

## MEANINGFUL MOVEMENT & PURPOSEFUL PLAY PACKET OF ACTIVITES

### ✓ I'M SO GLAD YOU CAME

**PURPOSE:** Fun way to generate a sense of playfulness while allowing children to work on their listening and responding skills

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** No equipment needed. Students scattered in personal space.

**HOW TO PLAY:** Recite the poem, filling in the blank with any type of movement you desire. Have the kids count with you as they do the designated movement. When you get to eight – they should freeze in whatever position they are in and hold that position until the poem is read again with a new movement.

*I'm so glad you came, I almost couldn't wait. Can you \_\_\_\_\_ as we count to eight? 1, 2 ... 7, 8*

### ✓ HELLO NEIGHBOR

**PURPOSE:** Fun activity based, call back poem that promotes non-locomotor skills while working on listening and interacting with peers.

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** No equipment needed

*Hello neighbor, what do you say?  
It's gonna be a wonderful day!  
So clap your hands and boogie on down,  
give us a bump and turn around!*

**HOW TO PLAY:** Teacher recites and models entire poem as children watch. Next teacher recites and models one line of the poem, then repeats it with children joining in. Next teacher adds on one line at a time until children are doing the entire poem with actions.

### ✓ 5 in 10

**PURPOSE:** Energizing, movement based activity that works on listening skills while having fun with peers.

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** stop watch or timer, music

**HOW TO PLAY:** The goal is to complete 5 of the movements in 10 seconds. The teacher identifies the movement and then starts the music. When the music is playing the students attempt to complete 5 of that movement before the teacher shuts off the music. Any type of movement can be used such as high five 5 different people, touch 5 different red items in the room, do 5 jumping jacks.

✓ **EMOTIONAL LOCOMOTION**

**PURPOSE:** Move through space communicating various feelings and emotion without words.

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** Word signs that have the various emotions on them. Students are scattered in personal space.

**HOW TO PLAY:** Teacher identifies a locomotor movement and an emotion. Students then use that movement to communicate that emotion without using any sounds or words.

**EXTENSION:** Play a guessing game where the teacher tells only a few students the movement and emotion. These student then do the movement and emotion as the rest of the students try to guess the emotion and name the movement.

✓ **JUMPING JACK FREEZE**

**PURPOSE:** Use body in creative way to communicate animals, objects or story characters, while working on static balance and muscular strength.

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** Hand drum. Students scattered in personal space.

**HOW TO PLAY:** The leader calls out the name of an animal, object, or story character, then beats the drum three times. On the third beat everyone must freeze in whatever shape was called out (i.e., giraffe, bear, toothbrush, chair, Buzz Lightyear).

✓ **YES GAME**

**PURPOSE:** Verbal communication and creative movement

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** No equipment needed

**HOW TO PLAY:** Begin with the teacher making an offer "Let's shake hands." The group yells, "yes!". Everyone then moves around and shakes hands until the teacher says something new, such as "Let's fly" – everyone yells "yes!", and they all pretend to fly. After a few teacher-led rounds the teacher can ask a student to make an offer of a different movement and the game continues.

✓ **WHAT'S ON MY FEET**

**PURPOSE:** Explore personal and general space, while interpreting the journey in the book

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** Story and pictures – students are scattered in their own personal space (To get the story contact Kristi Mally at [mally.kris@uwlax.edu](mailto:mally.kris@uwlax.edu))

**HOW TO PLAY:** Read the story and hold up the matching shoe for each part of the journey. Students listen and then interpret the journey through their motions.

✓ **THE GREAT ALPHABET HUNT** *(adapted from Clements & Schneider)*

**PURPOSE:** Enhance balance, strength, and stability while exploring imaginative movement and the alphabet

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** Create a binder book of the ABC's. Each page has the letter and a picture of something that starts with that letter. Students are scattered in front of the teacher.

**HOW TO PLAY:** Teacher reads and shows the book as she/he describes a journey of moving through the alphabet. Each picture can have its own little story that provides opportunities for a variety of movements. For example A is for apple, can you stand on your tip toes and reach for the highest apple on the tree, can you throw the apple as far as you can, can you pretend to be the apple, now you are the apple rolling down a hill, now you are applesauce.

