Transition Activities

Transition – Movement, passage or change from one position, state, stage, subject, concept, to another

Transition activities are quick games, music, songs, and Finger plays used when children are transitioning from one activity to another or are required to wait.

ROLE OF TEACHER – To facilitate both natural and planned transitions. To assist children from one part of the program to the next.

Standing in line is unnatural for this age group but can be fun! Try the following.

**Line Launch**
When children hear the word “Soldiers” have them stand straight, arms to their side and facing forward. When they hear the word “Penguins” they stand tall and waddle out. When they hear “Caterpillar” they stand still then take a step at the same time using the left foot and then the right foot.

**Animal Chant**
Stay awhile Crocodile
Say hello, Rainbow
What’s up, Buttercup?
How are you Kangaroo?
Looking fine, Sunshine.
Stick around, Basset Hound.
Be a friend, Pelican.
Stay and play, Manta Ray
Let’s share, Panda Bear
And hi, said the Fly!

**Soldiers**

I am marching, I am marching
In a row, watch me go
First I march one way
Then I march the other way
In a row, watch me go.

**Dancing Hands**

Play some music or sing a favorite song. Children follow the teacher’s hand movements to create dancing hands.

Suggested hand moments:
Clapping hands, shaking hands, opening and closing fists, moving fingers together and apart, etc.
**Failure to Plan is a Plan to Fail**

If you don't have a plan, the children will make one and it will not include you!

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**Finger Fun**

While in line or waiting for the next activity:

Have the children hold up their fingers and follow these directions:
- “Bend your fingers up and down.”
- “Close your fingers in a tight fist. Relax.”
- “Dance your fingers all around as fast as you can.”
- “Spread your fingers as far apart as you can.”
- “Touch your fingers together and swim like a fish. Hum as your swim.”

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**Pass the Mitten**

(NEED ONE OR MORE PAIR OF MITTENS)

Form a circle and give a mitten to a child. Turn on some music and ask the child to pass the mitten around the circle. When the music stops the child holding the mitten places it behind their back. Give another child a mitten and continue until the music stops. This time the children will compare mittens to see if they have a match.

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**Goodbye Chant**

See you later, Alligator
Bye, bye, Butterfly.
Give a hug, Ladybug.
Be sweet, Parakeet.
Blow a kiss, Jellyfish.
See ya soon, Raccoon.
Take care, Polar Bear.
Out the door, dinosaur.
So long, King Kong.
And bye, said the Fly!

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**Prepare for Circle Time by shaking out the sillies and prepare to sit down.**

**Shake Your Sillies Out**

Move hands in a shaking motion while singing:

We’re gonna shake, shake, shake our sillies out, shake, shake, shake our sillies out, shake, shake, shake our sillies out, shake our sillies away.

Continue with additional movements (jump, blink, turn, reach, etc.) ending with:

We’re gonna sit, sit, sit our sillies out, sit, sit, sit our sillies out, sit, sit, sit our sillies out, sit our sillies away.

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**Use Your Eyes**

Ask the children to form binoculars with their hands and place over their eyes.

Use your eyes, use your eyes.
You can look and see.
If you’re wearing brown shoes,
Hop, hop, hop to me.

Continue with other colors and pieces of clothing until all of the children have moved where you want them.
Acknowledgement

Model what you expect! Reinforce expected behaviors: “catch ‘em doing the right thing” and acknowledge it!

Verbal Praise: Awesome-Great job– Terrific–Way to go– Funtastic-Fantastic– That’s responsible– You’re so helpful– Great imagination– Good solution– Bright idea– You are a good friend– Great sportsmanship– I am impressed you figured that out-

Pilots

I am flying, I am flying
Round and round, up and down.
First I fly one way
Then I fly the other way.
Round and round, up and down.

Clothes Search

Have the children look at their clothing and see if they can find shapes in them, such as eyelet circles on their shoes or belts or patterns in their fabric. When they find a shape they can line up or choose their learning center.

Which One Doesn’t Belong?

Say a series of words all but one of which are zoo animals such as “elephant, monkey, box, lion.” Ask the children which one does not belong. Continue with farm animals, pets, etc.

Pass The Ball

Line up game. Give the first child a ball. The object of the game is to get the ball to the back of the line. It can be passed over heads, through legs, or a combination. Time how fast children can get it to the back of the line.

