

Toobeez Occupational Therapy Activity Workbook



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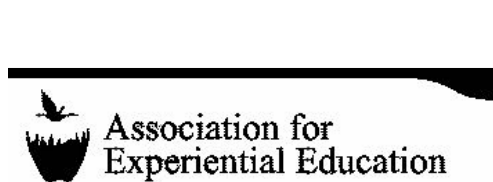
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Winning!**



Tested in 2004 by multiple teachers with families, the Toobeez Interactive Family Edition has won a Teacher's Choice Award for 2005. The Interactive Family Edition is what you get when you combine a set of Toobeez with Tom Heck's book, *The Official Toobeez Teambuilding Games and Activity Guide*, and Multimedia Training CD.

**All Project Connect Joint Venture participants are members of
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Candice Donnelly-Knox is a licensed and registered occupational therapist with over three years of experience. In 2001, she graduated with her bachelor's degree in Occupational Therapy from Elizabethtown College in Elizabethtown, PA. Candice began her career as an acute care occupational therapist at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. Currently, she works for an established contract agency, Pediatric Therapeutic Services, Inc. She is stationed at Overbrook School for the Blind in Philadelphia, PA where she has worked for more than two years.

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Project Connect thanks the following contributors for their efforts in the creation of this guide.

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Project Connect Training Opportunities

Do you want to:

- Become a more effective educator, teacher or trainer?
- Learn to creatively increase student involvement?
- Develop strategies for creating a dynamic learning environment?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, then the Project Connect training workshops are for you! We offer two types of workshops:



- 1. Train-the-Trainer Workshop**
- 2. TEAM Workshop**

Train-the-Trainer Workshop

This workshop is for you if:

- You are an educator looking for new ways of teaching team and leadership skills
- You like learning in a fast-paced and hands-on environment

What to expect

In the Train-the-Trainer workshop, you will learn how to lead activities that develop team and leadership skills. This workshop is fun, empowering and educational. It is also experiential, meaning you will learn by doing.

You will learn activities that promote trust and creative problem solving, as well as encourage purposeful and kind communication. You will experience physical activities, as well as activities which demand high cerebral skills. You will learn how to design everything from a five-minute



icebreaker to a full two-day adventure. Depending on the length of the program you choose, you can even learn how to integrate the activities into an existing curriculum.

You will learn how to deliver important processing skills to learn how to draw out the genius of the group by asking thought-provoking questions. When a discussion session is delivered properly, groups learn to own the information they generate from the teambuilding activities, providing them with a sense of empowerment, connectedness and success!

This is the perfect workshop for you if you are a:

- Classroom teacher
- School counselor
- Camp counselor
- Human Resources director
- Trainer or workshop presenter
- Therapeutic Recreation Specialist



TEAM Workshop

TEAM = Together Everyone Achieves More

The TEAM workshop is for your team if you are ready to:

- Move quickly from a “good” team to a “great” team
- Have fun and be challenged in a dynamic learning environment
- Be treated with respect and dignity while leveraging the strengths of your group

Over the years, we have worked with thousands of people from all walks of life, including:

- Business teams (from such industries as investing, communications, and insurance)
- Non-profit organizations (such as YMCA, YWCA and Boys & Girls Clubs)
- Educators (including public & private school teachers, school counselors, college students, college teaching staff and international students)
- Alternative education programs (including corrections officers, after-school programs and enrichment programs)

What to expect

In this workshop, you will participate in fun activities and engaging hands-on learning exercises to help your team address vital issues so it can move forward. This workshop focuses on where you are now as a group and where you are going.



For more information about attending or scheduling teambuilding training workshops, call:

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1-877-866-2339



Fostering Connections and Teamwork Through Fun!

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Introduction

Project Connect is dedicated to providing cutting-edge activities and tools for educators. Toobeez are a unique means of teaching academics, social skills, teamwork and problem solving. For the first time, the Toobeez program has been adapted as a useful teaching tool for utilization in schools and educational forums. The activities found in this workbook are designed to challenge students to evaluate concepts from a practical point of view with hands-on learning opportunities.

Project Connect Materials

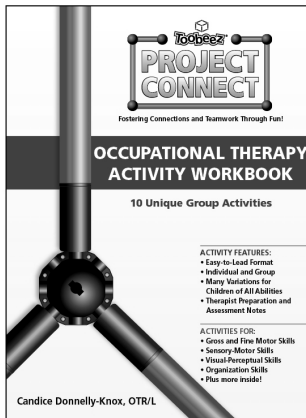
Project Connect offers the following products:

Toobeez

Toobeez are the incredible construction tubes used to build and create the activities for your group! A one-of-a-kind construction system, Toobeez give you the chance to "connect" as a group while engaging everybody in constructive play. Toobeez are a hands-on, easy-to-assemble and safe product that captivates the imagination of anyone who uses them. You can use them indoors or outdoors to hold a powerful experience anytime!



Each 57 Piece Toobeez Kit contains: (20) 3.4" spheres, (8) 36" tubes, (8) 24" tubes, (8) 16" tubes, (8) 11" tubes, (1) GIANT Toobeez storage bag, (2) red slide-on curtain panels, & (2) blue slide-on curtain panels. Shipping box is 36" x 12" x 6" and weighs 21lbs.



Activity Workbooks

The *Toobeez Occupational Therapy Activity Workbook* includes 10 detailed lesson plans with safety reminders, helpful hints, procedures, discussion questions and more to build and develop the academic skills of your group. Other available products include Math, Science, Language Arts, Physical Education, and Teambuilding workbooks. A teambuilding Multimedia Training CD is also available.



The Teacher's Role

The teacher plays a crucial role in the Toobeez program's activities. After selecting the activity, the teacher must aid students in executing the instructions, monitor safety, and observe the group's dynamics. Most important, it is the teacher's responsibility to convey positive leadership and the potential for success to create the best environment for these academic activities.

Motivational Learning Guide

Once the teacher determines that an activity is suitable for a particular group, he or she must make judgments about how the group is working. The teacher is responsible for running the activity; however he or she should not run the group. Instead, the teacher should act as a guide for students and ask probing questions which will help the group to progress in the activity. The teacher should positively motivate students so each individual enjoys the best possible learning experience.

Observer

While running the activity, the teacher must allow students to solve problems on their own. When groups are working, the teacher should take a step away and observe the group's dynamics so he or she can guide the group appropriately if they encounter problems.

Discussion Coordinator

The teacher begins the discussion by asking the questions he or she feels are most appropriate for the group. While considering the lessons learned from the challenge, as well as the possible "failures," the teacher should focus on the group's positive learning experiences while acknowledging both negative and positive issues.

Connections to Education

Teachers can use Toobeez as an innovative tool to implement the current educational practices discussed below. In addition, use of Toobeez in the classroom can play an important role in establishing connections between students, peers and teachers!

Brain-based Research

The Toobeez program activities support brain-based research by engaging learners and providing enjoyable hands-on experiences. The essence of brain research suggests that all learners have emotions, desires and needs. Researchers have found that relaxed, yet active, lessons that completely immerse the participants provide the most authentic learning experiences. This type of environment has been shown to increase retention, enjoyment and positive feelings about learning. The Toobeez program provides activities that challenge each participant at his or her individual level while engrossing them in a fun-filled learning environment.

Multiple Intelligence Theory

Developed in 1983 by Dr. Howard Gardner, the Multiple Intelligence Theory states there are multiple learning styles that maximize the learning potential in children and adults. The theory takes into account the various strengths in individuals, such as linguistic, logical, spatial and kinesthetic skills. It also suggests that different people learn in different ways. The Toobeez program provides a unique way to broaden the learning experience beyond traditional methods. By allowing instructors to offer lessons which address different learning styles, learning increases across the classroom.

Differentiated Instruction

In addition to building on the varying strengths of individuals, the Toobeez program allows instructors to appropriately adapt lessons to the various ability levels in a classroom. Activities can be enhanced for a greater challenge or they can be modified for a simpler activity.

Problem Solving

Lesson plans and activities in the Toobeez program require critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Participants are required to work together to brainstorm, select and execute solutions to each activity challenge.

Character Education Themes

Helping young people develop good character is a goal of many educational settings nationwide. The Toobeez program offers activities that can supplement or launch a character education curriculum. The character themes listed below can be applied to the activities in this book to help foster strong character among students who participate in this program.

- Perseverance
- Respecting Others
- Communication
- Teamwork/Cooperation
- Citizenship
- Responsibility
- Uniqueness
- Caring
- Trust

Teambuilding & Connections with Others

Research has shown that a sense of “connectedness” to parents and peers is the most influential protective factor in a teenager’s life. If teenagers lack this connection, their chance of engaging in risky behaviors increases. Through increasing teambuilding skills, the Toobeez program brings peers together while boosting the individual’s self-confidence and sense of “connectedness” with others.

Collaborative Hands-On Experience

The Toobeez program centers around a collaborative learning environment. Groups work together to solve each challenge while completing interactive, hands-on activities. Each lesson involves member participation, movement and teamwork for completion of the activity.

Safety

Please use caution when utilizing Toobeez in your classroom. Studying the material in this activity guide is not a substitute for professional training. Please refer to page 6 for information regarding the training options offered by Project Connect. For additional safety information, as well as product assembly and care, please turn to page 88.

Safety Tips!

- Do not allow students to climb on any Toobeez structures
- A first-aid kit should be easily accessible during the activities
- Follow general classroom safety guidelines during all lessons

The information presented in this activity guide is a reference, and the teacher is ultimately responsible for judging the suitability of an activity and safely supervising the activity.

The teacher's job is to make safety a priority and to manage the risk.

The publisher of this document assumes no responsibility or liability for the use of the information presented in this guide, including, but not limited to, errors due to misprinting or omission of detail.

How to Use This Workbook

Lesson Introduction Page

The first page of each lesson contains an outline of information for the teacher. This page includes lesson objectives, the activity challenge and setup procedures. An **Activity Plan** box on the page includes information regarding group size and time requirements. Space requirements are defined as follows:

Minimal: The activity can be conducted in the front of the room

Medium: A few desks may need to be moved

Lots: Clear all desks or relocate to a Therapy Gym or outdoor area

Helpful Hints

This section provides the teacher with suggestions to help guide the students and avoid possible obstacles during the activity.

Activity Challenge

Each activity presents a specific challenge to the students. Be sure to read this box to the group and clarify their understanding of the challenge.

Activity Instructions

This section explains how to conduct the actual lesson.

Activity Discussion and Processing

This section provides the teacher with a discussion topic that relates to the activity, as well as support information to use in guiding a group discussion. Questions are provided for the teacher to help guide the discussion.

Activity Variations

This section provides variations of easier or more challenging versions of the activity.

Notes

Space is provided for the teacher's notes on the activity. Notes can help teachers reflect on the lesson, as well as record possible future modifications.

Pre-Activity Warm-Up Routine

Prior to beginning active lessons, have students complete the following warm-up exercises to prepare for the upcoming physical activity.

1. Half-Circle Neck Rolls: Repeat 10 times.

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Begin with your right ear touching your right shoulder. Roll your chin across your chest and end with your left ear touching your left shoulder. This activates your vestibular system and alerts your brain.

2. Forward and Backward Arm Circles: Repeat 10 times.

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and extend your arms to the side. Pretend to draw small circles in the air with your fingertips.

3. Trunk Twists: Repeat 10 times.

Trunk control is vital to our body and **spatial awareness**, postural stability for when our bodies are in various positions, and for maintaining an efficient gait pattern when walking and moving.

4. Cross-Over Touches: Repeat 10 times.

While standing, separate your feet into a straddle position, slightly wider than shoulder-width. Bending at the waist, the right hand crosses midline to touch your left foot. Return to a standing position. Bending at the waist once again, the left hand crosses midline and touches your right foot. Complete this sequence ten times to once again strengthen core muscles. By **crossing midline**, both hemispheres of the brain are speaking to one another.

5. Jumping Jacks: Repeat 10 times.

Wake up all muscles of your body with jumping jacks.

