

Parachute games

Ask the PE teachers if you can borrow the big parachute. Bring it outside or into the gym and play these games:

Create waves – This is really a chance for them to start practicing with the parachute. Have them make big/small waves and slow/fast waves. Make sure you practice the “HOLD” signal (meaning they stop, hold their handle by their belly, and are quiet).

Merry Go Round - Tell students to hold the parachute in their right hand. Begin by walking around in a circle, like a merry go round. Change the locomotor movement to galloping, skipping or running. Switch to holding it with your left hand and do the merry go round in the opposite direction.

Umbrella – Start by squatting down. Parachute is low and students are holding handles to the floor. When teacher yells “umbrella”, everyone stands and lifts their handle as high up as they can. Arms should be fully extended. I often see students leaving their hands by their forehead with bent elbows. Remind students to raise arms all the way up, to make the umbrella higher. After making a few umbrellas, then I teach them to take ONE step in while they lift, to make the umbrella go higher.

Make a mushroom—Have students place the parachute down on the floor with one foot on their handle. This helps them to listen while you explain how to make a mushroom. (So they aren’t standing there shaking the parachute while you are trying to talk). a. To make a mushroom, start in squatted position with handles on the floor. When teacher yells “mushroom”, students lift it high, like an umbrella, then they go inside the parachute, sit on their handles, and take 3 scooches towards the middle. Remind students not to let go of their handles while they are going inside! (I have them take 3 scooches when they sit on their handle so that the mushroom goes higher. If the mushroom starts to fall, taking an extra scooch in towards the middle will lift it up again.) While inside the mushroom, take turns going around and saying what you’re excited to do this summer.

Mountain: A mountain is basically making a mushroom but not going inside. Students begin squatting with handles on the floor. When teacher yells “Mountain”, everyone lifts it high like an umbrella, then pull your handle very fast to the floor and hold the handles on the floor. It will look like a mountain.

Switch-a-roo - In this game, students will make umbrellas and 2-4 students will run under the

umbrella and switch places. The teacher can either call out names before making the umbrella, or call it while the umbrella is in the air (for older students).

Shark and lifeguards (Needs to be done inside on a smooth floor) – Two-four children are selected as sharks, the equivalent of “It” in a game of tag. They go under the parachute. Two students are selected as lifeguards. They stand up. All the other children sit on the ground and place their legs under the parachute as the sharks attempt to pull them under. If they get pulled under, the “shark” who pulled them under comes out and takes their place. The lifeguards try to save them by holding onto them. Demonstration here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4vcO2DFuOk>

Roly Poly: Students take turns rolling around on top of the parachute while the other players make big waves.