

Ropin' in a Healthy Heart

Introduction: As students learn and practice several jump rope techniques, they recognize that cardiovascular exercise is fun, helps them feel good, and is good for their heart. This lesson is adapted from a lesson idea on the American Heart Association's website at: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3003105>.

Grade Level and Subject: 1st Grade P.E., Health Education

TEKS: P.E. – 1B, 1C, 2A, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4A, 4B, 5A, 7A
Health Education – 1A, 4B

Materials: “Activities for the Heart” activity sheet, several jump ropes

Activity

1. Have children hold their right arms out straight from their shoulders and then bend their lower right arms toward their shoulders several times. Ask them to feel the muscles in their front upper arms (biceps) as they bend their arms. *Do you feel the muscle move each time you bend your arm? (Yes.) What do you think would happen to the muscle if you did a lot of this bending every day? (The muscle would get stronger.)* Point out that like the biceps, the heart is a muscle, and exercise will make it stronger, too. *Point to your heart.* (Slightly left in the center of the chest) *What does your heart do? (It pumps blood to the rest of the body.)*
2. Remind children that the best exercises for the heart are those that make the heart beat faster. Distribute the “Activities for the Heart” activity sheet. As a group, identify the activities pictured, and discuss why each activity is or is not an aerobic activity (a continuous activity using large arm and leg muscles that makes the heart beat faster). Explain that children are to circle the pictures that show activities that will help the heart the most.
3. Explain that jumping rope is a good aerobic exercise. It doesn't require much equipment or space; it can be done almost anywhere, and it can be done by one person.
4. Demonstrate the proper way to turn and jump a jump rope. *Begin with the rope behind you and resting against your heels. Then bring the rope up and over your head with a circular wrist motion. Jump over the rope and land on the balls of both feet. Keep your feet and ankles together.*
5. Hand out the jump ropes and let children try turning and jumping. Once they have mastered the basic technique, demonstrate the following variations that they can add to their rope jumping. Select those that are appropriate for the children's rope-jumping skill level.

- Heel Touch — Jump and touch your left heel in front of you; jump and touch your right heel in front of you.
 - Toe Touch — Jump and touch your left toe behind you; jump and touch your right toe behind you.
 - Heel and Toe — Jump on your left foot and touch your right heel in front. Jump on your left foot and touch your right toe in back. Jump on your right foot and touch your left heel in front. Jump on your right foot and touch your left toe in back.
 - Explain that for jumping rope to help the heart, it has to be done long enough and hard enough to make the heart work harder. Point out that children can tell if they are jumping enough by using the “talk test”: If they can talk while jumping, they are at the right pace; if they can’t talk at all, they need to slow down.
6. Show children how to make jumping rope part of a good aerobic workout. First, have them warm up by walking in place. Then have them start to jump rope. After a minute, have them try the talk test to check their exercise level. Have children continue to jump rope for 5-10 minutes (or as long as possible) without stopping. Then have them cool down by walking in place.
 7. Ask children what signs told them that they were giving their heart and lungs a workout. (Face feeling warm, breathing harder, heart beating faster, sweating) Point out that like the talk test, children can use these signs to tell when they are exercising enough. Caution them that they are over exercising if they feel weak or wobbly and they should slow down at once.

Evaluation: Observe students for participation in the activity. Check their activity sheets for accuracy.



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