6. Wall Push-Ups: Repeat 10 times.

Stand facing a wall at an arm's length away. Place your feet shoulder-width apart. Reach out your hands, and place your palms flat against the wall. Complete the push-up movement while standing up. This activity provides **deep tactile input** through the hands and **proprioceptive** input through all the joints of the hands, arms and shoulders. This assists in awareness of where these body parts are in space.

Learning Strategies

A number of learning strategies can be used in conjunction with the Toobeez classroom activities. Prior to an activity, these techniques serve to prime a student for learning by reviewing, highlighting and sharing relevant material from prior lessons and personal student knowledge. During an activity, these strategies can be used to organize material being taught for easier student recollection and understanding. Following an activity, these educational strategies summarize the learning experience in a useful, learner-friendly format. In all cases, use of these strategies enhances a student's learning experience by reinforcing the need for active, lasting information processing.

- **KWL Charts**

These three-column charts are used to record “What students already **know**,” “What they **w**ant to know” and “What they have **l**earned.” The first two columns can be used as a preparatory strategy, and the last column can be used as a summarizing technique.

- **Concept Mapping**

This technique serves to demonstrate a student's ability to organize knowledge. In this technique, students must be able to demonstrate true understanding of the relationship between various concepts.

- **Venn Diagrams**

These diagrams can be used to compare and contrast different topics from classroom material. This technique can be used to demonstrate interrelation between information from different lessons.

- **Jigsaw/Reciprocal Teaching**

This strategy allows students to become experts on certain topics/aspects of a lesson and share their knowledge. Allowing students to teach sections of a lesson to the rest of the class can be a powerful tool. It enhances student learning and can build student confidence.

- **Reflective Teaching**

Teachers, remember to use your “Activity Notes” section provided in the Toobeez activity workbooks. These notes can be used to improve future lesson implementation by highlighting any encountered challenges.

Acknowledgements

I would like to take a moment to thank the many staff and students at Overbrook School for the Blind for supporting this endeavor, for their time and patience, and for their countless hours reviewing this book and making sure that it was just right. I want to give a special thanks to Overbrook School for the Blind's therapy department for brainstorming, taking pictures and for processing each activity with me after they tried it. Thank you to: Judy Vannaerssen, OTR/L, CLVT; Jill Samberg, OTR/L; Jen Santisi, OTR/L; Tina Poley, OTR/L; Antonio Sofia, DPT; Beth Leach, MPT; Claire Ricker, PT; Vicki Brunswick, PT; Suzie Seckinger, MCCCCP-SLP; and Linda Santoli, MCCCCP-SLP. Thanks to John Thomas, an enthusiastic Orientation and Mobility instructor for help with the photos!

I want to give many thanks to the students who have inspired me day after day to create fresh and exciting learning opportunities to bring to school and therapy sessions. I greatly appreciate their enthusiasm as I continue moving forward with all of these ideas. I would also like to thank the parents for allowing their children to be a part of this project and for all of the hard work they do each morning, noon and night. Special thanks to the Delduco family for their creativity, flexibility and zest for all that life has to offer!

Most importantly, thank you to my husband and daughter for their patience, love and support.

ACTIVITY

1

BLASTOFF!



Preparation

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

- 1 Toobeez set
- 3 ropes or 3 long pieces of Thera-band
- swing (either a net or platform swing)
- therapy ball (sized so the child can sit on the ball with feet flat on the floor)
- bean bags
- 5 balloons (inflated)
- weighted blanket (optional)

Set Up: See the following page.

Objectives

- Pretend play
- Improve counting skills
- Follow auditory instructions and visual patterns
- Sensory exploration and sensory integration
- Improve **visual-motor** skills, **motor-planning** skills and **bilateral-coordination** skills

Activity Plan

Time: 30 minutes

Space: Therapy Gym

Instruction: Individual

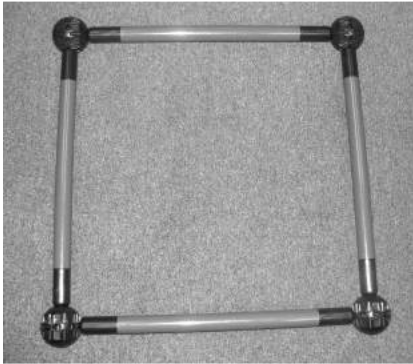
The Challenge

Float through outer space by following the path. Once you reach a station, catch or blast as many meteors as you can.

Blastoff!

Activity Setup

A. To construct the rocket ship:



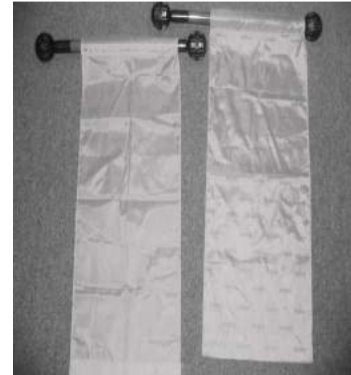
Step 1

Connect four 24" tubes to create a base.



Step 2

Connect four 36" tubes so they stand vertically from the base.



Step 3

Slide two curtains onto two 24" tubes.



Step 4

Connect two 16" tubes and one 24" tube to create a triangle.



Step 5

Connect the triangle from Step 4 to the front of the rocket ship. Add the curtains from Step 3 to make two walls. Then, add the last 24" tube to make the top.



Step 6

Connect two 16" tubes.

(Activity Setup continues on the next page.)



Step 7

Add the top of the triangle created in Step 6 to the top of the rocket.



Step 8

Be sure the equators of the connecting spheres are facing upward.



Step 9

The rocket ship is ready to board!

Blastoff!

B. To construct the meteor catcher:

1. Create another square using four 11” tubes and four connecting spheres.
2. Attach a Toobeez curtain from the left side to the right side of the square, and let it hang beneath the square like a basket.
3. Attach the last Toobeez curtain from the top of the square to the bottom. It will hang around and below the first curtain. This will be the meteor catcher.

C. To construct the meteor blaster:

Attach a sphere to each end of a 16” tube and place it next to the “moon” (therapy ball). This will be the meteor blaster.

D. Setting up the room:

1. Create a triangle with the three stations.
2. Place the rocket ship as far away as your rope will allow you from the swing.
3. Lay the piece of rope or Thera-band on the floor leading from the rocket ship to the swing.
4. Place the meteor catcher next to the swing.
5. Place the therapy ball “moon” as the third point in the triangle.
6. Connect the swing and the therapy ball with a piece of rope/Thera-band, creating a trail on the floor between the two stations.

Blastoff!

7. Connect the therapy ball and the rocket ship with the third piece of rope/Thera-band from Step #3.
8. Place the bean bags in front of the swing.
9. Place the five balloons in front of the therapy ball.

Helpful Hints!

Be sure to review these tips prior to beginning the activity, and if necessary, share reminders with the group during the activity.

- For a student or a child that presents with a lot of **flexion** in his/her hip and pelvis, trunk, neck and shoulder area, lying prone is a great way to facilitate **extension** of the child's body. This is also a great position for children that present with hypotonia/low **muscle tone** throughout their body. Pushing themselves in this position is a way for the child to control their own vestibular experience, and it is a great way to weight bear on their upper extremities to strengthen hand, arm, shoulder and neck muscles - all important muscles for the complex task of handwriting
- **Therapist Tip:** When lying prone on the swing, if a child does not have the strength to hold the meteor catcher with arms extended, instruct the child to sit upright on the swing. If the child chooses to remain prone on the swing, use balloons to hit the meteor blaster instead of the meteor catcher

Activity Instructions

1. Instruct the child to climb into the rocket ship and sit down on the floor to wait for the directions.
2. Read aloud the following Activity Challenge Box to the astronaut.

Challenge: Float through outer space by following the path. Once you reach a station, catch or blast as many meteors as you can.

3. Children are to count backward from ten to one and then shout "Blastoff!"

Blastoff!

- The therapist can shake the rocket ship a little as they blast off into space. The child and the therapist can also make blastoff noises as they take off.
- Once in outer space, the child should follow the rope to their outer space experience (bend down, pick up the rope, and follow it to the swing).
- The child should then climb on to the swing with assistance from the therapist as needed. Hand the child the meteor catcher. The child is now lying prone on the platform swing (or in the **net swing**) with arms extended and holding the meteor catcher (see “Therapist Notes” on the following page if there is a concern with lying prone.)
- Swing the child in **linear motion** (forward and backward). The child should remain facing forward and facing the therapist.
- The therapist should then position him/herself in front of the student with the basket of bean bags.
- Toss a bean bag or balloon (meteor) one at a time toward the child while he/she is swinging. The child is to catch the “meteors” in the meteor catcher. Make it a game and try to catch three, five or ten - let the astronaut decide!
- Once the child catches the number of meteors he/she set out to catch, request that the child slow him/herself down until stopped. Have the child climb off the swing and follow the rope leading from the swing to the therapy ball.
- With the meteor blaster in hand, have the child sit on the moon, making sure that his/her feet are firmly planted on the ground. The child can then begin to bounce on the “moon.” The therapist should reposition him/herself in front of the child once again.



Therapist Note

The up and down motion of bouncing on the therapy ball and the linear to and fro movement on the swing both provide a different type of **vestibular stimulation** to the child’s nervous system called **oscillation**.

- Again, ask the child to identify how many meteors he/she is going to blast. Setting goals and achieving them is a great self-esteem booster!

Blastoff!

13. The therapist should gently toss the balloon meteors toward the child. The child is to hold on to the meteor blaster with two hands in order to hit or “blast” them with the meteor blaster.

Therapist Note

Instructing the child to hold on to the meteor blaster with two hands allows both sides of the body to work together. By facilitating **crossing midline** on both sides, both hemispheres of the brain are speaking to one another, and the child’s brain is preparing to complete complex tasks such as reading, comprehending, handwriting, moving and thinking simultaneously.

14. Once the child reaches his goal of blasting meteors, have the child follow the rope back to the rocket ship for a cool down, countdown.
15. When the child is in the rocket ship, ask the child to sit on the floor and slowly count up from one to ten. When the child is finished counting, give a couple of extra moments for the child to prepare for the transition to his/her next task. **Therapist Tip:** If a child demonstrates difficulty calming him/herself, try wrapping the child in the weighted blanket to provide calming deep tactile input to the child’s body.
16. When the activity is complete, move on to the Discussion and Processing questions.



Therapist Notes

For children who do not enjoy lying on their stomachs or present with g- or j-tubes, have the student sit upright in the swing to promote **active sitting** (since the child will be moving while he/she is sitting). Active sitting requires core muscles in the trunk to contract in order to maintain balance while moving. This is also good for children who present with hypotonia/low muscle tone in their trunk. Strong trunk muscles are important because they help with proper posture needed for sitting or walking upright. Good upright posture allows our organs to function properly and ensures that our diaphragms are able to move appropriately so deep breaths can provide adequate oxygen to the brain. As a result, students are calm, organized and ready to learn.

Blastoff!

Therapist Assessment

- Observation of the child’s participation in pretend play that required integration of many senses to produce an adapted response
- Therapist observation of the child’s response to vestibular stimulation
 - Does swinging have a calming or alerting effect on the child?
 - Does bouncing have an alerting effect on the child?

Activity Discussion and Processing

Use the questions below as a guide for your discussion. Select the questions you feel will best benefit your child/student. It is not mandatory to cover every question. Make sure to let everyone share their ideas, and remind participants that everyone’s opinions and feelings are important!

Work through the following questions:

- What was easy about this activity?
- What made you smile during the activity?
- What was a hard part of this activity?
- Do you feel that you are better focused and/or ready to complete a quiet, seated activity after swinging in the swing and bouncing on the ball?

Activity Variations

1. Change the direction of the meteors.

If the child is sitting on a platform swing, the therapist can position him/herself to the right or left of the child (or switch every couple of bean bags) to toss the bean bags. Since the child is seated, by tossing the bean bags to the right or left of the child, the child must turn his/her trunk to catch the bean bags. This **trunk rotation** is an important component to normal gait patterns when walking.

2. Decrease the difficulty.

If the child is not able to catch the meteors in the basket or use the Toobeez to blast the meteor balloons, ask the child to catch the bean bags with their hands (*Activity Variations continue on the next page.*)

Blastoff!

and to hit the balloon back to you while seated on the swing and seated on the therapy ball.