Outburst

When you need their attention, suddenly burst out laughing hysterically. It will not take long to have everyone looking at you. When you feel you have all eyes on you, quickly stop and give them directions.
A cue is a verbal signal to which the children are trained to freeze silent wherever they are. You can train them to look at the person who has called the cue to listen for directions. For example you may call out “ice cream” and the children in like manner call back “cone”. Once the children are quiet and frozen, quickly give your directions or announcement. This will take several practices to accomplish and will need to be reinforced consistently. Avoid over using your cue! It can become ineffective.

Create a set of shapes from construction paper.

Hold up a shape and ask the children to identify it. Once identified, ask the children “What does this shape remind you of?”. Allow time for children to share their thoughts. Repeat with other shapes.

Body Parts

Have the children stand. Call two body parts and the children touch the parts together. Example: hand to foot, elbow to knee.

Put your feelers in...Put your wings in...stingers.... Backbones… legs…etc.

Shape Search

Create a set of shapes from felt to include a small, medium and large size of each.

Place the shapes on a felt board. Say to the children, “I am looking for a large circle; when you see one blink your eyes.” Ask a child to take it off the board and bring to you. Continue until all shapes are of the board. (Triangle, wiggle your noses, square, shake your fists, rectangle, point your fingers, etc.)

Buggy Wuggy

Do the Hokey Pokey with the children substituting insect and spider body parts.

Wiggling Worm

Teach the children the following chant and let their bodies be worms and move accordingly.

Wiggle, wiggle, wiggle.
March, march, march.
Sleep, sleep, sleep.
Snore, snore, snore.
**Staff Positioning**

- Staff should always position themselves in ways to see and hear all of the children. This will help prevent discipline problems.
- Station staff in strategic places to have a birds-eye view of what is happening whether it is in the cafeteria, gym or playground.
- Staff can do individual group activities and still be aware of what is going on elsewhere. Do not sit with your back to the children.

**Letter Echo**

Cup your hands around your mouth and say a letter to the children. Have the children cup their hands and echo it back to you. Continue with more letters.

**Puppets**

I am dancing, I am dancing.  
On a string, on a string.  
First I move one arm  
Then I move the other arm.  
Up and down.  
Up and down.

**Active Games**

Active Games are games that take longer than transitional times. The following games require little preparation. They can be used for times when you need an activity at the spur of the moment.

**Shape Search**

Ask children to search the classroom with their eyes to find a square (triangle, circle, etc.). Ask them to raise their hand when one is found. Call on the children to share the location of the shape they found. Continue for several rounds.

**Color Bow**

Have the children sit in a group. Say the rhyme using a different color each time and have the children, take their bows.

*If you're wearing red today,  
If you're wearing red.  
Stand up now and take a bow,  
And sit right down again.*
**Forecasting**

Think ahead about potential problems and prepare for them!
- Is your environment set up prior to the children’s arrival?
- Do you have the materials for today’s activities ready?
- What behavioral problems do you anticipate and why?
With this information, forecast and make changes to prevent the problem.

**Vegetable Echo**

Name several vegetables and have the children echo them back. Now have a child name a vegetable and everyone echo it back. Continue naming and echoing vegetables. Make the game more challenging by naming 2-3 vegetables and having the children echo them back.

**Fly and Spy**

Ask the children to pretend they are birds ready to fly away from a tree. Say: “Flap your wings and start flying around the sky.” Say: “Stop birds.” Ask the birds to stop where they are and look around. Ask several birds to tell what they see. Then say: “Fly on Birds.” Continue for several rounds.

**Fresh Fruit Feel and Guess**

Place a variety of fruit in a pillow case or small cloth bag. Have a child reach in, feel a fruit, guess what it is and pull it out. Everyone call out what it is. Set it on a tray. Continue until all of the fruit is out. Touch each fruit and have the children say what it is. Touch again and again going faster and faster.

**Silly Simon**

Give the children directions about dairy products, some of which make sense and some of which do not. If the direction makes sense the children should do it; if it does not, they should call out, “Silly Simon.”

“Simon says, Drink your milk”
“Simon says, Stir your yogurt”
“Simon says, Drink your egg”
“Simon says, Spread your butter”

**Boomerang**

*Teacher chants in a rhythmic manner and kids repeat “Chili, Chili, Chili, Chili, Chili” in like manner.*

Hands up!; Kids—Chili, chili—chili, chili, chili
Hands down!; Kids—Chili, chili—chili, chili, chili
Turn around!; Kids—Chili, chili—chili, chili, chili
Touch the ground; Kids—Chili, chili—chili, chili, chili

Instructor—Come on _____(choose a kid), do your thing, let’s all do the boomerang!
Selected kid decides how everyone will move and the group copies the child while chanting *Chili, chili—chili, chili, chili* two times.
Repeat selecting kids for a long as you like.