



LESSON PLAN D

PLAY AWAY

Time Frame: 15–30 minutes

Children will:

- Engage in free play to enjoy the benefits of running and playing for its own sake.
- Use their imaginations while moving their bodies in creative ways.
- Develop social skills and collaborative play skills.
- Use gross motor and planning skills to invent a new game and play it with others.

Overview:

Part one of this lesson is simple: Free play! Undirected play is the best way for preschoolers to learn and discover at their own pace, and allows them to use their imaginations. It's child-directed, spontaneous and critical for growth and development of all kinds: physical, mental, social and emotional.

Part two of this lesson allows for freedom within structure. Children are challenged to come up with their own ideas for a simple game to play with at least one other person or the entire class.

Part A. Free Play

Supervise children outdoors while giving them very simple instructions for ways to move their bodies while boosting creative thinking.

Instructions:

The point of this activity is that there are no real instructions or rules (other than to be safe). Let children run and play for 15 minutes. Then give them prompts to flex their creative muscles at the same time. Call out ideas like:

"Draw in the sand (or mud or dirt) with a stick."

"Run like the wind."

"Fly like a bird and see how far you can go!"

Part B. Invent Your Own Game

Let your students engage in creative problem-solving and see what they come up with! Designing and executing a game is hard work, even if there are only three steps involved. Make it easy by giving some parameters:

- It must involve physical activity (like running, hopping, throwing or other)
- It must be able to be played in 15 minutes or less

Indoor ideas include making balls out of crumpled recycled paper and tossing them in a basket. Lead a creative brainstorming session if kids get stuck.

Then take turns playing everyone's games over the next week.

Reflect on the different games during circle time. Are there any rules they would like to change? Which games would they like to play again?

Family Connection:

Give students a homework assignment: Go home and teach your family members or neighbors your new game!

Standards Alignment:

NAEYC

2.C.04 Children have varied opportunities and are provided equipment to engage in large motor experiences that:

- stimulate a variety of skills.
- enhance sensory-motor integration.
- develop controlled movement (balance, strength, coordination).
- enable children with varying abilities to have large-motor experiences similar to those of their peers.
- range from familiar to new and challenging.
- help them learn physical games with rules and structure.