

The Super Machine

Growth and Development

Objectives

Children will:

1. Demonstrate that the human body has joints and can bend.
2. Learn the location and function of the joints.
3. Discover that the body can repair itself.
4. Recognize that their bodies are precious machines.
5. Conclude that they are unique.

Materials

Square box with lid (1-foot)
Gift wrap paper (to cover box)
Small mirror
Glue
CD or cassette recording of
"Hokey Pokey" (optional)
CD/Tape player (optional)

Assessment

Teacher observes children's ability to recognize the special qualities of the human body.

Things to Do Before

1. Prepare a "Mystery Box" by covering a box and lid with gift-wrap paper, keeping the lid removable. Glue a mirror, facing up, to the bottom of the box.

Language Development

bend: to change the shape of something by making it curved

joint: the place where two bones meet or come together

machine: a device that performs particular job, made up of a number of moving or fixed parts that work together

Circle Time

1. Hold the "Mystery Box" in your lap and tell the children that the most wonderful thing in the world is inside. Ask them what they think it might be. Tell them they will find out in a few minutes.
2. Ask children if they know what a machine is. Explain that a machine is made up of a number of moving or fixed parts that work together. Tell children that the human body is a Super Machine.
3. Tell children that the Super Machine can think and feel and remember. Ask children "Which part of our body helps us think, remember, and feel?" Explain that the brain can learn new things and store away many facts for later use, while being much smaller than a computer.
4. Tell children that as a Super Machine is used, some of its parts become stronger. Ask, "What makes us strong? Show me how you test your strength."
5. Explain that the super machine has different parts and has many fascinating safety devices. The Super Machine is self-servicing, self-oiling, and self-cooling. Ask children, "What parts of your body help protect it?"
6. When things go wrong, the body can often fix itself. Ask, "How does your body cool itself when you play outside?"
7. Pick up the "Mystery Box" again and ask them if they know what wonderful thing is inside. One by one, give each child a turn to look inside the box to see him/herself in the mirror. Instruct them not to tell anyone what they saw until all the children have had a turn.
8. When all children have looked inside, ask them what they saw, and if everyone saw something different. Try to elicit the response, "me."
9. Attach one side of the box to the bulletin board, low enough so students may take off the lid to look inside.

Learning Center

1. Recall discussion from circle time about our bodies being Super Machines. Tell children that some body parts bend to allow us to sit down and throw a ball, while some body parts stay straight all the time.
2. Name a few body parts (arm, neck, knee, teeth, shoulder, finger, elbow, waist, leg, and toe) and ask children to try to bend that part as you name it. Remind children never to force a body part to bend. Ask children which body parts they were able to bend.
3. Ask students to stand and follow these directions:
"Face me. Stand straight and tall with your arms touching the sides of your body and your fingers pointing toward the floor. Show me where your hands would be if you were getting ready to catch a ball. Hold your hands still, right where they are, and look at your arms. Are they bent? With one hand, touch the place on your other arm where your arm is bent. Does the place you are touching have a special name? What do we call it?" Have children bend one arm at the elbow.
4. Then ask children to follow these directions:
"Look down at your legs. Do you have elbows on your legs? Is there a place on your leg that's similar to your elbow? If you think there is, touch that place with your hand. What is its special name?" Have children bend one leg at the knee.
5. Explain to children that the elbow and knee can bend because that is the place where there is a joint. A joint is the place where two bones come together. Joints allow us to bend and move our bodies in many ways.
6. Tell children, "To see how many ways we can use our body parts and our joints, we're going to do the Hokey Pokey." Play a recorded song or sing the song with the group. Have the class stand in a circle, facing in. Caution children to keep at arms length from each other so as not to accidentally touch someone while dancing. Teacher's tip: Place a sticker on each child's right hand and right foot as a reminder to differentiate it from the left hand and foot.

Additional Classroom Props

Mirrors
Dress up clothes
XRay
Skeleton

Music, Movement, and Poems

Music

"Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes"

Poems

"Just Me" The Random House Book of Poetry for Children, Edited by Jack Prelutsky
(Random House, 1983)

Books

Kelly in the Mirror by Martha Vertraece (Albert Whitman & Company, 1993)
All About Me by Debbie MacKinnon (Barrons Juveniles, 1994)
A, B, C, D, Tummy, Toes, Hands, Knees by B. Hennessy (Puffin, 1989)
My First Book of the Body by Chuck Murphy (Scholastic, 1995)

Letter Home

Dear Family:

Today in our Starting Healthy[®] program your child learned about how our bodies are super machines. We learned that the body can cool itself and make itself stronger. We also discovered that joints allow us to run, dance, and move freely.

Help your child continue to discover the powers of the body by encouraging physical activity. Go for a run together, have a family softball game, or dance in the living room. Point out the body parts that are being used, and marvel at all the different ways the body can move.

Thank you for your participation!

Sincerely,

Your Child's Teacher

Querida Familia:

Hoy, en nuestro programa Starting Healthy[®], aprendimos acerca de cómo nuestros cuerpos son unas máquinas muy poderosas. Aprendimos que nuestros cuerpos se pueden refrescar y hacerse más fuertes por sí solos. También descubrimos que las coyunturas nos permiten correr, bailar y mover libremente.

Usted puede continuar estos descubrimientos en su hogar, estimulando la participación de su familia en actividades físicas. Salgan a correr juntos. Jueguen un partido de softball en familia. Suban el volumen del radio y bailen en la sala. Cuando sea posible, identifique las partes del cuerpo que están usando y admire todas las diferentes maneras en que el cuerpo se puede mover.

¡Gracias por su participación!

Atentamente,

El/La maestro(a) de su hijo(a)