

Circus Performers

Hoop Fun Movement

Let the children pretend they are circus animals who have been trained to jump through hoops. Have the children line up in a single line and take turns stepping or jumping through a hula hoop. Adjust the height of the hoop according to the age and skill of each child. Explain to the children that sometimes at the circus the lion tamer will have lions jump through a flaming hoop. Have the children pretend that they are animal trainers and are teaching their animals to jump through a hoop. Let the children take turns throwing stuffed animals through a hula hoop or other large ring.

Flying Trapeze Performer

Materials: One 9 X 12 in. piece of construction paper, crayons or markers, scissors, tape, 2 pipe cleaners, white craft glue, glitter and buttons for decorations, 1 plastic drinking straw
Procedure: Fold paper in half crosswise. Draw a circle on the folded edge and then draw the body below the circle. Cut out. Draw a person's front and back. For arms, bend one pipe cleaner to look like the letter C. Use another pipe cleaner for legs. Decorate costume and then attach straw to pipe cleaner. Performer will do a 'flip' if straw is twirled. Item can be suspended from ceiling.

Circus Ponies

Use paper bags, cut as shown. (They may need to be tied under the chin.) For the mane, use a 6-in. wide strip of construction paper. Fold back 1 in. of the strip, lengthwise, and glue to the horse's head. Paste on eyes, triangle ears, and if desired, some brown or black spots. Add a plume. Measure a band to fit around the child's waist. Staple on a crepe paper tail made the same way as the Lion Tamer's whip.

Talk about lion tamers/lions, elephants, and horses (use toy figures if you have them) and how they perform.

Circus Ring Toss

Use decorated 2 liter soda bottles set on a card table. Fill with water for balance. Place bottles 6 inches apart. Make a ring using rope cut into 15 inch lengths. Tape the ends together with duct tape. Have children take turns and limit the number of throws. Everyone should get a prize for playing and the winners will get special prizes.

Poetry

The Acrobats

I'll swing By my ankles,
She'll cling To your knees
As you hang By your nose
From a high-up Trapeze.
But just one thing, please,
As we float through the breeze-
Don't sneeze.
Shel Silverstein

The Tightrope Walker

The the band is playing, Back and forth I go,
(pretend to walk tightrope)
High above the people, Sitting far below.
(cup hand over eyes and look down)
While the crowd is cheering,
I sway from side to side.
(Sway back and forth)
Now my act is over,
And down the pole I slide.
(Pretend to slide down pole)

Have umbrellas available and have the children walk on a balance beam or on a rope that is laid on the floor.

Balloon Balance

Draw or mark a circle on the floor, or on the playground. The child keeps the balloon in the air by not stepping out of the circle. The size of the circle is determined by the children's age and ability.

Balloon Experiment

Have a small container of vinegar and one of baking soda on the science table. Give the child a spoon and tell them to put a little bit of each on a plate. It will foam up. Later you can put both substances together in a soda bottle and quickly stretch a balloon over the top. The balloon will inflate.

Tight Rope Walkers

Make tight rope men/women from clothespins by painting faces and clothes on the pin and twisting pipe cleaners around the head for arms. Now put the tight rope walkers on a string and the performance is underway.

Throwing skills can be reinforced by two children holding a hoop while another throws stuffed animals through it. They can be a trainer training the animals.

Throwing Peanuts to the Elephant

Paint a box with an elephant's face on it. Cut out the opening for a mouth. Children could throw peanuts into the mouth to feed the elephant.

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Snake Charmers

Kids wear bathrobes and towel turbans. A wooden stick will have a piece of invisible fishing line attached to an old tie stuffed in a basket. Children sway as music is on and slowly the "snake " comes out of the basket.

Jugglers

Jugglers carrying stacks of plates and cups that never seem to fall? paper plates glued at various angles to look like balancing act.

Lion Tamers

Lion tamers and lions. Lion manes made out of tissue and lions jump through hoops.

Make barbells out of a dowel and styrofoam or nerf balls and pretend to be the weight lifter.