

Engage, Activate, and Motivate with *Scatter Square Dance*

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What is scatter square dance?

- Scatter square dance is a fun way to introduce children to the skills of square dance without the actual structure of square dance or the need for a specific kind of music.
- Children are scattered around a designated area and respond to the calls that the teacher makes. Calls can involve individuals, partners, combined groups of people, or the entire class.
- Calls are randomly made and children select new partners or groups with each new call. They must do this quickly, however, by taking the person/group closest to them when the call is made. Children are encouraged to move about on their own without following each other.
- If working with a large group of children, it is helpful to establish a "Lost and Found" area where children go if they cannot find someone close to them when the call is made. At the "Lost and Found" they will be able to find a friend quickly and begin the activity. As caller, you should allow partner or group skills to last longer to accommodate individuals in the "Lost and Found." (Note: I place a cowboy hat and bandana on a stick for my "Lost and Found" and place it inside the hole at the top of a cone.)
- If there is a child left without a partner: (1) the teacher may choose to temporarily partner with that student, (2) the student might use an "imaginary partner," or (3) the student may join in with the partner/group closest to the "Lost and Found" and share the skill responsibility among all participants.

What are the benefits of scatter square dance?

- Scatter square dance is not gender specific. There is no need to have a boy/girl partnership in order to perform the skills. Skills may be done with any person.
- This activity can be done with a large group of people and does not necessarily need an even number of people, as in traditional square dance groups of eight. In fact, uneven numbers often require quick thinking on the part of the participants.

- The skills can be spread out throughout the music so that children have time to react to the calls and perform them at a less stressful pace. This is particularly beneficial to young students.
- Any type of music can be used when working on the skills of scatter square dance.
- Scatter square dance skills change often. Therefore, students are not with each other for very long. This allows them to work and cooperate with a large number of people.
- Scatter square dance is easily adaptable to the age and skill level of the participants.
- Learning square dance skills in a scatter format creates an easier transition to traditional square dance.
- Corrections are easily made because of the smaller numbers in a group. Students feel more comfortable helping one another because of the informality of the activity.
- New skills can be continually added depending upon location, tradition, or special event. Creating new skills can be a fun challenge for students.

Which NASPE standards are applicable to scatter square dance?

Standard 1: Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.

- Using locomotor and non-locomotor skills to move appropriately with the music

Standard 2: Demonstrates understanding of movement concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics as they apply to the learning and performance of physical activities.

- Follow directions and procedures for rhythmic activities, including rules of safety
- Recognize correct transitions from skill to skill
- Identify and coordinate the motions of the right and left sides of the body
- Develop a movement vocabulary

Standard 5: Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings.

- Demonstrate an ability to work rhythmically and politely with a partner
- Move to a partner without regard to personal differences
- Students assist and correct one another as needed

Standard 6: Values physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction.

- Recognize the application of this activity to a possible upcoming event (Pioneer Day, Wild West Days, Parent Night, PE program, etc.) and lifetime activities
- Understand the health benefits associated with being physically active

How can one assess scatter square dance?

- Teacher observation during teaching, student practice, or dance
- Peer assessment following practice or dance
- Self assessment following practice or dance
- Class review/discussion following the day's lesson
- Teacher asks specific skill related questions of the class as they are lining up to leave
- An ongoing skill's checklist can be used by the teacher or students as skills are introduced and mastered

Resources

National Association for Sport and Physical Education. (2004). *Moving into the future: National standards for physical education* (2nd ed.). Reston, VA: Author.

Ermler, K., Mehrhof, J. (2001). *Physical Essentials: Kindergarten – 5th Grade Physical Education Curriculum*. Emporia, KS: Mirror Publishing.

(Square Dance Skills on Next Pages)

A Sample of Scatter Square Dance Skills

Individual Skills Standing Still

Clap to the music or keep time to the music

Slap and Tap (*tap foot and slap thigh*)

Say "Howdy"

Bow or Curtsy or Honor your partner

Lasso (*pretend to twirl a lasso above the head*)

Rope a steer (*pretend to throw the lasso out to rope a steer and pull it in*)

Play the guitar...piano...fiddle...harmonica

Say "yee haw"... "yahoo"...or "yippee"

Wave goodbye

Coyote howl (*go down on one knee, place hands to mouth and howl*)

Individual Skills Moving

Hit the lonesome trail (*walk*)

Skip, Jump, Slide, etc.

