



Introduction

As an early childhood educator, you know the best way to learn is by doing. Well, *Fun, Fitness & Learning* is all about “doing learning.” This book is meant to help students become active while engaging their thinking processes. In preschool and kindergarten, most children are so excited—and so ready—to learn. How about harnessing that good energy and making it work to enliven your lessons! There are plenty of moments for students to sit at their tables and focus quietly on what you are teaching. And, that is important. However, many lessons that teach vital life and academic skills can also get kids moving while learning and thoroughly enjoying it.

Fun, Fitness & Learning is designed to build children’s knowledge through action and high interest activities. Motor tasks and cognitive activities have been developed for the following topics:

- All About Me
- Learning the Alphabet
- Basic Concepts (Directional Words, Patterning, Go Together, Rhyming Words, Opposites)
- Identifying Colors
- Recognizing Emotions
- Using the Five Senses
- Moving Our Bodies to Be Fit
- Numbers & Counting
- Thinking About the Seasons
- Identifying Simple Shapes
- Community Workers

Each theme in this resource is comprised of five large-group movement experiences. Educators can use these activities to strengthen students’ cognitive skills while fostering their motor planning, body awareness, visual memory, and gross motor skills. Most of the large group activities can be done in a classroom, but some of the games will require space to move or run around. If a large, safe indoor space is not available, complete those activities outside on a sunny day. Suggestions for locomotor movements are provided; it is best to vary the movements to keep children engaged in the activity. Locomotor movements include:

- gallop
- hop on one foot
- jump
- leap
- march
- skip
- slide feet to move sideways
- stomp
- tiptoe
- waddle
- walk

Accompanying most of the large group activities are reproducible half pages for individualized hands-on skill practice. Special attention has been given to fine motor, figure-ground discrimination, prereading, and math skills to prepare young learners for more challenging academic work.

Improving overall fitness and motor skill development while fostering readiness skills is possible. So, get your students moving; get them learning with activities from this book!