3. Involving children who use wheelchairs.

Create a rocket ship large enough to place the wheelchair on the inside. You will need to use four 36” tubes as the base of the rocket ship. Eliminate the need to roll over a tube with the wheelchair by removing one tube to create an opening so the wheelchair can easily move through. Complete the countdown and then wheel the student to the swing. Safely transfer the student into the net swing or **Cuddle Swing®** (or another swing that the student is comfortable using). **Therapist Tip: Please ask another staff member to complete a two-man transfer if the child is unable to bear weight through his/her lower extremities.** If the child is lying supine in the net swing, hold the balloon meteor from above (at an appropriate distance corresponding to the child’s **active range of motion** in his/her upper extremities) and ask the child to reach out to touch or bop the meteor with his/her hands.

4. Involving children who use wheelchairs (outdoors).

Build a Toobeez rocket ship large enough to accommodate the wheelchair. This will require more than one Toobeez set, as the frame of the rocket ship will need to be built with all 36” tubes. Complete the countdown. If your facility has a specific wheelchair swing (a platform onto which you can wheel the wheelchair and lock it in place so the child is able to swing while in his/her wheelchair), take the balloon meteors and try to hit them back and forth.

5. Involving children with severe physical/motoric limitations.

Build a Toobeez rocket ship large enough to accommodate the wheelchair. Complete the countdown as stated in above activity. Either place the child in a wheelchair swing (seated in wheelchair) or complete a two-man transfer to a net swing or Cuddle Swing®. Use bubbles as meteors for an added sensory experience while in the swing!

6. For children who are nonverbal.

If a student has communication goals that require them to use a switch (Big Mac, Step by Step, etc.), record your voice saying “Blastoff!” on the device. After you countdown from ten to one, wait for the student to initiate the completion of the countdown by pressing the switch to say “Blastoff!” Continue with the remaining activity instructions.

Blastoff!

Activity Notes

See page 6 for available
training options!

ACTIVITY

2

MUSICAL SQUARES

.....



Objectives

- Improve **auditory-processing** and **auditory-discrimination** skills
- Improve **motor-planning** skills
- Improve **attention** and **concentration**
- Improve visual-motor skills
- Improve spatial-awareness skills by strengthening **proprioception** and **kinesthesia**

Preparation

Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Materials:

- 1 (or more) Toobeez set(s)
- radio, tape or CD player

Setup:

1. With four tubes and four spheres, build a square and place it on the floor.
2. Repeat this step to make additional squares so there is one square for each child.
3. Place all the Toobeez squares in a line or in a circle on the floor.

The Challenge

Listen to the music that is playing. When the music stops, move your body into one of the squares. You must find a different square each time the music stops.

Activity Plan

Time: 30 minutes

Space: Medium - Lots
(Therapy Gym, gymnasium or outside)

Instruction: Small group
(up to six individuals)

Helpful Hints!

Musical Squares

Be sure to review these tips prior to beginning the activity, and if necessary, share reminders with the group during the activity.

- Use an open space that is free of toys, objects or hanging items so the children do not trip over or hit their heads on anything
- Use upbeat music for an alerting experience
- For a larger group, you will need more than one set of Toobeez to create more squares
- Have the children help assemble the Toobeez squares to help strengthen their **bilateral-coordination** skills and hand skills of a gross hand grasp around the tube. Depending on the grasp, the student will be strengthening muscles that **flex** and **extend** the wrist, as well as muscles that **pronate** and **supinate** the wrist



Activity Instructions

1. Have the children seat themselves around the squares in a circle. There should be an equal number of squares to children.
2. Review the guidelines of the game as listed in the box below.

Musical Squares Rules

1. Keep your hands and body parts to yourself.
 2. Say, "It is okay to share squares today. We will be moving into and out of all of these squares today."
 3. Always be listening since the instructions may change.
 4. If you feel tired or would like to stop playing, please tell the therapist.
- Therapist Tip:** The therapist can continue to involve the student by having him start and stop the music.

Musical Squares

3. Read the Activity Challenge Box to the group.

Challenge: Listen to the music that is playing. When the music stops, move your body into one of the squares. You must find a different square each time the music stops.

4. Begin the music and have the children walk slowly around the squares on the floor.
5. When the music stops, the children should move quickly to an open square and jump into it.
6. Once they have jumped into the square, ask them to “freeze” like another student, an animal, or move their body in a different position.



7. Begin again and remind the students to choose a different square.
8. Observe the children’s behavior, and look for signs of fatigue or distractibility.
9. When you observe the activity coming to an end, move on to the Discussion and Processing questions.

Therapist Assessment

- Observe each child's behavior and participation in a group activity
- Observe each child's communication and social skills during the group activity
- Observe each child's ability to follow the game's instructions
 - How does the child follow simple instructions?
 - How is the child able to follow complex instructions?
- Observe each child's movements and ability to demonstrate awareness of self in relation to the squares as well as other children in the group

Activity Discussion and Processing

Use the questions below as a guide for your discussion. Select the questions you feel will best benefit your child/student. It is not mandatory to cover every question. Make sure to let everyone share their ideas, and remind participants that everyone's opinions and feelings are important!

Work through the following questions:

- What did you like about this activity?
- What was easy or difficult about this activity? Why?
- Did you like the music? What about the music did you like? What music did you dislike?
- Did this activity give energy to your body, or did this activity help you to get some energy out of your body?
- What time of day would an activity like this help you to feel awake and ready to learn (that is, first thing in the morning after a bus ride, midmorning, after lunch, etc.)?

Activity Variations

1. Decrease the difficulty.

Use music that has a slower rhythm. By moving around the squares at a slower pace, changing momentum and grading of the movement may be less challenging.

2. Increase the difficulty.

Remove one square after each time the music stops, ending with one child and one square.

3. Increase the difficulty.

To further challenge **gross-motor skills**, change the movement around the circle to crawling, hopping, jumping, skipping, galloping, walking backward or tip toeing. If a student or group of students have not yet mastered the skill of jumping, step into the square instead. Be sure to choose movement skills that are developmentally appropriate and that match current physical abilities of the children.

4. Change the shape.

Make it musical triangles or musical trapezoids! For increased difficulty and to challenge **memory** skills, when changing the shape, change the instruction of movement for each of the different shapes. For example, say “When the music stops, jump into the triangles and stand on one foot or jump into a trapezoid and place one hand on the floor.”

5. Change the game.

When the music stops, everyone puts their right or left hand or their right or left foot in the square. They could also put in an elbow or they could sit in the square. These variations reinforce skills such as **sequencing** and following instructions, and they also reinforce **body-awareness skills**.

6. For children who use wheelchairs.

Have the children propel themselves in the circular pattern around the squares along with the other children (combine children with all different abilities in the same group). If the child is unable to propel his/her own wheelchair, another staff member can push the child around the squares. Before beginning the music, instruct the children on the movement they are to do when the music stops. For example, “When the music stops, everyone put your hands on your knees and call out a color of a Toobeez square lying on the floor.”

7. For children using switches.

For a child that is cognitively and physically involved, switches are often used for communication and to control electronics (for example, lights, radio)
(Activity Variations continue on the next page.)

Musical Squares

TV, etc) in their environment. Using a Powerlink™ by Ablenet, hook up a switch to the radio and allow the child to control the starting and the stopping of the music.

8. For children using switches.

Program the instructions of the game onto a Big Mac switch or a Step-by-Step, and allow the child using switches to instruct the group.

Activity Notes

See page 6 for available training options!

ACTIVITY

3

QUIET CORNER



Objectives

- Promote calm minds and bodies to increase readiness for learning
- Facilitate self-regulation skills in children

Preparation

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

- 1 Toobeez set
- small bean bag chair
- small tape cassette/CD player, portable headset or white noise machine
- headphones
- calming music
- book(s) on tape
- container/shoe box of fidget items

Set Up: See the following page.

Materials (cont):

- weighted blanket or heavy sleeping bag
- visual timer

Activity Plan

Time: 15 – 30 minutes

Space: Corner of a room

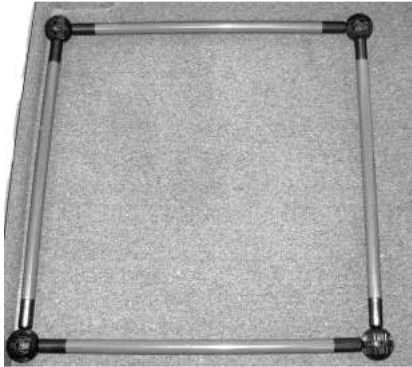
Instruction: Individual

The Challenge

The child is challenged to identify times during tasks (or in his/her daily routine) when “quiet time” is needed to regroup and reorganize.

Quiet Corner

Activity Setup



Step 1

Connect four 36" tubes to form a square base.



Step 2

Connect four more 36" tubes so they extend vertically from the base.



Step 3

Create the top part of the cube with eight 16" tubes. Add all four curtains to create walls.



Step 4

Place selected relaxation items in the Quiet Corner.

Therapist Tip: For added seclusion, drape a small parachute over the top of the Quiet Corner.

See page 6 for available training options!

Helpful Hints!

Be sure to review these tips prior to beginning the activity, and if necessary, share reminders with the group during the activity.

- Utilizing a Quiet Corner assists children in **self-regulation** and serves as an area that promotes a calm and relaxed environment. Children that demonstrate a low frustration tolerance to environmental demands, hypersensitivity to sensory stimulation and children that easily become over-stimulated by environmental stimulation may find this Quiet Corner a safe place to regroup and reorganize
- Slow and rhythmic auditory input is perceived by the brain as calming. Examples are ocean waves, Native American drumming or a white noise machine
- **Fidget tools** can include items such as a pad and pencil for doodling or writing, a hand-held vibrator for calming tactile input, and scented lotion (such as lavender, chamomile or vanilla) for a calming olfactory experience
- Fidget tools such as pipe cleaners, Play-Doh® or Theraputty®, squeeze balls and Koosh balls® also allow the child to provide calming tactile input through the manipulation of these objects

Activity Instructions

1. Once you have set up the Quiet Corner in the classroom or therapy room, place the bean bag chair, the cassette/CD player and music, the fidget box of goodies and the weighted blanket/sleeping bag inside of the Quiet Corner area. This allows the children to choose which tools assist him/her best in calming and reorganizing their brain and body.
2. Give the child time to explore the variety of calming tools that are inside the Quiet Corner.
3. Observe the child's behavior in a variety of settings and note his/her preferred activities and tasks. This may provide more ideas for calming tools to place inside the Quiet Corner.

Quiet Corner

4. Observe the times during the day that the child appears to need the Quiet Corner the most, and incorporate the Quiet Corner at the times during the day where the child appears to need help with getting ready to learn. Is it first thing in the morning after a long bus ride? Is it mid-morning after attending to seated work for an extended period of time? Is it after recess and the child is too “wound up” to sit at his/her desk and complete afternoon work? Does the child appear to have a “meltdown” or unravel at the end of the day after a full day of cognitive demands? Use the Quiet Corner as a part of the child’s **sensory diet**.



This student explores vibration as a calming tactile experience.

5. Observe the child’s behavior during specific tasks, and identify signs of frustration before the child unravels and suggest a break time in the Quiet Corner to regroup. Is the child becoming frustrated with a specific task that requires a lot of brain power? Heavy breathing, a clenched jaw, fisted hands, head down on the desk or table, and distractibility are a few signs of increasing frustration.



This student explores calming music through the headset and manipulates a Koosh Ball® in her hands.

6. Establish a routine. Children thrive on routine. Clear routines allow students to orient to the day, giving them a sense of order. It also helps them to anticipate the demands of the day and provides comfort.
7. Once the Quiet Corner has worked well for the student (either through their reports of “feeling better,” a smile, or you observe calmer behavior), begin to shift the responsibility of scheduling time in the Quiet Corner to the student. Provide the child times throughout the day to communicate the need to calm him/herself.

