

Anne Frank: Movement - Isometric Exercises

Summary

Quotation: 'I have a craze for dancing and ballet...and practice dance steps every evening diligently. My stiff limbs are well on the way to becoming supple again like they used to be. One terrific exercise is to sit on the floor, hold a heel in each hand, and then lift both legs up in the air. I have to have a cushion under me, otherwise my poor little behind has a rough time.' --Anne Frank (January 12, 1944)

Time Frame

1 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Individual

Materials

Chairs

Students, desk chairs, space next to desk area

Drawing of the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam

Optional: Exercise posters or index cards for 'pocket packs' of exercises

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will examine/identify attitudes toward discrimination.

Instructional Procedures

See preface material from 'Anne Frank in the World, 1929 - 1945 Teacher Workbook.'

Students will have read or be reading 'Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl.' Talk with the students about the length of time that the Frank family was in hiding (25 months) and about the size of the Secret Annex. Explain that proper exercise and muscle tone are essential to physical health and mental well being. Together with nutritional deficiencies, extended time in hiding in cramped quarters can lead to weakened muscles, stiffened joints, sluggish circulation, loss of body minerals, and other conditions.

List the exercises on the chalkboard or display them - one exercise to a poster. 'Pocket packs' of exercise cards can be assembled by students for easy reference. All exercises can be done quietly sitting in a chair. Students may want to imagine that they are exercising to music; they could compose tunes for their workout. (If Anne had a personal stereo and access to batteries as she might today, her dancing and ballet practice could have had undetectable music accompaniment.) Every day during classroom work, teacher and students should take a quick exercise break by performing one or more of the exercises in their seats.

Closure: Have students discuss the need for proper exercise and maintenance of muscle tone. Does the classroom exercise break affect learning? How? Share these exercises with other classes and with community groups such as senior citizens or business organizations. This is an activity that everyone can participate in.

Extensions

Instead of using the exercises in the order listed, students can take turns designing routines that mix the exercises in ever new combinations. Post these combinations by exercise number or name on the board or overhead projector or have the designer call out the numbers or names.

Research other isometric exercises. Consult with the school nurse or physical therapists to get ideas

for new exercises. What kind of exercises do people with disabilities do?

Authors

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