



Teaching Rhythmic Gymnastics: A Developmentally Appropriate Approach

Heather Palmer

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Rhythmic gymnastics offers a unique blend of music, movement, and apparatus that challenges students to discover their bodies' capabilities. The opportunities for movement are endless as children use their natural creativity and imagination to manipulate ribbons, balls, hoops, ropes, and scarves in fun and spectacular ways.

With *Teaching Rhythmic Gymnastics*, you don't need any specialized training to put together a developmentally appropriate program; this book leads you through the entire process. It's so easy to implement that once you've begun reading you'll be able to lead classes through the basics of rhythmic gymnastics from the very first day. This book has everything you need to get going:

- Practical ideas for making your own hand apparatus from everyday materials

- Lesson plan ideas and strategies for class management

- Activities that you can use to develop each of the movement elements: locomotion, jumps, leaps, balances, turns, and pivots

- Learning challenges for every fundamental movement using each apparatus

- Tips for selecting music, including basic information about tempo, rhythm, and beat

The book takes a developmental approach that places you, the teacher, in the role of facilitator, using themes, guided discovery, and problem solving to encourage students to work at their own ability levels. The students may work individually or in groups, which help them build teamwork, collaboration, and leadership skills. You can easily include special-needs populations by using simple equipment modifications or program adjustments. Plus, the book includes suggestions for tailoring a rhythmic gymnastics unit for older (secondary) students.

By providing open-ended movement tasks and challenges, you can use this program to guide children to self-discovery within their individual capabilities. After developing movement and spatial awareness, students get the opportunity to use apparatus and discover the fundamental movements and vocabulary along the way. To expand their learning, students refine and add to their movements through a series of learning challenges. The culmination of the learning process occurs when students combine their newly discovered skills into sequences and routines.

This open-ended approach and extensive illustrations make this resource easy to use. To make your job even easier, the book includes a variety of convenient and time-saving tools, including ready-to-use checklists, assessment guidelines, lesson plans, word searches for vocabulary development, and even routine-planning posters that you can enlarge on a copier and post in the gym.

Rhythmic gymnastics is an enjoyable sport that develops fitness, inspires creativity, and enables every child to work at his or her own level. With *Teaching Rhythmic Gymnastics*, you can add variety to your gymnastics and rhythmic units; start a rhythmic gymnastics club; or introduce a safe, enjoyable alternative to traditional gymnastics programs.

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