Therapist Assessment

- Observe each child's preferred activities
- Observe each child's participation in a group activity or seated work task after the student has spent time in the Quiet Corner. The child should be calm, alert and ready for learning
- Observe the "tools" each child chose to use when in the Quiet Corner. Fidgets such as a Koosh ball® and pipe cleaners are able to travel with students to various activities (that is, if switching classes) and are portable for transition times (for example, a bus ride home). The ability for the child to have these calming tools with him throughout the day will further aid in his/her self-regulation. These tools are also relatively inexpensive, and providing parents with this information will aid the successful carryover of daily routine (school, daycare, camp, etc.) into the home routine
- Ask the child to journal his/her experience in the Quiet Corner. Ask them to write how they felt when they went into the Quiet Corner, what activities they chose, and how they felt when they came out of the Quiet Corner

Activity Discussion and Processing

Use the questions below as a guide for your discussion. Select the questions you feel will best benefit your child/student. It is not mandatory to cover every question. Make sure to let everyone share their ideas, and remind participants that everyone's opinions and feelings are important!

Work through the following questions:

- What made you decide to take some time in the Quiet Corner?
- Which fidget tools, if any, did you choose to use when relaxing in the Quiet Corner?
- Did you like the music? What about the music did you like?
- What did you feel like before you went into the Quiet Corner? What do you feel like after coming out?

Activity Variations

1. Use it as a place to work on tasks.

The Quiet Corner can also be used as a space for seated work that requires concentration and manipulation of materials. All of the sensory materials can easily be removed, and the Quiet Corner can provide boundaries for children that are easily visually distracted. The quality of work may improve, and the child may appear less anxious when presented with a task that requires sustained attention.

Activity Notes

See page 6 for available training options!

ACTIVITY

4

TOOBEEZ TANGRAMS

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Objectives

- Facilitate **receptive communication** and **expressive communication** skills
- Address auditory-processing skills
- Address spatial awareness
- Improve **right/left discrimination** skills and directional concepts
- Improve **tactile-discrimination** skills
- Address **self-advocacy** skills
- Support **orientation & mobility (O & M)** skills in individuals with visual impairments

Preparation

Time: 5 minutes

Materials:

- 1 Toobeez set
- 1 blindfold per student

Setup:

1. Each individual is given the same variety of pieces (start with five depending on skill level).

Activity Plan

Time: 30 - 60 minutes

Space: Tabletop or floor space (about the size of a gym mat)

Instruction: Individual (with therapist) or pairs

The Challenge

Without seeing the other person, connect the Toobeez and build the same exact design. One person gives directions and the other person follows auditory instructions only.

Helpful Hints!

Toobeez Tangrams

Be sure to review these tips prior to beginning the activity, and if necessary, share reminders with the group during the activity.

- If using floor space, sit back to back to one another. For students with visual impairments or total blindness, sit at a table. When the design is complete, the designs should be identical
- Remember that this is not a mirroring activity. The person building is listening and interpreting the verbal instructions
- If a child is receiving individual therapy, the therapist can be the child's partner for the activity
- Find a quiet area to minimize auditory distractions. This activity requires concentration and minimal environmental distractions for the best results

Activity Instructions

1. Provide the individuals with the same number of Toobeez (begin with a few and add on as the children are successful). Students should also have the exact same pieces. For example, one piece could be a sphere, one piece could be a 36" tube with a sphere on the end, one piece could be two 11" tubes connected by a sphere to form an "L" shape...be creative! See picture below for sample starting pieces.



Toobeez Tangrams

2. If necessary, review directional concepts such as right and left, up and down, away from and toward, front and back, straight and veer. Ask the children to point (using their body as the center) in each direction.
3. If necessary, review concepts such as short, long or medium lengths. Ask students to use their hands to gesture differences in lengths.
4. Review the pieces and clarify the vocabulary used to describe each tube. This ensures that both individuals are clear on how to describe the pieces when giving and receiving the instructions. For example, have the children agree on what they will call the black sphere to clarify instructions - will they call it a sphere, a ball or a connector?

Therapist Note

For children with intact vision, have them sit back to back on the floor so each child is unable to see the other person's work space. For children with visual impairments, total blindness, or if the only space available is a tabletop, have the students sit across from one another. Be sure that both of the participant's vision is occluded using the blindfolds.

5. Read the following Activity Challenge Box. Review the importance of listening and feeling comfortable asking questions to clarify instructions. For individuals with visual impairments, this is a vital skill needed to travel routes safely and efficiently.

Challenge: Without seeing the other person, connect the Toobeez and build the same exact design. One person gives directions and the other person follows auditory instructions only.

6. Children should decide which participant will give directions and which will receive directions.
7. Begin the activity, and the therapist should not prompt students unless frustration is noticed and/or help is requested by the students. The children should strengthen their **problem-solving** skills and communication skills by working with each other.
8. Upon completing the designs, the children can inspect each other's design and move on to the Discussion and Processing questions.



Two students were successful in giving and following instructions!

Therapist Assessment

- Observe each child’s ability to comprehend and follow specific instructions, as well as the ability to clearly state instructions. This observation will provide ideas as to the type of learning style to which the child will best respond and what types of strategies are needed to encourage full participation in daily activities, whether in the classroom or in the home
- This activity requires a lot of **planning** of language and of gross motor and spatial awareness. By occluding the child’s vision, this allows the body to use both tactile and **kinesthetic/proprioceptive** senses to strengthen these skills
- This is a great activity to co-treat with speech and language pathologists, if the child requires their professional services

See page 6 for available training options!

Activity Discussion and Processing

Use the questions below as a guide for your discussion. Select the questions you feel will best benefit your child/student. It is not mandatory to cover every question. Make sure to let everyone share their ideas, and remind participants that everyone’s opinions and feelings are important!

Work through the following questions:

- What was easy or hard about this activity?
- What frustrated you during this activity?
- What do you now know about yourself from this activity? For example, do you need your teacher to repeat instructions or re-word your instructions for homework to be able to understand them? Do you need more time to think about instructions to best understand what you have been asked to do?

Activity Variations

1. Add blindfolds.

With sighted children, use blindfolds to occlude vision and further tune into the **tactile sense**. This also requires children to use a different set of concepts to describe the tubes (short or long rather than by color).

2. Decrease the difficulty.

Use fewer Toobeez pieces and provide the students with the exact pieces that they need to use. This can decrease feelings of being overwhelmed when trying to find the piece being described.

3. Increase the difficulty.

Add more pieces to the activity to increase the challenge.

4. Increase the difficulty.

Divide the set of Toobeez in half. Instruct the students to build a three-dimensional structure including all of the pieces rather than a flat design.

5. Make it a group activity.

If more than two students are involved in a group therapy session, split the students into two groups. Ask one student to build the structure or the design while the other students can take turns providing instructions. Or, more than one child can participate in the construction of the design and one designated child can provide the other group with instructions.

6. Change activity to mirroring.

Have children seated facing one another and ask one child to be the leader and the other the mirror. The child that is the mirror must follow the leader's every move, even if they itch their ear before picking up the Toobeez piece. The mirror must follow each move and connect the same pieces in the same direction as the leader (leader's right side of body will be the mirror's left side of the body).

7. For children who use wheelchairs.

Have one child create an "accessory" to their wheelchair (perhaps an extended arm like an oar that would make steering more fun – be creative!) and have that child give directions to another child (vision occluded or back-to-back) to create the same wheelchair accessory.

Activity Notes

ACTIVITY

5

CLONE



Objectives

- Improve **visual-perceptual** skills
- Improve visual-motor skills
- Strengthen planning, sequencing and problem-solving skills by participation in a self-correcting activity
- Improve bilateral-coordination and upper extremity use during construction
- Strengthen visual memory and short-term memory

Preparation

Time: 5 minutes

Materials:

- 1 Toobeez set
- digital camera (optional for activity variation)
- paper and pen (optional for activity variation)
- tape (optional for activity variation)

Setup:

1. Divide the Toobeez set in half. The therapist and child should have the same exact pieces.

The Challenge

Copy a design using the visual and tactile systems. No auditory instructions will be provided.

Activity Plan

Time: 30 - 60 minutes

Space: Tabletop or floor space (the size of a gym mat)

Instruction: Individual or pairs

Helpful Hints!

Clone

Be sure to review these tips prior to beginning the activity, and if necessary, share reminders with the group during the activity.

- Do not allow the child to see the shape or the design that you are creating. The child that will be constructing the design or structure should be presented with the finished product and he/she must plan where to begin
- At first, choose simple designs such as shapes or alternating patterns of colors in a straight line so the child can feel successful. Then move on to more difficult shapes, designs, patterns and structures
- Find a quiet area to minimize auditory distractions. This activity requires concentration and the less environmental distractions, the better the results

Activity Instructions

1. With younger children, and if necessary with older children, review the concept of shapes such as square, triangle and rectangle (shapes that are able to be created when using the Toobeez product).
2. With younger children, and if necessary with older children, review the colors of the Toobeez pieces.

Therapist Note

For children with visual impairments, review size concepts. Label the Toobeez as different sizes such as small (11" Toobeez), medium (16" Toobeez), large (24" Toobeez), and extra large (36" Toobeez). If using all four tubes is difficult for the child, choose only two sizes (such as 11" and 24" tubes) and label them as short and long or small and large.

3. With younger children, and if necessary with older children, review directional concepts of left and right, up and down, away from and toward, and straight and veer.
4. Read the following Activity Challenge Box.

Challenge: Copy a design using the visual and tactile systems. No auditory instructions will be provided.

Clone

5. Without the child looking, the therapist should create a shape, design or structure. The difficulty of the design can increase by increasing the number of pieces used.
6. Once the therapist has completed the design, the child should then be instructed to copy the design using the same number and sizes of pieces. The therapist should not provide auditory instruction as this activity is designed to strengthen visual and tactile systems.
7. When the activity is completed, move on to the Discussion and Processing questions.

Therapist Assessment

- Supports classroom/academic goals of improving **body awareness**, pattern recognition, spatial awareness and concepts of shapes and sizes. All of these skills support math concepts
- Supports classroom/academic goals of improving visual-motor and visual-perceptual skills (to help with tasks such as copying homework from the chalkboard to a piece of paper)

Activity Discussion and Processing

Use the questions below as a guide for your discussion. Select the questions you feel will best benefit your child/student. It is not mandatory to cover every question. Make sure to let everyone share their ideas, and remind participants that everyone's opinions and feelings are important!

Work through the following questions:

- What was easy or hard about this activity?
- What frustrated you during this activity?
- What do you now know about yourself from this activity? For example, do you need your teacher to read the homework that is written on the board or can you copy homework instructions as your teacher reads them to you?

See page 6 for available training options!

Activity Variations

1. Decrease the difficulty.

Use fewer Toobeez pieces and present the child with only those needed to complete the task. This can decrease feelings of being overwhelmed when it is time to pick out the correct pieces from a larger pile of Toobeez pieces.

2. Increase the difficulty.

Use a snapshot approach to the activity. When presenting the child with the design to copy, allow them to study it for up to five seconds (increase the time for a more difficult design). Once they have studied the design, remove it from their field of vision and ask them to reproduce the design from memory.

3. Increase the difficulty.

Take a picture of a few designs using a digital camera and print them out. Ask the student to create the 3-D design from a two-dimensional picture.

4. Increase the difficulty.

If a digital camera is not available, draw a shape, design or structure on a piece of paper. Label the sides with the color of the Toobeez you would like them to use. Ask students to create the three-dimensional design from the two-dimensional model that is drawn on the paper.

5. Increase the difficulty.

To further challenge visual-motor and visual-perceptual skills, use Variations #2 & #3. Tape the pictures on a vertical surface such as a wall or chalkboard. The child must then re-create the design on a horizontal surface (such as the floor or a tabletop). This requires the child to shift his/her eye gaze. In addition, the brain must interpret the picture from a different plane than the plane in which the child is working.

6. Increase the difficulty.

Tape the picture of Variation #2 & #3 to a vertical surface. Ask the child to study the picture as in Variation #1. Allow the child approximately five seconds (depending on the difficulty of the design) to study the picture, and then take the picture away. Instruct the child to reproduce the picture with a set of Toobeez by relying on his/her short-term memory.