✓ **MOVEMENT SOLVERS ... IF I WERE A \_\_\_\_\_, I WOULD MOVE LIKE \_\_\_\_\_ !**

**PURPOSE:** Use imagination and problem solving to turn body into something.

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** none

**HOW TO PLAY:** Get creative and fill in the blank (i.e., a deflated balloon being blown up, an eraser being used to erase, a soccer ball in a game, a leaf falling from a tree, a rabbit jumping through the grass, a crayon coloring a picture, a block tower falling to the ground, a monkey swinging from a vine etc.). Children act out the phrase

✓ **HEY EVERYBODY LET'S MAKE A SHAPE**

**PURPOSE:** Use body in creative ways to communicate various shapes, while working on muscular strength and balance

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** No equipment needed. Students scattered in personal space.

**HOW TO PLAY:** This is a call back type game. Teacher begins by saying: Hey Every Body, Let's Make a Shape. The students respond by saying: Shape, Shape, what Shape? The teacher then says, Square, 2 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 – as students create the shape with their bodies.

**EXTENSION:** Add descriptors to the shape such as big, small, high, low, wide, narrow etc.; see if they can work with a partner to use both of their bodies to make the shape; allow a child to play the role of the teacher

✓ **INDOOR NATURE TRAIL**

**PURPOSE:** Bring nature indoors, while children explore the many movements associated with being outdoors in nature.

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** Task signs with different outdoor objects, places on them (i.e., floating/falling leaves, rolling stones, fluttering butterfly, leaping frogs, blowing wind, bubbling brook). Spread the task signs scattered throughout the playing space.

**HOW TO PLAY:** Students travel along the indoor nature trail as they perform the motions associated with the task signs.

✓ **HOME DANCE/PLAYGROUND DANCE**

**PURPOSE:** Use movement as a tool to communicate chores that are done around the home; exploring movement patterns and sequences

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** No equipment required, but could use paper to list the names of the chores

**HOW TO PLAY:** Begin by brainstorming a list of chores that children do at home. Try to get them to come up with chores that require a variety of different types of movements. Create a movement to go along with each of the chores. Choose two of the chores and create an AB movement pattern. Choose 4 chores and create a sequence of movements doing each chore for 4 counts.

**EXTENSIONS:** Create various other patterns; use a hand drum or tambourine to add the concept of tempo or rhythm; instead of the home dance do the sports dance, or playground dance using movements that are done in these environments.

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## ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE LOCOMOTOR - TRAVELING SKILLS

✓ **RECYCLING LOCOMOTION**

**PURPOSE:** Repetition of any of the locomotor skills. This game also works on matching colors.

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** Roll up sheets of construction paper – about 20 of 4 different colors. Four buckets – each colored to match one of the four colors used to make the construction paper rolls. Place one bucket in each corner, and scatter the paper rolls all over the space in the middle.

**HOW TO PLAY:** Students use a locomotor movement to sort the paper into the correct bucket.

✓ **NO VACANCY – FILL THIS SPACE**

**PURPOSE:** practice locomotor skills while working on both personal and shared space

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** No equipment needed.

**HOW TO PLAY:** The goal of this game is to work as a class to fill all of the space in the area. Begin by asking the children to point to an area in the space that is not filled, then on signal tell them to move directly to that area and freeze. Practice this a few times and then let them freeze in a fun pose. Once they get this they are ready for the game ... find an open spot with your eyes, move to it with your body, freeze and hold a pose in that spot while you count to 3, find another spot with your eyes, point to it, move to it with your body, freeze ... continue

**EXTENSION:** stress keeping your eyes open, head up, looking around and watching for others moving in the space. You can add that they have to say excuse me and thank you as they move through space, getting closer to each other's personal space.

✓ **FROM HEAR TO THERE**

**PURPOSE:** Practice locomotor skills while moving through shared space

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** No equipment necessary but can use anything that is already in the space as location markers, such as the tree, corner of the building, end of the sidewalk, teachers chair, door, pretend oven etc.

**HOW TO PLAY:** Together the class describes where they are in the space and then choose a location to move to; teacher identifies a movement form and says *lets skip from here to there*. Everyone does that movement to the new location, where another spot is chosen and a new movement form is identified such as, *Lets gallop from here to there*.

