



Playset Curriculum

Scope:

This curriculum is designed for children, with a focus on introducing them to the fundamental skills and techniques involved in swinging, sliding, and climbing on a playset. It aims to promote physical development, coordination, balance, and gross motor skills while fostering a love for outdoor play and exploration.

Overview:

The curriculum is divided into three main sections: Swinging, Sliding, and Climbing. Each section includes a brief overview of the activity, its history, and developmental benefits, followed by a series of structured lesson plans. The lessons are designed to be engaging, interactive, and tailored to different age groups and skill levels.

Benefits:

Learning to swing, slide, and climb on a playset provides numerous benefits for children's development, including:

- **Physical Development:** Improves gross motor skills, strength, coordination, balance, and overall fitness.
- **Cognitive Development:** Enhances problem-solving skills, spatial awareness, and decision-making abilities.
- **Social and Emotional Development:** Promotes teamwork, cooperation, and socializing through interactive games and activities.
- **Sensory Integration:** Stimulates the vestibular system (sense of balance) and proprioceptive system (body awareness).
- **Confidence and Risk-Taking:** Encourages children to challenge themselves and build self-confidence in a safe environment.

History and Developmental Milestones:

Swings have been a part of human history for centuries, with evidence of their existence dating back to ancient Greece and Rome. The modern playground swing, however, can be traced back to the late 19th century, when they became popular in public parks and playgrounds.

Sliding and climbing structures, such as slides and Monkey Bars, gained popularity in the early 20th century as playground equipment evolved to cater to children's developmental needs.

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Playsets and playground equipment play a crucial role in helping children achieve various developmental milestones, including:

- **Gross Motor Skills:** Swinging, sliding, and climbing help develop large muscle groups and coordination.
- **Balance and Spatial Awareness:** These activities promote body awareness and the ability to navigate spaces.
- **Social Skills:** Cooperative play and games on the playset encourage socialization and teamwork.
- **Risk-Taking and Confidence:** Challenging themselves on climbing structures and swinging higher fosters self-confidence and risk-taking abilities.

Lesson Plans

Section 1: Swinging

Introduction to Swinging

- Overview of swings and their history
- Benefits of swinging (e.g., balance, coordination, sensory integration)
- Safety rules and guidelines

Mastering the Swing

- Proper sitting
- Pumping techniques (using legs and core strength)
- Games and activities to practice swinging

Advanced Swinging Techniques

- Swinging higher and faster
- Twisting and turning on the swing
- Cooperative swinging activities (e.g., swing tag, partner swinging)

Swing Games and Challenges

- Swing Relay Races
- Swing Obstacle Course
- Swing Freeze Dance
- Swing Hopscotch

Sensory Swinging

- Swinging with eyes closed (promoting vestibular system integration)
- Swinging while listening to music or sounds
- Swinging with different textures or materials on the swing

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Creative Swinging

- Storytelling on the swing
- Singing songs while swinging
- Swinging to different rhythms or beats

Swinging is a popular and enjoyable activity for people of all ages, offering a range of physical and emotional benefits. Here's a comprehensive overview:

Overview of Swings and Their History

1. Historical Background:

- **Ancient Origins:** The concept of swinging can be traced back to ancient times. Early swings were often simple and made from natural materials like ropes and wooden planks.
- **Medieval and Renaissance Periods:** Swings were depicted in various artworks and literature. They were used both for leisure and as a form of amusement in gardens and estates.
- **Modern Era:** The development of more sophisticated swings began in the 19th and 20th centuries with advancements in materials and safety features. The classic playground swing set became a staple in parks and playgrounds.

2. Types of Swings:

- **Traditional Swings:** Typically consist of a seat suspended by ropes or chains. They come in various designs, including bucket swings for infants, belt swings for older children, and garden swings for adults.
- **Specialty Swings:** Include tire swings, disc swings, and adaptive swings designed for individuals with disabilities.