(Activity Variations continue on the next page.)

Clone

7. Work in pairs.

If working in pairs, ask one student to create a shape or structure without the other student watching. When completed, ask the other student to copy the first student's design. See the example pictures below.



Student creates a design.



Student copies the original design.

Activity Notes

ACTIVITY

6

LETTER POND



Objectives

- Challenge hand-eye coordination
- Strengthen pre-reading skills of letter recognition and letter identification
- Strengthen matching skills
- Strengthen **fine-motor** skills for tool use (scissors and markers)
- Practice turn-taking skills (if working in a group setting)

Preparation

Time: 15 - 30 minutes

Materials:

- 1 Toobeez set
- ½ inch button magnets (4 packs)
- yarn or string
- scissors (1 pair for adult and 1 pair of safety scissors for a child if cutting skills are emerging)
- tape (hot glue gun – optional)
- 52 large index cards
- marker
- blue construction paper (optional)

Setup: See the following page.

Activity Plan

Time: 30 - 60 minutes

Space: Medium

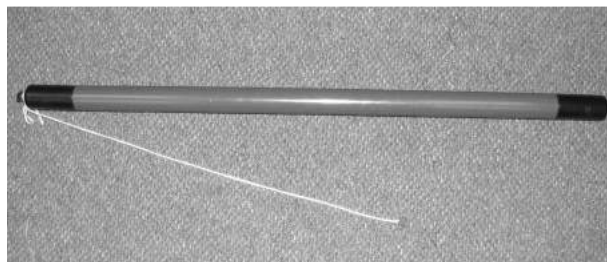
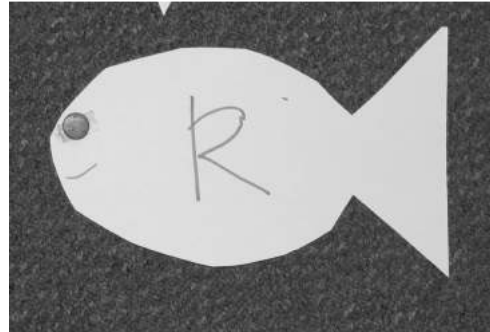
Instruction: Individual or small group (up to four)

The Challenge

Catch the letters that are swimming in the pond and match them to the letter cards held in each player's hands. The first one to match all of the letters wins!

Activity Setup

1. Build an octagon out of the eight 16” tubes. This will serve as the pond.
Therapist Tip: Children who are working on cutting skills can also cut waves out of the blue construction paper for further practice. Be sure to draw lines for the child to follow if they require a visual pattern to successfully cut the paper. Throw the waves into the pond!
2. Cut the large index cards into the shape of fish. You will need 26 fish.
3. Write the uppercase letters of the alphabet on the fish (one letter per fish).
4. On the index cards or large paper, write each letter of the alphabet. Each player should have four index cards, each with different letters. For example: player one has *A, B, C, and D*; player two has *E, F, G, and H*; player three has *I, J, K and, L* etc. One letter should be written on each card.
5. Using tape or hot glue, attach one ½ inch button magnet to each fish on the side where the letters are not written (make it the eye – be creative!). (To decrease the difficulty, attach the magnet to the side of the fish where the letter is written.) It does not matter which side the magnet is attached to on the index card.
6. Throw the fish into the pond! The magnets should be facing up.
7. Cut a two to three foot piece of yarn or string to serve as the the fishing line. If working in a group setting, each child should have their own fishing line.
8. Each child fishing should choose a fishing rod (either a 16”, 24”, or 36” Toobeez tube).
9. As picture below, tie the string to the end (the piece that resembles a key) of the Toobeez fishing rod.
10. Attach a 1½ inch button magnet to the opposite end of the string either with tape or by hot glue. This serves as the fishing hook.



Attach the magnet (either side) with tape or a hot glue gun to the end of the string.

Helpful Hints!

Be sure to review these tips prior to beginning the activity, and if necessary, share reminders with the group (and staff members assisting) during the activity.

- Be sure to allow children to participate in as much of the set up process as they are able. If a child is working toward a goal that requires them to hold and use scissors efficiently, allow them to cut the index cards into shapes of fish (using a pair of safety scissors). If a student is working on the skills of handwriting their letters, be sure to allow them to use the marker to write the individual letters on each card
- If time limits the therapy session, choose the part of the activity that will benefit the child's development most. The set up of this activity allows a child to practice many important developmental milestones, and this should not be lost due to time constraints. If needed, break this activity into two sessions. One session dedicated to the set up and the next session dedicated to the activity

See page 6 for available training options!

Activity Instructions

1. Review general rules with the individual or the group. For example, everyone will wait their turn, no grabbing each others cards, etc.
2. Read the following Activity Challenge Box.

Challenge: Catch the letters that are swimming in the pond and match them to the letter cards held in each player's hand. The first one to match all of the letters wins!

Letter Pond

3. Position the children around the pond, depending on the number of children involved in the activity. If working with a larger group, position the children in a circle around the pond. **Therapist Tip:** Children should be allowed to move around freely in order to catch the fish of their choice!
4. The first child should begin by casting their fishing line into the Letter Pond.



5. If the fish is a match to one of their index cards they are holding, they keep the fish and put their pair aside. **Therapist Tip:** If working in a group, ask the child to show their letter to the other students. If another student has a match, the letter should be



given to that student to make a pair. Each person will get one turn to cast their fishing line and pick a fish. See the picture for an example of a match.

6. Continue taking turns to fish. The first person to find all of the fish to match their cards wins!
7. When the activity is complete, move on to the Discussion and Processing questions.



Hand-eye coordination and patience allowed these two youngsters to have a successful fishing experience!



Therapist Assessment

- Therapist's observation of child/children's participation
- Therapist's observation of child/children's matching skills
- Therapist's observation of hand-eye coordination to catch the fish
- Therapist's observation of child/children's turn-taking skills

Activity Discussion and Processing

Use the questions below as a guide for your discussion. Select the questions you feel will best benefit your child/student. It is not mandatory to cover every question. Make sure to let everyone share their ideas, and remind participants that everyone's opinions and feelings are important!

Work through the following questions:

- What was easy or hard about this activity?
- What frustrated you during this activity?
- How did this activity help you to practice reading your letters?

Activity Variations

1. Decrease the difficulty.

If a child (or group of children) is not ready to match letters, draw a variety of shapes on the fish and their playing cards. If using a few shapes, add more fish by making a few of the same shapes different colors. Children must match the same color and shape to their playing cards.

2. Decrease the difficulty.

Use a variety of pictures of everyday objects that the child may encounter (for example, a chair, ball, doll, truck, etc.). Follow the same activity instructions.

3. Increase the difficulty.

After the student matches the letter, ask them to verbalize a word that begins with their letter pair.

(Activity Variations continue on the next page.)

Letter Pond

4. Using memory skills.

Instead of showing the letter to the other players if no match is found, throw the fish back into the pond. Children will need to remember where they placed the fish so they do not catch the same one twice!

5. For children with hearing impairments or deafness.

Write individual letters on the fish, but instead of matching the letters to another letter, have the children sign the letter.

6. For children with hearing impairments or deafness.

Print out pictures of a variety of signs (American Sign Language) they are learning and glue them to the fish. After catching the fish, instruct the child to finger spell the word or vice versa. Write words on the fish and, after the fish are caught, instruct the child to match the word to the picture of the sign.

7. For children with visual impairments or blindness.

Follow the same instructions as the original activity, but instead of writing letters on the fish, ask the students to write Braille letters on the fish and the playing cards to match.

8. For children who use wheelchairs.

Make sure they receive a 36" tube as their fishing rod so they are able to reach the fish further out into the pond.

Activity Notes

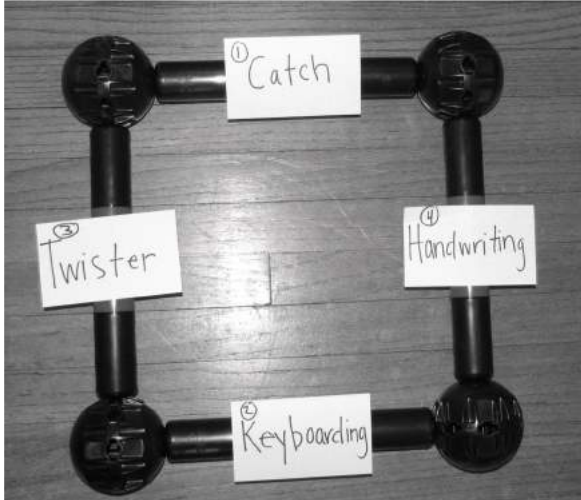
This activity was adapted from the tabletop version of ABSeas fishing game by Discovery Toys.

ACTIVITY

7

TOOBEEZ TIMER

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Objectives

- Turn the abstract concept of time into a concrete method of teaching anticipation of time and effort
- Improve organizational process of planning, sequencing and time management in order to complete required tasks in a specific time frame

Preparation

Time: 5 minutes

Materials:

- 1 Toobeez set
- index cards (one for each activity you would like to complete in a specific amount of time)
- tape
- marker
- activities planned for the therapy session

Setup: See the following page.

Activity Plan

Time: 30 - 60 minutes

Space: Minimal or Medium

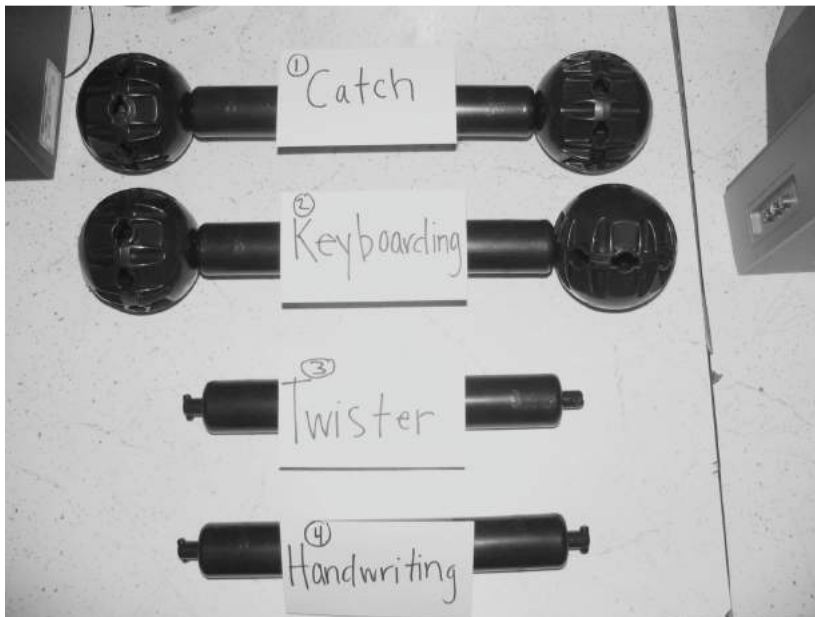
Instruction: Individual

The Challenge

The child will independently identify how many tasks he/she must complete before a specified amount of time has passed.

Activity Setup

1. Create a closed structure (for example, a square, triangle or cube) to display to the child as a model. **Therapist Tip:** Be sure not to make a line because that can sometimes be misunderstood in that it could continue on forever. The goal of this activity is to provide a concrete way to demonstrate time. The size and shape of the structure will depend on the number of tasks you have planned and the amount of time estimated to complete each task during the therapy session. That is, a 60 minute therapy session may equal three tasks if 20 minutes are allotted for each task. Therefore, three tasks can be completed, so use a triangle (since it has three sides).
2. Lay out in front of the child the pieces to make the same structure as the model. (That is, for a triangle, lay out three tubes with one sphere attached to each tube).
3. On the notecards, write the tasks that need to be completed. Continuing with the triangle example, Card #1 may read “swing time,” Card #2 may read “letter practice with clay,” and Card #3 may read “handwriting practice”).
4. Tape one card to each tube.
5. Present the set up tubes with notecards attached in a list format (top to bottom - with the first activity to be completed at the top and the last activity at the bottom) to the child.



Helpful Hints!

