

Lesson Plan: Animal Adventure Obstacle Course

Materials Needed:

- Sidewalk chalk
 - A few pillows, cushions, or a rolled-up towel
 - A large blanket and two sturdy chairs
 - A small, soft ball
 - A hula hoop (or you can draw a large circle with chalk)
 - An open outdoor space (backyard, patio, or park)
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Lesson Plan Details

Subject: Gross Motor Skills, Creative Play

Student: Kara (Age 4)

Time Allotment: 30-45 minutes

1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, Kara will be able to:

- Demonstrate developing balancing skills by walking along a designated line.
- Practice coordination by jumping with two feet over a low obstacle.
- Use whole-body movement to crawl under an object.
- Practice hand-eye coordination by throwing a ball toward a target.
- Follow a sequence of multi-step directions to complete the course.

2. Instructional Strategies & Activities

This lesson uses a "Play-Based Learning" approach, where skills are developed through imaginative and engaging activities.

Part 1: The Animal Warm-up (5 minutes)

- **Goal:** To engage Kara and prepare her body for movement.
- **Instructions:**
 1. Say, "Kara, today we're going on an exciting animal adventure in our own backyard! To get ready, let's practice moving like the animals we might see."
 2. Call out different animals and perform the actions together. Be expressive and have fun!
 - "Let's **stomp like a mighty elephant!**" (Loud, heavy steps).
 - "Now, let's **hop like a quick bunny!**" (Small, quick two-footed hops).
 - "Can you **stretch like a tall giraffe** eating leaves from a tree?" (Reach arms up high on tiptoes).
 - "Let's **waddle like a penguin!**" (Keep feet close together and take short, shuffling steps).

Part 2: Build and Run the Course (20-25 minutes)

- **Goal:** To practice specific gross motor skills in a creative and sequential way.
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- **Instructions:**

1. **Build Together:** Involve Kara in setting up the course. This gives her ownership and helps her understand the tasks. Explain each station with its animal theme as you set it up.
2. **The Stations:**
 - **Station 1: The Snake's Wobbly Path (Balance):** Use chalk to draw a long, wavy line on the ground. Say, "This is a path through the jungle! You have to balance on it like a snake so you don't fall into the pretend water!"
 - **Station 2: The Frog's Log Leap (Jumping):** Place pillows or a rolled-up towel on the ground. Say, "Look, a log is blocking the path! You have to be a frog and LEAP over it with both feet."
 - **Station 3: The Bear's Cave Crawl (Crawling):** Drape a blanket over two chairs to create a tunnel. Say, "It's time to hide! Let's crawl through the dark bear cave on our hands and knees."
 - **Station 4: The Monkey's Coconut Toss (Throwing):** Place the hula hoop on the ground a few feet away. Give Kara the soft ball. Say, "The monkeys are hungry! Can you stand here and toss the 'coconut' into their basket?"
3. **Run the Course:** First, demonstrate how to complete the entire course. Then, let Kara try it at her own pace. Cheer her on and use encouraging, thematic language ("Great balancing, little snake!"). Let her run the course several times.

Part 3: Cool-Down: Sleeping Lions (5 minutes)

- **Goal:** To help Kara's body calm down and transition out of the high-energy activity.

- **Instructions:**

1. Say, "Wow, what an adventure! All that running, jumping, and crawling has made the animals very tired. Let's play 'Sleeping Lions'."
2. Ask Kara to lie down on the grass or blanket and pretend to be a sleeping lion.
3. Encourage her to lie as still as possible, close her eyes, and take slow, deep "lion breaths." This is a great way to practice mindfulness and self-regulation.

3. Differentiation and Inclusivity

- **To Provide More Support:**

- Make the chalk line straight and wider for easier balancing.
- Offer a hand for stability during the balance walk or the jump.
- Allow her to step over the "log" instead of jumping.
- Let her toss the ball from a much closer distance to the target.

- **To Provide an Extra Challenge:**

- Draw the chalk line in a spiral or zigzag pattern.
- Ask her to hop on one foot on a section of the line.
- Add a second "log" to jump over.
- Ask her to create a new animal station for the course, encouraging her own creative ideas.

4. Assessment (Informal Observation)

Assessment will be ongoing and based on observation, not a formal test. While she plays, watch for:

- **Balance:** Is she able to stay on the line for at least half of its length? Does she use her arms to help balance?
- **Jumping:** Is she attempting to jump with two feet together? Is she clearing the low obstacle?
- **Coordination:** Is she able to crawl through the "cave" successfully?
- **Following Directions:** Is she able to move from one station to the next in the correct sequence after one or two demonstrations?

Provide positive verbal feedback throughout the activity, such as, "I love how you bent your knees to get ready for that big frog jump!"