Benefits of Swinging

1. Balance and Coordination:

- **Physical Development:** Swinging helps improve core strength and balance. The act of swinging engages various muscle groups and promotes better coordination.
- **Motor Skills:** For children, swinging aids in the development of motor skills and spatial awareness. It helps in the coordination of movements and timing.

2. Sensory Integration:

- **Sensory Stimulation:** The back-and-forth motion of swinging stimulates the vestibular system, which is crucial for processing movement and balance. This sensory input can be calming and helps with sensory integration.
- **Relaxation:** The rhythmic motion can be soothing and reduce anxiety. It can also improve focus and attention by providing a calming sensory experience.

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3. Emotional and Social Benefits:

- **Fun and Enjoyment:** Swinging is a fun activity that can promote happiness and reduce stress.
- **Social Interaction:** In playgrounds, swinging provides opportunities for social interaction and can encourage cooperative play among children.

Safety Rules and Guidelines

1. Proper Use:

- **Supervision:** Always supervise children while they are using swings, especially younger children who might be less aware of potential dangers.
- **Age Appropriateness:** Use swings that are suitable for the user's age and size. For example, use bucket swings for infants and belt swings for older children.

2. Safe Swinging Practices:

- **Seated Position:** Always sit on the swing properly with feet off the ground. Standing on swings can lead to accidents.
- **One Person at a Time:** Only one person should use a swing at a time to avoid collisions and injuries.

3. Equipment Safety:

- **Inspect Regularly:** Check swings for any signs of wear or damage before use. Ensure that all parts, such as chains and seats, are secure and in good condition.
- **Safe Environment:** Ensure that the swinging area is free from obstacles and has a soft surface like mulch, rubber mats, or grass to cushion falls.

4. Avoid Dangerous Behaviors:

- **No Twisting or Jumping:** Avoid twisting the swing or jumping off while in motion, as these actions can lead to injuries.
- **Proper Installation:** Ensure that swings are installed according to manufacturer guidelines, with appropriate clearance from other structures and ground surfaces.

By understanding the history, benefits, and safety practices associated with swinging, you can enjoy this timeless activity while ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for all participants.

Section 2: Sliding

Introduction to Sliding

- Overview of slides and their history
- Benefits of sliding (e.g., spatial awareness, gross motor skills)
- Safety rules and guidelines

Sliding Techniques

- Proper sitting/standing position



- Sliding techniques (e.g., straight slide, turning slide)
- Games and Activities to Practice sliding

Advanced Sliding Challenges

- Sliding from different heights
- Sliding with obstacles or challenges
- Cooperative sliding activities (e.g., relay races, synchronized sliding)

Slide Races and Challenges

- Slide Races (individual and team)
- Slide Obstacle Course
- Slide Hopscotch
- Slide Patterns (e.g., zigzag, reverse)

Slide Exploration

- Sliding with different body positions (e.g., backwards, sideways)
- Sliding with objects or toys
- Sliding with different textured surfaces or materials

Slide Storytelling and Imagination

- Creating slide stories or scenarios
- Pretending to be different characters or animals while sliding
- Slide-inspired arts and craft projects

Sliding is a fundamental movement skill and a fun activity enjoyed across various sports and playgrounds. Here's a comprehensive introduction to sliding, including its history, benefits, and safety guidelines.

Overview of Slides and Their History

1. Historical Background:

- **Ancient Times:** The concept of sliding can be traced back to ancient cultures, where smooth surfaces and inclines were used for various purposes, including transportation and recreation. Ancient Greeks and Romans had primitive forms of slides used for both play and practical tasks.
- **Modern Playground Slides:** The modern playground slide, as we know it today, began to take shape in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Early slides were made from wood or metal and were primarily designed for playgrounds. The introduction of plastics in the mid-20th century allowed for more versatile and safer designs.

2. Variations of Sliding:

- **Playground Slides:** Commonly found in parks and playgrounds, these slides come in various shapes and sizes, including straight, spiral, and wavy designs.