**EXTENSION:** Add in the use of changing levels, pathways and speeds – for example, let's walk low to the ground from here to there, or let's slide in a curvy pathway from here to there.

✓ **HOW DID YOU GET THERE?**

**PURPOSE:** Exploring ways to use my body to move across space.

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** everyone lines up on one side of the playing space with the leader doing the first movement

**HOW TO PLAY:** Leader does a movement across the space (ride your motorcycle, jump like a frog, dance like a ballerina, walk like a bear). When he/she gets to the other side everyone says ... \_\_\_\_\_ how did you get there? She/he says back I rode my motorcycle, can you? Then everyone does that movement across the space.

✓ **AROUND AND AROUND**

**PURPOSE:** Moving in relationship to objects and to others, while learning relational awareness vocabulary

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** One hula hoop (home) for each child. Scatter the hoops throughout the playing space.

**HOW TO PLAY:** Begin by exploring relational awareness terms by saying to the child, show me how you move around your hoop, show me how you move in your hoop, out of your hoop, over your hoop etc. Then when the music turns on have the children move around someone else's hoop and then return to their home hoop and move around it, then leave and move around another hoop and then back to their own – continue going around and around. Change it to in and out, over and through, etc.

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**ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE Non- LOCOMOTOR - STABILIZING SKILLS**✓ **BODY PART TOUCH AND GO**

**PURPOSE:** Body part identification, moving through shared space, and balance.

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** A bunch of poly spots or paper plates scattered all over the playing area. Signs of different body parts – I use a foot, hand, elbow, and a head.

**HOW TO PLAY:** Children begin moving around the playing area touching poly spots with their foot (hold up picture of foot), when the music is on. When the music shuts off, children freeze and are directed to do a variety of static balances – such as balance on three body parts, balance with your tummy high and your bumper low, balance as wide as you can etc.

✓ **MAGICAL ZOO**

**PURPOSE:** Exploring personal and general space, enhancing static and dynamic balance, while 'becoming' animals in a zoo.

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** Task cards of different zoo animals, placed on cones that are spread out around the playing space.

**HOW TO PLAY:** Begin with a conversation about going to the zoo, letting children share their favorite animals. Next introduce the idea of a magical zoo... each time you look at an animal, poof, you become that animal, and can only move and sound like that animal, until you get to and see another animal. Let them explore and move through the zoo. *Variations include* ... ask students to hold the shape of the animal before moving on through space, ask them to travel in different levels or pathways, use music of varying speeds and ask them to move like the speed, pair students up and ask them to work together to

become one of the animals using both of their bodies, have one student secretly choose an animal and move like it while a friend guesses...

✓ **SECRET MOVEMENT BAG**

**PURPOSE:** Identify objects and use the body to act out these objects, while working on body and space awareness.

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** A set of pictures of objects that are found around school or the home that move either when turned on or when someone uses them (i.e., blender, washing machine, scissors, eraser, crayon, tweezers). Place the pictures in a pillow case or other type of bag.

**HOW TO PLAY:** There are many ways to organize this activity. It can be a full class activity where the students take turns pulling out a card and everyone acts it out, or a student acts it out alone for the class to guess.

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## ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE OBJECT CONTROL-MANIPULATING SKILLS

✓ **THE GREAT EXCHANGE**

**PURPOSE:** Repetition of self toss/catching skills, while exploring using a variety of different sizes, textures, shapes, and weights of objects.

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** Depending on number of children, I collect a variety of different items that can be self tossed and caught. It is best to find items that are really different from each other. Collect 2-4 of each item and place like-items in a hoop or box, and spread the hoops/boxes around the perimeter of the playing space.

**HOW TO PLAY:** Children choose any item and begin self tossing and catching in their own personal space. On signal students are asked to take their item to its home, and exchange it for a different item to self toss and catch. The value of this activity is that they get to really explore the movements associated with self toss and catch for a variety of types of objects.

**EXTENDING CHALLENGES:** If the children are ready and if the items you are using have high floatability you can add some fun challenges: clap before catching, jump to catch, touch your tummy before catching, spin a circle, look away...they can be pretty creative with coming up with challenges.

