

LUMMI STICK SUGGESTIONS THAT HAVE WORKED FOR ME

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1. When first teaching this activity, I try to make the routine simple and repetitive. With younger students I often start this activity with a sit down routine, just to teach them some basic skills before adding movement.
2. I teach the routine or segments of the routine using the hands first. I find that students concentrate harder on what I am teaching if I add the sticks after they have learned the pattern with their hands.
3. Students enjoy working and experimenting with equipment. When I first hand out the sticks, I allow a few minutes for the students to just work with them on their own. If I do not do this, I find that they are attempting to do it anyway during my instruction time. I actually save myself time and frustration by allowing them some free time.
4. Before handing out the sticks, I come to an immediate agreement with the class on a stopping position for the sticks. Otherwise, I find myself trying to talk above the tapping sticks. (I usually have my students hold the sticks on their shoulders.)
5. If I have a student who consistently plays with the sticks while I am talking, I ask that student to return the sticks to me and go back to using just his hands for a while. This usually solves the problem, as students enjoy using the equipment much more.
6. When choosing sticks for partners, I ask students to choose two sets of sticks that are different colors. Have each partner take one stick of each color. I use the rhyme "**place the light in the right.**" This tells the students to place the lighter color stick in their right hand. In this way, they will be working with the same color sticks on various moves and tapping the same color sticks together when they do right and left motions with a partner. Sometimes I even use the terms "light to light" and "dark to dark" in place of "right to right" and "left to left." This often helps the student who has difficulty with left and right.
7. When choosing music for a routine, I have discovered that my students have an easier time learning the routine if the song has lyrics. The class learns to identify particular moves or skills with certain lyrics. If a song is chosen that is instrumental, I try to use one that is more unique and not too repetitive sounding. **(NOTE: When choosing songs with lyrics, watch out for offensive language.)**
8. I almost always do routines to the count of eight (4/4 time works well). It is easy for students to remember and allows them to do most actions equally on both left and right sides. It also helps to choose music with a consistent beat and tempo, so as to not confuse the students.
9. When first teaching the routine, I teach the patterns with everyone facing forward. If we are working on a segment that uses a partner, we use an imaginary one. After a few practices to the front with the music, we partner up and try the routine.

10. When students partner up, I have them stand facing each other with their side to me (I'm at the front of the room by the music). This allows all students to see the instructor and prevents anyone from having his back to me.

11. I get some great ideas from my students when I provide time and music and allow them to create their own routines. Most students also enjoy performing the routines that they have made up, but I do this on a voluntary basis.

12. I like making my own lummi sticks better than purchasing them through a catalog. I buy a standard 4 foot dowel rod at the lumber yard or hardware store, cut it into three 16 inch pieces and spray paint them different colors. The longer length lummi stick seems to work easier for partner skills.

13. I really stress safety, especially on skills like flips and partner tosses. Even the tapping of the stick on the floor can be dangerous if done inappropriately. I have students report broken or cracked sticks right away. **Remember:** the sticks are only made of wood, so expect some to break over time.

14. Using a lummi stick routine for a Parent Night or a Physical Education program can be very impressive. It is a unique activity and the audience usually responds well to the fun music and the driving beat of the sticks!