Be sure to review these tips prior to beginning the activity, and if necessary, share reminders with the group during the activity.

- Be sure to be seated in a quiet area to minimize distractions
- Depending on the amount of time estimated to complete each activity, give the amount of time a specified length of tube. For example, 15 minutes may be demonstrated by an 11” tube; 20 minutes by a 16” tube; 30 minutes by a 24” tube. If working for a long amount of time, use the 36” tube to provide a visual cue of longer periods of time
- If a child is not yet reading words, use pictures (drawn or with **Boardmaker™**) of the activities that are planned for the therapy session

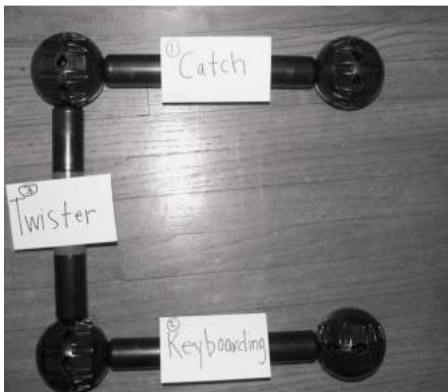
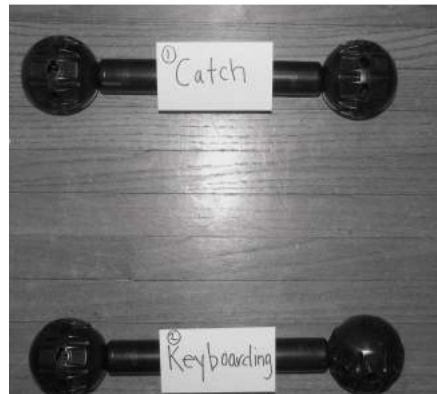
See page 6 for available training options!

Activity Instructions

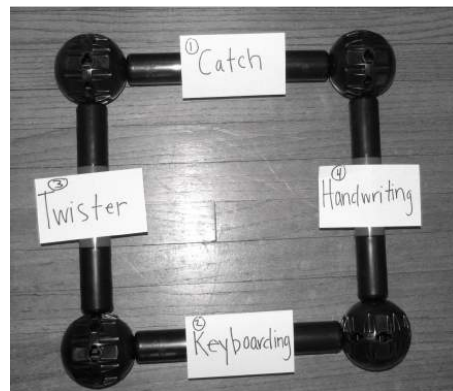
1. Seat the child with the activity tubes in list format to the left of the child.
2. Review with the child how long the therapy session will be. For example, “Good morning, Jimmy. Today we will be working together for one hour/30 minutes, etc.”
3. Present the child with the model shape/structure that they will make by the end of the therapy session and discuss that he/she will know that therapy time is finished when the structure is complete. For example, “Jimmy, we will be finished working together when your square looks like mine.”
4. Review the activity tubes with the child, telling him/her what is expected of them during the therapy session. Verbally presetting a child in this way assists the organizational process and allows them to anticipate the sequence of events for the therapy session (30/60 minutes).

Toobeez Timer

5. Ask the student to read the first activity on the list (top). Providing a list also adds structure to the child's therapy session and facilitates an organized approach to a task – a specific beginning point and specific end to the session.
6. Complete the prepared activity and place the first tube (with the activity on the index card) in a position that will begin the shape (either the top of the shape or the left as this also provides a structured approach to task and requires the eyes and brain to proceed using the same approach as reading – top to bottom and left to right).
7. Complete the next task prepared for the therapy session and place it beneath the first task's tube. Ask the child how many tasks are left until he is finished the therapy session. He could either look at the shape/structure to identify how many missing pieces there are, or he could look at the list and identify how many tasks are left on the list.
8. Continue this pattern until the therapy session is complete.
9. When the activity is complete, move on to the Discussion and Processing questions.



The student is able to see that there is only one last task to complete.



The student is able to visually identify that all the tasks have been completed and that the therapy session is finished.

Therapist Notes

- Be sure to praise the child for hard work
- If the child becomes distracted and demonstrates difficulty attending, review what you expect from them and let them know that they may have a rest break when a task is complete
- Be sure to allow rest breaks as needed. These should occur when the task is completed and before the next task begins. If seated at a table to complete the prepared therapy tasks, be sure to include movement in the rest breaks. Rest breaks can include: standing up to stretch, getting a drink of water, eating something crunchy such as two pretzel rods, swinging on a swing, bouncing on a therapy ball, etc. Be sure to set a two-minute timer (or however long you feel necessary) for the rest breaks
- Be sure to choose rest break activities that you have identified as organizing for a child. Rest break activities that over stimulate children will not allow them to come back to the table to finish seated work tasks that you have prepared for him/her
- Be sure to remind the child not to rush through the activities just to complete the shape/structure

Therapist Assessment

- Therapist's observation of participation in the activity with increased structure of the therapy session
 - Did the child demonstrate a longer attention span to the planned therapy tasks with structure?
 - Did the child demonstrate less distractibility or less frustrated behavior (that is, getting up and walking around in the middle of a task)?
- If this structure greatly improved a child's ability to attend and concentrate for an extended period of time, share this with parents/teachers/support staff in order to carry this strategy over into the classroom and home to improve readiness to learn

Activity Discussion and Processing

Use the questions below as a guide for your discussion. Select the questions you feel will best benefit your child. It is not mandatory to cover every question. Make sure to let everyone (other staff observing, parents that are observing the session) share their ideas, and remind participants that everyone's opinions and feelings are important!

Work through the following questions:

A. For the child:

- Did you like doing this throughout the therapy session?
- What was good about it?
- What did you dislike? Why?

B. For teachers/para-educators/other therapists:

- Did you observe a difference in behavior or attention span with the therapy session structured in this way?
- What were the differences? Were the differences helpful for the child's learning or did it appear to distract the child further?
- How could we work together to utilize this strategy across all areas of the child's day?

Activity Variations

1. For a group of students.

Apply the same strategies of organization and time management to a group therapy session. Upon completion of each task, a different member of the group can add another piece to the shape/structure.

2. Using pictures instead of words.

If a child is not able to read the instructions of the therapy session on the index cards, use pictures instead. If a child is learning to read, pair pictures with the words to begin associating the activity with the words.

Toobeez Timer

Activity Notes

ACTIVITY

8

CATCH!



Objectives

- Strengthen bilateral-coordination skills
- Strengthen visual-motor skills
- Strengthen motor-planning skills
- Communicate with peers/staff to build turn-taking skills
- Strengthen attention and concentration to a task
- Build planning and problem-solving skills
- Teamwork

Preparation

Time: 5 minutes

Materials:

- 1 Toobeez set
- bean bags

Setup:

1. Create a large catcher's mitt using two 16" tubes, four spheres and one curtain. (see picture above).
2. Slide the curtain onto both 16" tubes and attach the spheres at each end of the 16" tubes to hold the curtain in place.
3. Repeat these instructions to make another for a second player. Make up to four structures if in a small group setting.

Activity Plan

Time: 30 - 60 minutes

Space: Lots (Therapy Gym, gymnasium or outside)

Instruction: Individual, pairs or small groups

The Challenge

Toss the bean bag (or if you are really good, a Toobeez sphere) back and forth without dropping it!

Helpful Hints!

Catch!

Be sure to review these tips prior to beginning the activity, and if necessary, share reminders with the group during the activity.

- For the first time practicing this activity, use bean bags that are soft, but have some weight so they do not easily roll out of the catcher's mitt when caught
- For safety purposes and until a rhythm is found, use the softer bean bags in case the child's body is accidentally hit
- Be sure to review the rules of the game (as stated in the "Activity Instructions") prior to beginning. Ask the child or group to repeat the guidelines of the game before beginning to ensure comprehension and to promote safety

See page 6 for available training options!

Activity Instructions

1. Sit down in a circle with the players of the game (if in an individual therapy session, sit across from the child on the floor). Wait until you have their attention and then review the rules of the game in the box below.

Rules of Catch!

1. The purpose of this game is to get the bean bag (or sphere) into the other player's mitt. Toss the bean bag gently so the sphere lands right inside the mitt.
2. Always be ready and watching where the bean bag (or sphere) is so no one gets hurt.
3. Wait until the player who will be receiving the sphere is looking directly at you so you know he/she is ready. Practice saying their name before you throw the bean bag to them so they are ready to catch it.

Catch!

Therapist Notes

- Be sure to involve parents, siblings, teachers, para-educators or other support staff in this activity to work through this activity together! It may provide them with fun activities to do with their child at home or in the classroom
- If working in a small group setting, remind the children that we are all on one team and we are working together to toss and catch the bean bags as many times as we can

2. If working in an individual therapy session, stand across from one another. If working in a small group, players should be positioned standing in a circle so everyone is able to see each other.
3. Read the following Activity Challenge Box.

Challenge: Toss the bean bag (or Toobeez sphere) back and forth without dropping it!

4. Set a goal with the players as to how many times the team should toss and catch it without dropping the bean bag.
5. Begin by having the therapist model the guidelines of the game. They should call out the other player's name, wait for their attention, and then toss the sphere to the child. **Therapist Tip:** To toss the sphere, begin by cradling the sphere in the curtain basket, when ready to toss the sphere, smoothly and evenly outstretch both arms at the same time to stretch the curtain out. This motion will pop the sphere up and out of the basket. You may need to take a step forward while outstretching your arms in order to aim the bean bag toward the other player (see picture instructions below).



Catch!

6. The child should repeat the therapist's approach to the game and follow through with the toss. It may take many minutes of practice to get the rhythm of the toss and the catch. Be patient and encourage the players to keep trying.
7. Continue tossing the bean bag (or Toobeez sphere) until your goal is reached!



Therapist Note

This is a complicated task and may not be appropriate for younger children as it may cause extreme frustration. For younger children, please see the variations listed at the end of this activity.

8. When the activity is complete, move on to the Discussion and Processing questions.

Therapist Assessment

- Observation of the child's participation, his/her attention to the task, and frustration level. If you begin noticing frustration, challenge the child to continue trying, but be sure to modify the activity so the task is always presented as a "just right" challenge
- Observation of the child's **motor control** and ability to smoothly coordinate both sides of the body to toss the sphere
- Observation and assessment of the modification of the task:
 - Was the task broken down into simpler, motoric tasks or steps?
 - Was the task increased in difficulty if the challenge was too easy?

Catch!

Activity Discussion and Processing

Use the questions below as a guide for your discussion. Select the questions you feel will best benefit your child. It is not mandatory to cover every question. Make sure to let everyone (other staff observing, parents that are observing the session) share their ideas, and remind participants that everyone's opinions and feelings are important!

Work through the following questions:

A. For the child:

- Did you like playing catch this way?
- What was easy about it?
- What was frustrating or difficult about this activity?
- How did you feel after you successfully tossed and caught the bean bag (or sphere) in this tricky way?
- How do you feel after moving around and playing this game? Do you feel more awake?

B. For teachers/para-educators/other therapists:

- Was this activity difficult or easy for you?
- Did you need to change your approach to the task at all?
- What does the phrase "**just right challenge**" mean to you?
- Why is it important to always be aware of a child's frustration level during activities?
- How could we work together to utilize this activity and movement activities in general across all areas of the child's day?

Activity Variations

1. Decrease the difficulty.

Instruct the child to catch as many bean bags (or balls) in his/her catcher's mitt as possible. After catching the bean bags, lay the catcher's mitt down on the floor and he/she can pick up the bean bags one at a time and underhand throw them back to you.

2. Increase the difficulty.

Involve more than one bean bag (or sphere). If working in pairs, instruct the two players to toss the bean bags at the same time to the other player. This requires quick thinking and planning for tossing and catching at the same time!

(Activity Variations continue on the next page.)

Catch!

3. For a small group.

Begin in a circle and decide in which direction the bean bag will be moving. Each person should look to that direction and say the name of the person standing next to them on that side (that is, the person to whom they will be tossing the bean bag). Now look at the person on the opposite side and say that person's name. This is the person from whom they will be receiving the bean bag. The therapist should begin the tossing to model the task (look at the person to whom they are tossing the bean bag, say the person's name, wait for them to look, and then toss the bean bag). Set a goal for the number of times to complete the circle or time how long it takes to get around the circle, and then try to beat that goal or time!

