



## 500 Minutes for Parkinson's Lesson 11 : Statues – Focus on Balance!

### **Parkinson's Points:**

One common characteristic of Parkinson's disease is problems with balance. Studies have shown that it is possible for Parkinson's patients to improve their balance with specific exercises and strategies.

### **Lesson Objectives:**

- To practice and experiment with a variety of balances and balance sequences and consider how individuals with balance problems would feel performing these actions.

### **Materials/Equipment:**

Adequate space for students to move and balance independently.

### **References/Resources:**

Parkinson Society Canada

### **Activity Description:**

#### *Statues*

Direct the students to find a space within the gymnasium away from the walls and other students. On the word "go" each student spins around slowly a few times, and freezes on the word "stop". Each student holds this shape or statue until the 'buyer' (the teacher or designated student) comes around and activates the statue by touching his/her shoulder.

Once the statue is activated, the student changes his/her position to demonstrate various balances, twists, stretches, or curls at different levels. The 'buyer' touches the statue again to freeze it a second time, and moves on to the next statue.

After they have gone through a few poses as statues, give the students a quick rest or stretch and begin again.

Do this activity outside in the field for more space. Before you begin, ensure that students have done a visual sweep of the area to check for potential hazards.

Break the class into smaller groups of five or six so that they do not have to hold their statue for so long. The buyer is one of the students within that group.

*These are clues that you have reached the outcomes ...*

Can students hold the balances for three to five seconds?

Can students show control in moving from a frozen (statue) balance to an active balance involving movements such as stretches, curls, and twists.

*Discuss* with students which of the statue "poses" are easiest? What happens when they change positions or add active components to the pose? How do you think it would feel doing these activities if you had problems controlling your balance (uncertainty, fear, reluctance to participate, etc).

Did balances get easier with practice? Reinforce the idea that people with Parkinson's should practice balance exercises to help maintain balance abilities.

### **Ontario Ministry Curriculum Links:**

Daily Physical Activity

Health and Physical Education