✓ **T-SHIRT EXPLORATION & MANIPULATION**

**PURPOSE:** Work on manipulating a piece of equipment while learning movement concepts; plus extra work on tracking and catching skills

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** Each child needs a large t-shirt; this activity is best played on a non-carpeted floor

**HOW TO PLAY:** Take the children through the following series of movement tasks:

- Put t-shirt on and try to put entire body inside the shirt – on signal shoot your arms, head and legs out of the shirt
- Roll shirt up like a snake and jump back and forth over it
- Spread shirt out on floor and move around it and over it
- Stand on shirt and twist
- Bend over, putting hands on shirt only and push it around the space
- Roll shirt up as a lasso and twirl it over your head – try it with the other arm
- Hold it like a jump rope and try to step through it without letting go of the ends
- Sit on it with entire body – move across the space using only your arms to push/pull
- Lay on it on your tummy – swim across space using only your arms
- With a friend – one sits on a shirt and holds on to the end of another that is rolled up, which is also held onto by a friend who is standing on his feet. The standing person pulls the one seated on the shirt
- Wad up the shirt and toss it into the air – catch it
  - Catch it on your arm, back, knee, head, tummy
  - Toss it, move and try to sit under it so when it lands it lands on you
- Play catch with one shirt and two children
- Play catch with two shirts and two children
- Make up your own t-shirt tricks

✓ **THROW (KICK, ROLL, STRIKE) AND GO**

**PURPOSE:** Practice throwing (or kicking, rolling, striking) skills for force, while also getting a good workout

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** an object to throw, kick, roll, or strike – balls work great but if you don't have enough you can make newspaper balls, sock balls, use milk jugs to kick etc.

**HOW TO PLAY:** Either playing individually, with a friend or in a group – someone choose a place to go to and then everyone does the movement toward that destination – for example maybe you have a tree on one end of your outdoor play space, everyone would kick their object until they arrived at the tree (this is kind of like golf but using other manipulative skills)

✓ **ROLY POLY – FIND ME**

**PURPOSE:** Work on rolling and collecting skills while also working on communicating with others

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** something for every two children to roll

**HOW TO PLAY:** One child stands in a personal space in the playing area with the ball, the other child moves to his/her own personal space and then calls and waves at his partner. The child with the ball rolls it to their partner working on using the correct amount of force and the correct direction. Once their partner gets the ball and look at them, it is their turn to move to a new spot in the space, wave and call for their partner and then collect the incoming rolled ball.

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## ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE MOVEMENT CONCEPTS

✓ **CLEAN UP THE FARMER'S FIELD**

**PURPOSE:** Repetition of underhand tossing while exploring the concept of force.

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** Make a mess in the middle of the playing space – spread out stuff, anything that can become a target. I like to use hoops, spots, boxes, towels, etc. Each child needs a spot around the outside of the playing space (good idea to mark this with something so they know where they are supposed to go back to), and a bean bag or yarn ball.

**HOW TO PLAY:** The goal of the game is to underhand toss the bean bag out into the mess so it lands on a piece of 'junk.' If it lands on an object, the child gets to go retrieve the item and their bean bag. If they miss they just go get their bean bag. The game continues as the children are figuring out how to change their tossing form to hit targets that are near and those that are far.

✓ **OVER, UNDER, AROUND AND THROUGH**

**PURPOSE:** recognize relationship vocabulary while manipulating an object; while also working on balance and strength

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** this activity can use about anything from a balloon to a scarf, or a bean bag to a paper plate.

**HOW TO PLAY:** Begin the activity by having one partner put their body in a balanced position they think they can hold for a long time – encourage making bridges. The partner moves the object in the location directed by the teacher – this can then become an add on activity where they move from one spot to another eventually getting to over, under, around and through (or add any other terms you may want such as above, next to, in front of, far from etc).

✓ **SHAPE SHIFTING - TRANSFORMERS**

**PURPOSE:** Static and dynamic balance, while using body as a creative communication tool

**EQUIPMENT & ORGANIZATION:** Cards that have two animals on them – picture and name. Try to make the combinations very different – small and large, fast and slow – for example a snake and giraffe, a butterfly and cow, a cheetah and mouse.

**HOW TO PLAY:** Begin by showing the entire class one card. Students begin acting out the first animal. When the teacher says shift, they transform themselves into the second animal.