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- **Sports and Recreation:** Sliding is also a key component in sports such as baseball (sliding into base), and recreational activities like sledding, where participants slide down snowy hills or artificial slopes.
- **Functional Uses:** In some industries, slides are used as a quick and efficient way to transport materials or people between different levels of a building or structure.

Benefits of Sliding

1. Spatial Awareness:

- **Understanding Movement:** Sliding helps individuals develop a sense of how their body moves through space. It enhances the ability to judge distances, speed, and direction.
- **Balance and Coordination:** Sliding requires and improves balance and coordination as individuals manage their body's movement on an incline.

2. Gross Motor Skills:

- **Muscle Development:** Engaging in sliding activities strengthens large muscle groups, including those in the legs, core, and arms.
- **Movement Control:** Sliding helps in refining movement control and spatial orientation. It involves initiating, maintaining, and stopping motion, which are key aspects of gross motor development.

3. Social and Emotional Benefits:

- **Confidence Building:** Mastering sliding can boost confidence, particularly in children who see their ability improve over time.
- **Social Interaction:** Sliding often occurs in social settings, such as playgrounds, fostering social skills and cooperative play.

Safety Rules and Guidelines

1. Playground Slide Safety:

- **Supervision:** Always supervise children using slides to ensure they are using the equipment correctly and safely.
- **Proper Use:** Ensure that children are sitting down and facing forward while sliding. Standing or lying down on slides can be dangerous.
- **Check Equipment:** Regularly inspect slides for damage or wear. Ensure they are made of smooth materials to prevent injuries and have proper safety features such as high sides and smooth transitions.

2. Sliding in Sports:

- **Baseball Sliding:** Wear appropriate protective gear like sliding shorts and helmets. Practice proper sliding techniques to reduce the risk of injury.
- **Sledding and Recreational Sliding:** Use slides and sleds in designated areas. Wear appropriate clothing and protective gear, such as helmets and gloves, to avoid injuries.

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3. General Guidelines:

- **Clear Obstacles:** Ensure that the landing area at the base of the slide is clear of obstacles and hazards.
- **Proper Technique:** Teach and practice proper sliding techniques, whether on playground slides or in sports, to prevent falls and injuries.
- **Weather Considerations:** Be cautious of weather conditions; wet or icy slides can be slippery and increase the risk of falls.

By understanding the history and benefits of sliding, along with adhering to safety guidelines, individuals can enjoy sliding activities safely and effectively. Whether for recreational play or as part of sports training, sliding is a valuable and enjoyable movement skill.

Section 2: Climbing

Introduction to Climbing

- Overview of climbing structures (e.g., Monkey Bars, climbing walls)
- Benefits of climbing (e.g., strength, coordination, problem-solving)
- Safety rules and guidelines

Climbing Fundamentals

- Proper grip and foot placement
- Traversing techniques (e.g., horizontal, vertical)
- Games and activities to practice climbing

Advanced Climbing Challenges

- Climbing with obstacles or challenges
- Traversing complex structures
- Cooperative climbing activities (e.g., group challenges, team building exercises) Climbing Obstacle Courses
- Designing and navigating climbing obstacle courses
- Incorporating different climbing structures and challenges
- Timed challenges or relay races

Climbing and Balancing

- Balancing activities on climbing structures
- Traversing narrow or unstable surfaces
- Incorporating yoga or stretching poses on climbing structures

Climbing and Problem-Solving

- Solving puzzles or riddles while climbing
- Navigating mazes or labyrinths on climbing structures
- Cooperative problem-solving challenges on climbing structures

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Climbing is a dynamic activity that engages both physical and mental skills. It encompasses various structures and forms, from playground equipment to specialized climbing walls. Here's an introduction to climbing, including an overview of climbing structures, its benefits, and essential safety guidelines.

