Teaching Jump Rope Skills – Elementary P.E.

I **HIGHLY** recommend Rene Bibaud’s Jump Rope DVDs as an instructional tool for teachers. I use Rene Bibaud’s “Complete Fundamentals of Rope Jumping” DVD while I teach jumping rope to students.

Here are some ideas and progressions for teaching jump rope skills to elementary students.

1. Selecting a rope:
   * When students select a jump rope, they should measure it to make sure it’s a proper fit. Stand with both feet on the middle of the jump rope. Pull up the handles along the sides of your body. The handles should come up to the armpits. If the jump rope is too short or too long, students will have difficulty jumping.
2. Teach “ready” position:

* Stand with jump rope behind your feet. Hold the handles out in front of you so the rope is touching against your legs. Push hands down towards the ground and turn rope over your head, so it makes a rainbow shape.

Drills:

* As seen in Rene Bibaud’s video, I have students practice the arm motion without a rope first, then add the rope. At first, have students swing rope over their head and trap the rope with their feet (instead of trying to jump over the rope). When they feel comfortable with the arm movements they may begin to try to jump over.
* It is very important to begin in this ready position. Often times students will begin with the handles up high by their ears, but the handles should be extended out in front of the body (waist height, away from body).

1. Basic jumps:

* I like to teach 3 “basic jumps”. Single bounce, double bounce, and the jogging step. These are all great ways to jump rope, however, a person must master the “single bounce” if they wish to later perform tricks.
* Single bounce: One jump for every turn of the rope. Remind students to not jump too high, just a few inches off the floor. Keep elbows/arms by your sides.
* Double Bounce: Two bounces for every turn of the rope. This is good if you want to work on endurance.
* Jogging step: I notice most younger students start out using the jogging step because it’s probably easier for them. It’s stepping over the rope one foot at a time, as if you’re jogging in place.

1. Single Rope Tricks: See my blog for videos of tricks (<http://carly3.blogspot.com>) There is a much longer list of tricks you could teach students. My list reflects the tricks that seem to be easiest for elementary students, and it’s about all I have time for in my unit.

* Side Swings
* Hopping on one foot
* Criss Cross
* Backwards Jumping
* Jumping Jacks
* Backwards Criss Cross
* Double Unders

1. Partner Tricks (with single ropes): (see my blog: videos of these will be posted mid-January). http://carly3.blogspot.com

* Switching Handles
* 1 Twirl/ 1 Jumps
* Face to face (or face to side)

1. Long Rope Jumping:

* You should have enough ropes for students to work in groups of 3. This way no one has to sit out. If you do not have that many long ropes, simply make it a center and have other students jumping with single ropes, Chinese ropes, or doing another activity.
* Before teaching long rope skills to students, I like to mark the floor with tape to show where the twirlers and jumpers stand. Elementary students tend to stand too far apart and therefore the jump rope does not go high enough, or ends up not touching the floor.
* With two people holding the ends of the rope, they should be able to twirl it so that the rope is touching the ground. They should hear the “click” sound of it touching. The rope should make a nice arc, like a rainbow.
* Mark a line in the middle for the jumper. Kids sometimes make the mistake of not staying in the middle, so this will help them see where they need to be.
* To begin, have the jumper stand in the middle. I tell the twirlers to give “THREE ON THE FEET” before twirling. This means they gently tap the jumpers feet and count to 3, then continue to twirl the rope over the jumper’s head.
* Especially when jumpers are first learning (and mess up a lot), I tell them to take three turns in a row, then rotate twirlers/jumpers.

1. Long Rope Jumping with Rhymes:

* When students get good at jumping, it is fun to teach them rhymes to say while they jump. Here are some favorites of my students:

Teddy Bear – Teddy Bear Teddy Bear Turn Around, Teddy Bear Teddy Bear Touch the Ground, Teddy Bear Teddy Bear Turn off the Light, Teddy Bear Teddy Bear Jump Outta Sight!

Ice Cream- Ice cream Ice Cream, Cherry on Top, How many boyfriends do you got? 1, 2, 3, 4,…etc…(keep jumping until you miss)

1. Chinese Jump Ropes:

* Chinese Jump Ropes are a great activity for students as young as preschool. Jumps can be as easy or complex as you want them to be!
* To use the Chinese Jump Rope, you need 3 or more people. These ropes are long and stretchy. They are to be held around two players’ ankles. The jumper goes in the middle.
* The basic idea of Chinese Jump Rope is to jump a pattern and master it at each level. The first level is ankles, then calves, knees and finally hips. I keep it at ankle or calf level for younger students. I have had 4th graders who were successful at jumping at the hip level!
* Basic jumps: Jump Inside, Jump Outside, Jump ON the ropes, Straddle one rope, straddle both ropes, Criss Cross.
* Patterns: Begin at ankles, if jumper does not mess up the pattern OR stumble on the jump rope, they move up to the next level.
  + “Americans” = 1,2,3,4, IN, ON, OUT. The 1,2, 3, 4, part is when the jumper straddles one rope. Jump with one foot in the middle, one foot on the outside…4 times. Then jump inside, on the ropes and out.
  + “Name Game” = Just like Americans partner except spell out a name instead of saying 1,2,3,4. Ex, “J, I, M, IN, ON, OUT

Notes: As an incentive, I give students a “Jump Club” certificate for anyone who is able to jump 30 times in a row without messing up. I give them a certificate with their name and their score on it. I let students jump as long as they possibly can for their “test”. I also began keeping school records and have had kids jump an amazing amount! Currently our schools record is over 2,000 jumps in a row. I bring in volunteers to help on our testing day, so each child gets a lot of turns. The school record holder was jumping for 25 minutes without stopping!

\*You may choose to lower the requirement for the certificate to 20 jumps for younger students (1st-2nd graders).

**More Jump Rope Activities - For Elementary Students**

**(Ideas from the book “Dynamic Physical Education for Elementary Students” by Robert Pangrazi)**

Rope Forming a Straight Line:

Lay rope on the floor in a straight line and do the following:

1. Jog around the rope forward and backward. Do the same with other locomotor movements or animal walks.

2. Hop back and forth across the rope, moving down the line.

3. Hop slowly down the line and rapidly back.

4. Jump with two feet over the rope.

5. Do a high jump over and a low jump back.

6. Bunny jump over, frog jump back.

Rope forming a circle:

Lay rope in a circle.

1. Hop in and out.

2. Jump in and out.

3. Do animal walks around it.

4. Balance inside the circle in different positions.

5. Make a bridge over the circle.

6. Run and jump in the circle. Or, run and click your heels as you jump inside the circle.

7. Jump and turn inside the circle (90 degrees, 180 degrees, 360 degrees).

Rope Forming Various Figures

1. With the rope and your body for a triangle, square, rectangle, circle, diamond, figure eight.

2. Form letters or words,

Small or Large Group Activity: Use several ropes to make shapes, letters or patterns. Display posters of forms for students to make.

Long Rope Introductory Skills - For Early Elementary Students

1. Building a House: Two players hold rope loosely, a few inches off the floor. Another player jumps over rope and back. Holders raise the rope a couple inches each time the jumper clears it. May also be done with a Chinese Jump Rope.

2. Snake in the Grass: Holders stoop down and wiggle the rope on the floor. Jumpers try to jump over the rope and not touch it as it moves.