropriate scents. At each station, the partner presents the student with whichever scent is needed until the route has been completed.

Comments:

While playing this game, I have found that after about 10-12 sniffs, the nose gets tired and it becomes more difficult to tell which scent is which. Also, I tried 3 different brands of plastic bags, and each had a residual smell which overrode the smell of the item placed inside.

From Cecelia Quintana ©

**Handout produced and made accessible by
Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired**

Outreach Programs



Figure 1 TSBVI logo.



"This project is supported by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the U.S. Department of Education."

Figure 2 IDEAs that Work logo and OSEP disclaimer.