Overview of Climbing Structures

1. Playground Climbing Structures:

- **Monkey Bars:** Horizontal bars typically arranged in a series, where climbers traverse from one bar to the next using their hands. Monkey bars enhance upper body strength and grip.
- **Climbing Frames:** These include various designs such as ladders, nets, and ropes arranged in configurations for climbing and traversing. They help develop strength, coordination, and spatial awareness.
- **Rope Climbs:** Vertical or angled ropes that climbers ascend using their hands and feet. This type of climbing focuses on upper body and core strength.

2. Climbing Walls:

- **Indoor Climbing Walls:** Specialized walls with handholds and footholds of varying shapes and sizes, designed for both recreational and competitive climbing. They can be vertical or overhung and often have pre-set routes (called problems or routes) of varying difficulty levels.
- **Outdoor Climbing Walls:** These can include natural rock faces or artificial structures designed to mimic rock climbing. Outdoor climbing offers different challenges, such as variable weather conditions and natural features.

3. Ropes Ladders:

- **Setup:** Elevated consisting of various obstacles such as ropes, bridges, and nets. They challenge balance, coordination, and problem-solving skills.

Benefits of Climbing

1. Physical Strength:

- **Muscle Development:** Climbing engages multiple muscle groups, including the upper body, core, and legs. Regular climbing improves muscle strength and endurance.
- **Flexibility and Agility:** The diverse movements involved in climbing enhance overall flexibility and agility.

2. Coordination and Balance:

- **Motor Skills:** Climbing improves fine and gross motor skills by requiring precise movements and coordination between different body parts.
- **Spatial Awareness:** Climbers develop a better sense of body positioning and spatial relationships through navigating climbing routes.

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3. Problem-Solving and Cognitive Skills:

- **Route Planning:** Climbing requires strategic thinking and problem-solving to determine the best path or technique to complete a climb.
- **Focus and Concentration:** The need to focus on each movement and handhold improves concentration and mental resilience.

4. Confidence and Psychological Benefits:

- **Self-Efficacy:** Successfully completing climbing challenges boosts confidence and self-efficacy.
- **Stress Relief:** Climbing can be a stress-relieving activity that promotes mental well-being and relaxation.

Safety Rules and Guidelines

1. Playground Climbing Safety:

- **Supervision:** Always supervise children using climbing structures to ensure they are climbing safely and following proper techniques.
- **Proper Use:** Teach and reinforce safe climbing practices, such as using both hands and feet and avoiding risky behaviors like jumping or climbing unsafely.
- **Equipment Checks:** Regularly inspect climbing structures for any wear or damage. Ensure that all equipment is secure and in good condition.

2. Climbing Wall Safety:

- **Safety First:** Learn and follow belaying techniques and safety procedures.
- **Climbing Routes:** Follow designated routes and be aware of your surroundings to avoid collisions with other climbers.
- **Warm-Up and Stretching:** Always warm up and stretch before climbing to prevent injuries and enhance performance.

3. General Guidelines:

- Climbing offers numerous physical, cognitive, and emotional benefits, making it an enriching activity for individuals of all ages.
- By understanding the various climbing structures, embracing the benefits, and adhering to safety guidelines, climbers can enjoy this challenging and rewarding activity while minimizing risks.

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Frequent focus breaks

Frequent focus breaks will help develop the mind to be able to focus more on the core curriculum needed to complete school.

Materials Required

- Swingset with at least two swing seats
- Slide (straight or curved)
- Monkey bars or climbing structure
- Climbing wall
- Safety surfacing (e.g., rubber mulch, poured-in-place rubber, wood chips, or turf, including a boarder if needed, such as pavers)
- Safety gear (e.g., helmets, knee pads, if desired)
- Woodplay Cedar Playset

Note: It is essential to ensure that the swingset and playground equipment meet safety standards and are properly installed and maintained for children's safety. By following this curriculum, children will not only develop essential physical skills but also cultivate a love for outdoor play, exploration, and adventure, setting the foundation for a lifetime of active and healthy living. These lessons incorporate elements of play, creativity, sensory exploration, and cognitive challenges, ensuring a well-rounded and engaging experience for children as they continue to develop their swinging, sliding, and climbing skills.

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