Activity 6: Clown Tricks: juggling and balloon twisting.

In Brief: By the end of this activity, your kid will know how to juggle, twist balloons and use storytelling to narrate their actions.

Objectives: The goals of this activity are to develop their dexterity and physical skills; as well as learning how to engage with the audience through storytelling.

Background: Clown tricks are an essential part of circus entertainment with a long history. Clown’s characters and storytelling play an important role in creating a circus’ unique energy.

Materials: Objects you can use to juggle (tennis balls, ping-pong balls, limes, rolled-up socks...) and special balloons good for twisting (also called “twist balloons”).

Focus: Start with simple and easy juggling and twisting tricks that are age and ability appropriate for your child. This should be fun and not frustrating. The goal is to blend the clown character with these tricks in an entertaining way for the audience. Even beginner or bad jugglers can make their “show” entertaining with lively story telling.

With/for Your Child: Engage!


Step 1. Go online and look up video tutorials for juggling and balloon twisting. Look for beginner instructions.

Step 2. Think about the kind of clown character that you are creating and how the juggling and twisting tricks will fit that clown’s character and story. Is your character skilled, silly, joyful, daring?

Step 3. Pick the juggling video you like the most. Choose the objects you want to juggle with. Start practicing! One step at a time. Make it fun.

Step 4. Pick the balloon twisting video you like the most. Start practicing that too!

Tips: If the tutorial you picked is too complicated, that’s fine! Pick another one, practice it and go back to the hardest one when you feel more comfortable.

Step 5. When you feel confident with both tricks, practice making funny noises when you juggle (laugh loudly when you get it right, take a noisy inhale when
you want the audience to think you are going to miss a ball...). Then try and tell a story when you twist balloons. You can tell the audience what you are doing, maybe tell them a few jokes, or imagine a story for the animal or object you are creating.

**Tips:** Let’s be eco-friendly and think about getting biodegradable balloons!

**Follow up and Extensions:** *Time to act!* If you are fond of visual arts, drama, acting... This is your chance to make a video recording of your juggling and balloon twisting act. Start with simple juggling and simple balloon characters and build them into the story that fits your clown character.

**IMAGES OF CLOWN TRICKS**

https://www.allanandfriends.com/services/talents-and-shows/jugglers/the-wonder-juggler/