LEARNING WITH ELASTICS

New...exciting...and very different!
SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN 3-10 YEARS

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1: Why Use Elastics?
Fun, inexpensive, A wonder of hidden learning, Versatile, For indoor or outdoor use, Safe, Suitable for a variety of group numbers, Suitable for 3 years and over, Educational, Challenging, Enhances musical appreciation and experiences, Ideal for wet days, Can be used in most learning environments, Enhances social experiences, Fitness, Co-ordination

2: Learning that Occurs
Cognitive, social, language and numeracy development, body awareness, co-ordination, brain/body connection, spatial awareness, spring and landing skills, fitness, direction, safety, concepts, rhythm, visualization, imagination.

3: Why Jumping?
Children need lots of activities that involve knee and leg awareness. Progressive interesting and varied activities to enhance bending of the knees and jumping skills can be hidden through creative activities and is the key to learning for children during their early years.

4. Spatial Awareness
Varying heights and body positions, while performing actions and challenges to enhance children's spatial awareness, is of great value to co-ordination, problem-solving, cognitive processes, choice-making, enhancing the vestibular system (essential for balance), body awareness, exploration, experimentation, social interactions and learning.

5. All About Balance
A sense of balance, good muscle tone and a healthy integration of children’s sensory motor system assist with learning in a classroom as well as giving them a strong sense of self-worth and self-confidence.

INDIVIDUAL ELASTICS

BALANCE CARDS
The children need to understand the basic static positions with their body without using elastics, before they progress to using the same positions with elastics.

Full colour A4 sized Balance Illustrations are available (www.robyncrowe.com) if you wish to use them as visual cues showing these balances. They are progressive so offer challenges of the initial balance positions.
OTHER WAYS TO USE THE BALANCE ILLUSTRATIONS

● The adult may select the Balance Illustration to use with the whole group.

● Encourage each child to choose their own Balance Illustration and perform the balance shown.

● Small groups can take it in turns to choose a Balance Illustration and as a group perform that balance shown.

● Position the Balance Illustrations on the floor, around the room, gym or outside area. The children perform the balance they have selected and move progressively to the next illustration.

GROUP ACTIVITY USING A CO-OPERATIVE

Purchase a Co-operative band from an equipment supplier or alternately securely join lengths of elastic to create a circle suitable for use by the whole class.

Activity: A variety of gross motor, locomotion and spatial awareness activities are ideal skills to use with a co-op band.

♫ Chant: Tie a ribbon around one point of the elastic. Pass the elastic quickly around the circle with the hands, and then watch the ribbon move from child to child. To add creativity to the activity, imagine it is a train going from station to station. Great for eye tracking.

The train (lyrics by Robyn Crowe)

The train is at a station
The train is on the tracks
The train is at a station – Clickerty Clack...clickerty clack...Whoaaaaa

Vary the body positions and speed of passing the co-op band e.g fast slow, vary speed half way, lie down face in, face out etc.

ELASTIC ACTIVITIES USING GROUPS OF 3 CHILDREN
(suitable for 5-9 years)

One child stands at each end with feet shoulder-width apart. The elastic is held at ankle height. Vary to knee height to offer a challenge. One child performs the activity. Once complete or repeated, they swap with one another until each has had a turn.

Alternatively, rather than using children to support the ends of the large elastic, use chairs.

SAFETY when using chairs
1. Always face the chairs inward so they don’t tip over.
2. Tape the elastic to the legs of the chair at the lower height, to prevent it from slipping upward.

PRE-REQUISITE
Use carpet squares or tapped lines on carpet to practice feet combinations

♫ Chant  Humpty Dumpty (traditional) Suitable for 3-5 years

Humpty Dumpty JUMPED on a wall
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
All the King’s horses
And all the King's men
Couldn't put Humpty together again.

Actions: Start with two feet standing on one side of the elastic facing outward. Jump continually onto the one side of elastic. When Humpty Dumpty falls of the wall, the child jumps forward off the wall, landing on two feet. They then gallop around the other children in their group supporting the elastic. Jump to land back onto the original side of the elastic.

♫ Clickety Clack (written by Robyn Crowe, 2007) Suitable for 3-8 years

Clickety clack
Down the track
The engine chuffed along.
He blew his whistle
Very loud
And sang a merry song.
Whooo.

Two children support each end with a ‘wide’ stance position. Practise all skills without the elastic initially suing the tape line or carpet squares.
The third child stands to one side facing into the elastic. Jump over the first length of elastic. Jump over the second length of elastic. Jump backwards over the first length, then the second length. Repeat four times. Jump all the way over both lengths of elastic on the last line of the chant.

Please note 3 year old children will not be able to jump backwards competently so they can turn and jump forwards, turn and jump forwards.

♫ The Garden Gate (written by Robyn Crowe, 2007) Suitable for 8-10 years

A little boy climbed a gate
And his little legs got stuck
He fell down the other side
And landed in the muck.

Two children support each end with a normal stance position. The third child stands with one foot on the outside of the elastic and one foot inside as shown. Repeat jumping to the other side with one foot in and the outside foot out.
Repeat jumping to each side x6. Jump with feet together into the middle.

Extension. Two children can hold hands facing each other and repeat the activity.

♫ A Naughty Monkey (written by Robyn Crowe, 2007) Suitable for 3-6 years

A naughty monkey went to town
To buy a gold and silver crown.
He brought bananas home instead
And wore them all upon his head.

Two children support each end with a normal stance position. The third child stands in the middle with feet together.
Jump feet out to either side of the elastic. Jump feet in together. Repeat in and out action x4. Jump to land feet on top of the elastic.
Extension
Repeat the above chant and actions.
On the last line, the child jumping identifies another body part rather than the head as stated in the chant. The children on each end supporting the elastic touch that body part, e.g. elbow, back, knees.

♫ Cross the River  (Written by Robyn Crowe, 2007) Suitable for 4-8 years
  I went to cross the river
  To see a little dog
  So I floated to the other side
  Sitting on a log.

Two children support each end with a normal stance position. The third child stands in the middle with feet together. Place one foot outside to the floor the other foot to the other side then replace to the middle in a jogging action. Repeat several times then finish with both feet landing on the elastics.

All activities can be extended by raising the height of the elastic to knee height.

WRITE YOUR OWN NOW!!!

HAVE FUN!

More information and activities can be found in the “LEARNING WITH ELASTICS” resource manual and balance illustrations.

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