

Playground Safety

Summary

After completing the activities in this lesson, students will understand the importance of playground safety.

Materials

blank paper (sample charting format in this lesson)
hard boiled eggs (3), apples (3), bananas (3), small bouncing ball (1)
chart paper
markers
masking tape to label each egg, apple, and banana
band-aids
individual clipboards
overhead transparency

Additional Resources

Local newspaper stories about safety; Photographs of safety signs in community (e.g., construction, speed zones, hand washing signs)

Intended Learning Outcomes

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Demonstrate a positive learning attitude.
Demonstrate social skills and ethical responsibilities.
Demonstrate responsible emotional and cognitive behaviors.
Develop physical skills and personal hygiene.
Understand and use basic concepts and skills.
Communicate clearly in oral, artistic, written and nonverbal form.

Process Skills

Symbolization, observation, description, prediction, data collection, investigation, problem solving, form conclusions

Instructional Procedures

Invitation to Learn

The teacher will give each student a Band-Aid. Ask the student to put it on an "owie," and then to tell a friend how they got that "owie." The teacher will then tell the students that they are going to learn some ways to prevent getting hurt while on the playground.

Instructional Procedures

Ask if any of the "owies" happened on the school playground. Have those students who indicated they did share how it happened.
Divide class into four groups. Each group will be responsible to chart one experiment. Discuss charting format, and have students in each group make their own chart by folding paper as illustrated in this lesson. Students will draw lines and add text for their group experiment as indicated e.g., egg, banana, apple, or ball. The text should be simplified to a label (i.e., asphalt). It is written out in this example as a clarification for teachers.
Distribute clipboards for students to attach to their charts. Remind students to bring a pencil and take the class outside. Invite students to observe and describe what the playground looks like (bring out the different kinds of surfaces on the playground). Explain they are going to do an experiment using their apples, eggs, bananas, and balls on the playground.

Ask students to sit beside the members of their group (but the whole class will stay in the same area). Each group will be responsible for charting only their own experiment. Have each student in the egg group discuss, draw and/or write their prediction of what will happen to the egg if it were dropped on various surfaces and record their predictions in the spaces on top row. Repeat the same procedure for the groups, throwing an apple or bouncing a ball across each surface. Students in the banana group will discuss and predict what will happen to the banana if it bumped against a piece of playground equipment when being held by someone walking, and when held by someone running. Then they will discuss and predict what would happen to a banana if it were to crowd in line and record their predictions on the chart.

One group at a time will be given 3 hard-boiled eggs, 3 apples, 3 bananas, or a ball. Each group will perform their experiment while the rest of the class observes each of the experiments (dropping the egg, throwing the apple, bouncing the ball, and moving with the banana into equipment). Have the students observe, discuss, draw, and/or write their observations in the appropriate boxes on their charts.

Sit down together (either inside or outside) and discuss what they predicted and what they observed. Ask them why they think the outcomes of the various objects were different on the different surfaces (and banana at different speeds).

Ask the students why they think the playground was created with different kinds of surfaces. Ask the students how they can relate the egg, apple, and banana to the human body. Compare the breaking of the apple skin to an abrasion on a knee, the egg to a broken bone, the bruising of the apple or banana to the bruising of an injury. Talk about appropriate places to play running games, ball games, jump ropes, etc. Discuss the potential problems if students play a game in an inappropriate place (i.e., soccer in the jump rope area, jump ropes around the playground equipment, tag by the swings or slides).

Have the students help create a few basic playground rules, and write these rules on a chart using shared writing strategies. Display these rules in the classroom or in the hall. The established routines of most classrooms are less evident on the playground, and children with low language skills frequently also lack judgmental and negotiating skills. This lesson could be adapted to assist these students.

Extensions

Possible Extensions/Adaptations

Work with students on first aid skills, calling for help, and emergency names and numbers.

Writing about or verbally sharing personal experiences of playground happenings.

Class meetings about playground problems.

Family Connections

Students can share the results of their experiments and share their predictions and results recorded on their charts.

Students could create a class newsletter describing their experiments and findings.

Assessment Plan

Student work is collected for portfolios as part of ongoing assessment.

The teacher takes note of appropriate playground behavior and students ability to problem solve.

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