4. Increased difficulty for a small group.

Follow the instructions above. Instead of tossing it to the right or left, instruct the child to choose a person on the opposite side. Each person must choose another player standing across from them (not someone on their right or left). The child can identify who will be receiving the bean bag and to whom it will be tossed. Set a goal for the number of times to complete the circle or time how long it takes to get around the circle, and then try to beat that goal or time. For a big challenge, have more than one bean bag in play at the same time!

Activity Notes

ACTIVITY

9

STRAW SOCCER



Objectives

- Weight bearing through upper extremities to increase strength
- Collaborate with speech therapy to strengthen **oral-motor** skills and breath support
- Build planning, strategy and problem-solving skills
- (For small groups): Improve communication and teamwork to strengthen social skills

Preparation

Time: 5 – 10 minutes

Materials:

- 1 Toobeez set
- straws (1 per student)
- ping pong ball

Setup:

1. Using two 36” tubes, four 16” tubes, six 11” tubes and 12 spheres, create a rectangular “playing field” with two goals at each end. *See the picture on the next page.*
2. Place the playing field either on the floor or on a table.

Activity Plan

Time: 30 - 60 minutes

Space: Medium - Lots (tabletop, Therapy Gym, gymnasium, etc.)

Instruction: Pairs or small groups

The Challenge

Holding the straw in your lips, blow the ping pong ball into the other player’s goal to score as many points as possible!

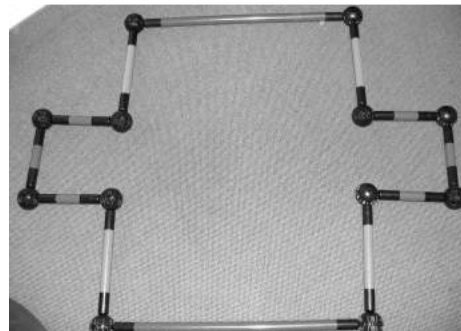
Helpful Hints!

Be sure to review these tips prior to beginning the activity, and if necessary, share reminders with the group during the activity.

- Set and review basic guidelines of the game prior to beginning. Incorporate the student's ideas for rules into these guidelines
- For safety purposes, be sure to allow frequent rest breaks to prevent dizziness and light-headedness. Be sure to stop the game if a player is feeling dizzy or light-headed
- Try to use areas where there is no carpet. Carpet causes the ball to slow down, making players need to blow harder. This may cause dizziness and light-headedness quickly. Gymnasium floors work best
- Be sure to involve parents, siblings, teachers, para-educators or other support staff in this activity! It may provide them with fun activities to do with children

Activity Instructions

1. Sit down in a circle with the players of the game (if this is an individual therapy session, sit across from the child on the floor). Once the rules of the game are reviewed, ask students to repeat them to ensure understanding.



Straw Soccer setup.

Rules of Straw Soccer

1. The purpose of this game is to blow the ping pong ball into the other player's goal. Wait until you are given the sign to go to begin playing.
2. If you need to sit down or take a break, say so at any time and play will resume when all the players are ready.
3. When playing, all hands, arms and other body parts are to stay off the playing field.
4. There is no goalie, and to block a goal, you must blow the ping pong ball away from your goal cage.
5. You must always stay on your side of the playing field. Do not cross over the center field line.
6. Be respectful. Only say encouraging words and cheer each other on.

Straw Soccer

2. To wake up all muscles of the body, complete the “Pre-Activity Warm-Up Routine” located on page 16 at the beginning of this workbook.
3. Read the following Activity Challenge Box.

Challenge: Holding the straw in your lips, blow the ping pong ball into the other player’s goal to score as many points as possible!

4. Each player should take their position on opposite ends of the playing field.
5. Decide on the end score (for example, the first person to five wins).
6. If working in a small group, instruct the players to huddle up to plan their offensive and defensive strategies.
7. Begin with the ping pong ball in the center of the playing field. Countdown “3-2-1, play!” And the players should begin blowing the ping pong ball into the other team’s goal.
8. Provide reminders to the players if they are not following the guidelines.
9. Once a goal is scored, return the ball to the center of the playing field and begin again until the end score is reached.
10. When the activity is complete, move on to the Discussion and Processing questions.



See page 6 for available training options!

Therapist Assessment

- Observation of the child’s behavior and participation in the activity:
 - Was the child able to follow the auditory instructions of the game?
- Observation of the child’s participation in the pre-game warm-up:
Assessment of the child’s state of arousal/alertness prior to completing the warm up routine:
 - Was the warm-up routine alerting? Did he/she appear to be better able to attend to the auditory instructions?

Therapist Tip: Try completing this activity (at the same time of day, in the same location, and track the data) a few times without the pre-game warm up and a few times with the pre-game warm up. Document if there is a difference in performance with the pre-game warm-up. A child may or may not need this routine to prepare for learning prior to completing seated academic work.
- Observation of the social interaction of the child/children:
 - Was he/she appropriately communicating wants/needs, thoughts, or ideas to the teammates, the opposing players, and to the staff?
- Therapist modification of the task to provide the “just right” challenge:
 - What modifications were needed?

Activity Discussion and Processing

Use the questions below as a guide for your discussion. Select the questions you feel will best benefit your child. It is not mandatory to cover every question. Make sure to let everyone (other staff observing, parents that are observing the session) share their ideas, and remind participants that everyone's opinions and feelings are important!

Work through the following questions:

A. For the child:

- What was easy about it?
- What was frustrating or difficult about this activity?
- How did you feel after you successfully made a goal?
- How does your body feel after moving around and playing this game? Do you feel more awake?

B. For teachers/para-educators/other therapists:

- Was this activity difficult or easy for you?
- Did you need to change your approach to the task at all?
- What does the phrase "just right challenge" mean to you?
- Why is it important to always be aware of a child's frustration level during activities?
- How could we work together to utilize this activity and movement activities in general across all areas of the child's day?

Activity Variations

1. Decrease the difficulty.

Use the straws as hockey sticks. This also incorporates the use of fine-motor skills in order to manipulate the straw in the hand.

2. Increase the difficulty.

If working in a small group (3 to 4 players – may include the therapist), blindfold one player on each team. The other "sighted" teammate must communicate where the ball is and where his teammate should position his/her body in the playing field in order to score and/or block the ball.

3. For children who use wheelchairs.

Set up the playing field on a table so the wheelchair can fit under the table.

(Activity Variations continue on the next page.)

Straw Soccer

Follow the same activity instructions as stated above. Also, the child should transfer (with or without assistance – depending on ability) to the floor and lie **prone** with his/her upper body propped up on forearms so weight is bearing on the upper extremities in that manner. If a group is a combination of children who both use and do not use wheelchairs, instruct all children to lie prone on the floor and play the game in that position.

4. Consult with the speech therapist.

Consult with the speech therapist on the professional team to change the size of the straw, eliminate the use of the straw during the game, or to use another oral-motor tool to challenge the children based on their needs.

Activity Notes

ACTIVITY 10

TOOBEEZ OBSTACLE COURSE



Note: The two tubes forming the first section (from left to right) of the “ceiling” of the course are 24” tubes which are different from the 36” tubes that form the second and third sections.

Preparation

Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Materials:

1 Toobeez set

Setup:

1. Create the Toobeez obstacle course (as pictured above) using eight 36” tubes, two 24” tubes, eight 16” tubes, 16 spheres, and two curtains.
2. Connect four 11” tubes with a sphere attached to each one (four spheres) to any part of the obstacle course.

The Challenge

Move through the obstacle course following this pattern – over, under, under, over. Collect one 11” tube each time you pass through the obstacle course. After all the 11” tubes are collected, construct a square out of the collected tubes and spheres.

Objectives

- Strengthen motor-planning skills
- Strengthen body awareness and spatial awareness concepts such as over and under
- Strengthen visual-motor skills
- Strengthen bilateral-coordination skills
- Strengthen memory of auditory instructions for the task

Activity Plan

Time: 30 minutes

Space: Lots (Therapy Gym, gymnasium or outside)

Instruction: Individual

Helpful Hints!

Toobeez Obstacle Course

Be sure to review these tips prior to beginning the activity, and if necessary, share reminders with the group during the activity.

- Invite the child to assist in the set up process. This will further strengthen skills in the objective section of the activity. Assisting in the set up also allows children to work on auditory-processing skills such as following multi-step instructions. For example, “Jimmy, please get me two 36” tubes and place them next to the 11” tubes”

See page 6 for available training options!

Activity Instructions

1. Sit across from the child/children on the floor. Wait until you have their attention, and then read aloud the Activity Challenge Box below.

Challenge: Move through the obstacle course following this pattern – over, under, under, over. Collect one 11” tube each time you pass through the obstacle course. After all the 11” tubes are collected, construct a square out of the collected tubes and spheres.

2. To wake up all muscles of the body, complete the “Pre-Activity Warm-Up Routine” located on page 16 at the beginning of this workbook.
3. Instruct the child to move to the beginning of the obstacle course.
4. Instruct the child to jump over the curtain, move their body under the next two bars, and then jump over the last curtain.



Toobeez Obstacle Course

5. Remind the child that only **one** 11” tube may be detached and collected each time they move through the obstacle course.
6. Also, remind the child that the only tubes their body can touch are the 11” tubes (they must use their hands to detach them from the obstacle course). All other tubes should not be touched; this will heighten their awareness of their body as they move through the obstacle course.
7. Once they have collected the first 11” tube and have moved through the obstacle course, they are to run around the side of the obstacle course and place the 11” tube in a designated area. For safety purposes, children are not to throw the tubes into the designated area. Remind them to squat down and place the tube on the floor.
8. The child should then repeat the obstacle course from the beginning, collecting a new 11” tube.
9. Once the child collects all of the 11” tubes, they should then create a predetermined shape or structure with the collected tubes (see the picture below). The child should be moving through the obstacle course four times before constructing the square. **Therapist Tip:** The number of tubes to be collected determines the number of times the child should travel through the obstacle course.
10. Remind the student that this is not a timed activity, so they should not rush through the obstacle course.

This student collected all four 11” tubes and is now creating the final shape.



11. When the activity is complete, move on to the Discussion and Processing questions.

Toobeez Obstacle Course

Therapist Assessment

- Therapist's observation and assessment of the child's movement through the obstacle course
- Therapist's observation of the efficiency of a child's movement through the obstacle course:
 - Did he/she appear clumsy and bump into all of the tubes?
- Therapist's assessment of the child's ability to remember and follow multi-step instructions (that is, jump over, crawl under, crawl under, jump over, collect the tube, etc.)
- Therapist's assessment of modifications to the obstacle course as needed:
 - Did the child have trouble jumping over the curtains? Could he/she step over instead?
 - Was the student able to remember the auditory instructions given or did he/she need a visual diagram to follow?

These assessments are valuable pieces of information to report to classroom teachers, parents and team members when programming for a child/student.

Activity Discussion and Processing

Use the questions below as a guide for your discussion. Select the questions you feel will best benefit your child. It is not mandatory to cover every question. Make sure to let everyone (other staff observing, parents that are observing the session) share their ideas, and remind participants that everyone's opinions and feelings are important!

Work through the following questions:

A. For the child:

- What was easy about this activity?
- What was frustrating or difficult about this activity?
- How did you feel after you successfully made it through the obstacle course?
- How does your body feel after moving around and doing this activity? Do you feel more awake?

(Questions continue on the next page.)

Toobeez Obstacle Course

B. For teachers/para-educators/parents/other therapists:

- Was this activity difficult or easy for you?
- Did you need to change your approach to the task at all?
- What does the phrase “just right challenge” mean to you?
- Why is it important to always be aware of a child’s frustration level during activities?
- How could we work together to utilize this activity and various other movement activities across all areas of the child’s day?

Activity Variations

1. Decrease the difficulty.

Complete the same obstacle course without requiring the collection of the 11” tubes to create a square.

2. Decrease the difficulty.

If it is difficult for a child to jump over the curtains, ask them to step over instead. Children with **gravitational insecurity** may have difficulty with jumping over the curtain. Challenge them to try stepping over one curtain.