Ride a Horse (*gallop*)

Walk backwards

Tip your hat to a friend (*walk and pretend to tip a hat to each person you meet*)

Meet and greet (*shake hands with people you walk past*)

Turn one alone (*turn one quick circle and keep walking forward*)

High five a friend (*high five people as you walk by*)

Lame Dog (*hop on one foot*)

Kick up your heels (*jump and kick heels together out to right and left sides*)

Partner Skills Moving

Circle two (*hold hands-walk in slow circle*)

Do si do (*circle around each other, always keep stomach facing same way*)

Right or left hand star (*turn circle with right/left hands touching above head*)

Right or left elbow trim (*hook elbows and turn in a circle*)

Horse and buggy (*two people stand one behind the other with back person's hands on shoulders and walk*)

Change Drivers (*back person moves to front of horse and buggy*)

Around the flagpole (*one person down on one knee with pointer finger in air – second person gently holds finger and walks in circle around partner*)

Promenade (*facing same direction, stand shoulder to shoulder with partner – hold right hand to right hand and left hand to left hand – walk*)

Reverse promenade (*partners walk and do an about face to go the other way – hands always stay connected*)

Wring the dishrag (*partners hold hands and turn a complete circle bringing their hands over their heads without releasing hands*)

Partner twirl (*Partners face each other. One partner extends right hand to his partner's left hand. The hands are lifted in the air as one person walks under the hands and back to the starting position. The partner then takes a turn.)*

Groups of Four Moving

Circle four (*hold hands-walk in slow circle*)

Walk to the middle and back with a whoop and a holler (*keep holding hands and take 3 steps in and yell and back out 3 steps and yell*)

Right hand star (*turn circle with right hands touching up in the middle of the circle*)

Left hand star (*turn circle with left hands touching up in the middle of the circle*)

Pinwheel (*two groups of elbow trims hook up together and turn*)

Wagon Train (*two horse and buggy's connect and walk*)

Reverse (*entire group changes direction*)

Hook up four (*two wagon trains stand next to each other-all place inside hands on shoulder of person next to them - back people place outside hand on front person's shoulder*)

Dive for the oyster, duck for the clam (*from a circle four, one set of partners makes an arch with their joined hands while the other two dip under the arch and back out – other partners do the same*)

Thread the needle (*Similar to dive for the oyster/duck for the clam except partners walk under the arch and keep going. The first couple making the arch will follow them, making the entire circle now face out. The "thread the needle" can be reversed by saying "back it out" and the original two people who made the arch will do it again and the other couple will walk backwards through the arch while the other couple follows.*)

Cut the cake (*From a circle of four who are still holding hands, one couple walks in towards the other couple and uses their inside hands to gently "cut down" on the other couple's inside hands to separate them. The separated couple then backs up and walks backwards to reconnect hands with one another. The entire circle is now facing out and everyone continues to walk in a circle. The "cut the cake" can be reversed by saying "put it back, face the middle" and the partner's whose hands were separated will let go of hands and walk forward and around to reconnect in a circle that faces the center.*)

Large Group Moving

Circle up the wagons (*All group wagon trains circle into one big circle, all facing the same direction*)

Promenade to one big circle (*Partners promenade to make one big circle moving in the same direction. This can be varied by asking the outside person in the promenade to move one person forward so he/she can have a new partner.*)

Circle to the right or left (*face the center and move in the called direction*)

Cotton Eyed Joe (*From a promenade position, partners start the actions for the Cotton Eyed Joe. Cross right foot over left knee, kick right foot forward, take 3 small steps (R, L, R) backwards, cross left foot over right knee, kick left foot forward, take 3 small steps (L, R, L) backwards, Repeat right and left kick sequences one more time. Travel forward with 8 step together steps, starting with the right foot. * Note – the Cotton Eyed Joe can also be done as an individual, partner, or small group skill.*)