3. Increase the difficulty.

Continue to add pieces to the obstacle course to make it longer, more narrow, or require more changes in body positions throughout the course. You can also add more pieces to the original course to collect for the shape/structure at the end.

4. Integrate the activity with a classroom lesson plan.

If a child is school-aged, talk with their teacher and ask what spelling words they are studying, math problems, etc. On index cards, write out the letters of the spelling words (one or two letters on each index card) and tape the index cards to the 11” tubes to be collected. Once all of the tubes are collected, instruct the student to connect the tubes in the sequence to correctly spell their word. For integrating math lessons, break down problems they are studying, write them on index cards, and tape them to the 11” tubes to be collected. Once all of the tubes are collected, they must arrange the tubes in the sequence that will solve the math problem.

5. Increase the difficulty.

Line up about six cones in a pattern to follow on their way back to the starting point of the obstacle course and instruct them to complete another movement around the cones. For example, children could weave around the cones while crab walking, bear walking or walking backward.

(Activity Variations continue on the next page.)

Toobeez Obstacle Course

6. For small group settings.

As many students that are in the small group (no more than four are recommended), add the same amount of extra construction pieces to the original obstacle course structure. Each child should go through the obstacle course and add their collected piece to the shape to be completed after moving through the obstacle course.

Activity Notes

Glossary of Terms

Active range of motion (AROM): The action of a joint moving a limb as much as possible by muscle contraction (Trombly, pg 73).

Active sitting: Also known as dynamic sitting; the idea of free and constant movement while in a sitting position. Active sitting strengthens core muscles of the back and abdomen and improves **trunk stability**.

Attention: The ability to focus one's efforts and cognitive energy to a task.

Auditory discrimination: The brain's ability to receive sound or auditory input and interpret information in order to decipher what the sound is, which direction it is coming from, and the distance between the sound and the individual.

Auditory processing: The brain's ability to take in auditory stimulation and sounds, and then make sense of and interpret the information into meaningful sounds (i.e. language).

Bilateral coordination: The ability to use both sides of the body in a smooth and efficient manner in order to complete a task.

Boardmaker™: A graphics database of pictures and symbols to be used for communication by individuals with a variety of language deficits.

Body awareness: Having a mental map of one's body; the ability to know where one's body parts are in relation to the rest of the body without needing to look with the eyes; a function of the proprioceptive sense.

Concentration: The ability to sustain focus and cognitive energy to a task over a period of time.

Crossing midline: Movement of body parts (eyes, arms, hands, feet, etc.) across the vertical line of the body. This is a vital developmental milestone that lays the foundation for complex tasks such as reading and writing.

Cuddle Swing®: Made of neoprene, this swing is stretchy and envelopes a child providing deep tactile input to the child's body, in addition to calming vestibular input when swinging linearly.

Expressive communication: Upon comprehension, the brain's ability to formulate a response (either physical or verbal) and to motor plan the method of response.

Extension: Straightening a joint (Accardo, et al., 149).

Fidget tools: Objects that are able to be manipulated in the hands; the manipulation of these objects is used to organize the nervous system to maintain optimal alertness and arousal when one's attention is required for a demanding cognitive task.

Fine motor: Coordinated movements of small muscles, especially in the hand (Accardo, et al., 159). Also includes muscle movements of the toes, eyes and mouth (Stock Kranowitz, 286).

Flexion: The bending of a limb with the joint as the axis (Accardo, et al., 161).

Gravitational insecurity: Distress that arises when the vestibular system is stimulated by a change in head position or movement, especially when the child's feet are off the ground (Accardo, et al., 181).

Gross motor: The use of large muscle groups for posture, mobility and large movements; for example, running and jumping are gross-motor movements.

Hypotonia/low muscle tone: Less than normal resistance to passive elongation (Trombly, 167); normal tone in muscles maintains position against the resistance provided by gravity.

“Just right challenge”: To create a successful challenge by presenting an individual with a demand that requires new learning, but incorporates elements of a comfortable experience in order for the demand to be successful; just out of reach, but the individual is able to stretch to reach the goal.

Kinesthesia: See proprioception.

Linear motion: A type of vestibular stimulation; the to and fro motion when swinging.

Memory: The ability to store information in the brain and recall it at a later time; includes sensory register, short-term memory, working memory, and long-term

memory (Accardo, et al., 252). Memory can also include auditory memory, visual memory, motor memory and recognition memory.

Motor planning/praxis: The skill of conceptualizing, planning and executing a sequence of unfamiliar physical movements to meet the immediate demands of the environment.

Net swing: A swing that resembles a hammock that can either be attached to a single ceiling joint or to hooks on an “A” frame.

Oral motor: All sensory and physical functions of the lips, mouth, tongue, oral cavity and throat that relate to feeding, swallowing and speech (Accardo, et al., 389).

Orientation & Mobility (O & M): Combining cognitive and physical strategies to instruct individuals with visual impairments or blindness to learn to move safely, efficiently and independently in their environments; this includes planning routes or modes of transportation for community travel or learning specific techniques to safely travel through an open space or hallway.

Oscillation: Vestibular stimulation that is characterized by the up and down movement (as in bouncing on a therapy ball) or the linear movement of swinging back and forth.

Planning: The cognitive function of sequencing steps in order to prepare for a task.

Problem solving: The cognitive function of assessing an ineffective or inefficient approach to a task or completion of a task; the “figuring out” of alternative methods to approach or complete the task.

Pronate (pronation): Beginning with the wrist in neutral, the contraction of the pronator teres and pronator quadratus muscles to turn the hand so the palm is facing down. When lying in prone, the child’s stomach is on the floor.

Proprioception: Receptors found in and that receive information from tendons, ligaments, joints and muscles; these receptors send information to the brain regarding body and spatial positioning.

Receptive communication: The brain's ability to accept auditory (i.e. verbal instructions) or visual information (i.e. American Sign Language or written language), process information and comprehend information in order for the words and/or gestures to be meaningful.

Right/left discrimination: The cognitive function of identifying either side of the body (right or left).

Self regulation: The ability to control one's activity level and state of arousal as well as one's emotional, mental or physical responses to sensations (Stock Kranowitz, 289).

Self advocacy: An individual's ability to express his or her needs in order to successfully complete a task.

Sensory diet: A "nutritional plan" for one's senses; providing an individual with a variety of sensory experiences throughout the day maintains an optimal state of arousal and alertness for learning.

Sequencing: The ability to cognitively ask oneself "What is next?" and to then identify and initiate the next step or instruction to complete a task.

Spatial awareness: The ability to know where one's body is located in space in relation to objects and other people; the ability to motor plan and grade movements effectively in order to move without bumping or crashing into elements within the environment (i.e. walls, desks, other children etc.).

Supinate (supination): Beginning with the wrist in neutral, the activation of the supinator and biceps brachii muscles in order to turn the palm so it is facing upward.

Tactile discrimination: The brain's ability to receive information from the skin and identify the properties (such as wet, hard, smooth, rough) of the object the skin is touching.

Tactile sense: Receptors in the skin that receive information such as pressure, light and deep touches, vibration, pain and temperature. Protective receptors respond to light touch to avoid injury or harm; discriminative receptors provide information regarding the characteristics of a person or object being touched (Stock Kranowitz, 289).

Trunk rotation: Action of the core musculature to turn or twist the torso to the right or the left, as the hips and pelvis remain in a neutral position.

Trunk stability: Contraction of the muscles of the abdomen and back that allow one to maintain an upright posture throughout a variety of movements.

Vestibular stimulation: Stimulated by gravity, these receptors in the inner ear tell the brain the position of the head, if our bodies are moving, and if so, how fast and in what direction.

Visual motor: The integration of visual processing with a nonverbal response; for example, copying letters is a visual-motor task (Accardo, et al., 305).

Visual perception: The brain's ability to receive information from the eyes, to interpret the stimulation into meaningful information, and to discriminate spatial information.

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Important Safety Information

Visit www.toobeez.com/safetyinfo.htm for the latest safety information & product updates.

ATTENTION ALL USERS OF THIS PRODUCT:

- This product has been tested and approved for use with participants 4+ years of age
- Please inform all users of this product of this very important information
- Failure to obey or understand these legal disclaimers could result in bodily injuries
- This product was not designed to be a “climb-on” that you may see in a playground or schoolyard
- Using excessive weight or force on a structure could cause it to break and may void the warranty
- It is highly recommended that all structures be built on a flat and even surface at all times
- Do not use this product as a baseball bat, sword or any type of weapon. Please inform all users of this information
- Do not use this product to harm other people, animals or other personal property
- This product was not designed or manufactured as a “water toy” or as a water-safety flotation device. The tubes on this product will absorb water which will cause it to sink. Use of product in water is at your OWN RISK
- Please use this product in a safe manner to ensure years of fun

Product Information

This product is made of a high quality polypropylene and ABS thermoplastic material. This product also includes an ultra violet (UV) stabilizer to help minimize color fading due to excessive and direct sunlight. It is not recommended to leave this product in direct sunlight over long periods of time.

Product Care

Outdoor use: It is not recommended to leave this product in direct sunlight over long periods of time. Doing so will shorten the life of the product and possibly cause the plastic to become brittle, in turn causing the plastic to break. If this product is left in direct sunlight for extended periods of time, thermoplastics will absorb the heat. This product could become too hot to handle with bare hands. Please be cautious.

Storage: It is not recommended to store this product in a place where the temperature is not regulated, such as in a car on a hot day for an extended period of time. To avoid injury, try to avoid storing this product in places where heat can build up and be absorbed by the product.

Do not climb: Toobeez were intentionally designed as a "non-climbable" structure/building product. It is primarily used for building framework. That is why the ends on the tubes may come apart if you stand on the product or try to bend the ends forcefully into a sphere. This is a built-in safety feature and is not advertised (it is our patent-pending "company secret").

First-time Use

When using this product for the first time, it is highly recommended that an adult instruct all users how to properly assemble and disassemble a structure. Start building from the bottom up to complete your structure. When you are ready to disassemble a structure, you must always begin by removing pieces from the top and working your way down to the bottom. Please review the set up and take down instructions for more information.

As an educational tool, it is suggested that teachers, parents or guardians work with and teach the children who use this product how to build safe structures and other creative forms.

Assembly

It is very important that every time a tube is inserted into a sphere, the rotating end of the tube should be turned to secure (or semi-lock) the tube to the inside of the sphere. This is accomplished by turning the rotating end of the tube $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way around (or 90 degrees) in either direction. You should feel the "key" (located on the end of the tube) roll over the speed bumps located inside of the sphere. **Note:** This is not a 100% secure lock, and therefore this

product is marketed as a “do not climb construction/structure product.” If you do not feel the “key” roll over the speed bumps (located inside of the sphere), try using another “key hole” on the sphere until you have achieved success. If you still cannot feel the speed bump “semi lock” into the sphere, please do not use that particular piece. It may still be under warranty or have reached the end of its product lifecycle.

Never attempt to remove the screws from the sphere(s), or the rotating ends from the tubes. This will permanently damage the product and will void the warranty. The ends of the tubes are to be used only at certain angles when in use with the spheres. If you try to force the tubes into a bad angle, this puts unwarranted stress on the sphere and on the tube ends and can cause one of the following actions:

- Pressure on the screws to become loose on the sphere (Screws can be re-tightened with a #10 Torx screwdriver (previous models) or by using a Phillips or flathead screwdriver – be careful not to over-tighten the screws)
- Pressure on the "T," located on the rotating tube ends, may become bent or damaged if excessive weight and pressure is applied. If this occurs when you are attempting to lock a tube into a sphere, you may not feel the "T" rollover the bumps inside of the sphere
- The rotating ends may become separated from the tube. To fix, simply re-insert it into the tube and be careful not to pinch your hand

If any of these actions occur, we will conclude the product was "possibly" being used in an inconsistent manner for which it was designed or manufactured.

We encourage you to contact the Toobeez™ Project Connect Joint Venture members for more product information or additional services. Additional contact information is available on pages 4-5 of this guide.

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