

Will o' the Wisps

A Hand Gesture Game

~ Wilma Ellersiek

For a video of Lynn St. Pierre demonstrating the game, see the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/yc66ux39>

It flimmers – it flimmers.

Holding hands next to each other, move them from below to above, twice. At the same time, lightly and quickly turn wrists in and out, making a restless movement like lapping flames.

It shimmers – it shimmers.

Hold both hands, palms forward, at nose level; the hands are on either side of, and a little forward of, the face. Lightly move all fingers, like glowing coals.

It flits – it flits.

Quickly move both hands diagonally forward, with pointer fingers extended, once to the left, once to the right.

It glits – it glits.

Hold both fists (with rolled-in fingers forward) next to each other at chest height. At “glits” pointers dart out and are pushed up toward eye level. Then roll up pointers lightly and at the second “glits” let them dart out again above head.

It blits – zits – zits – zits.

Draw “lightning” into the air with the tips of both pointers, starting high left and moving down, right, left, right, down to thighs, in the shape of a thunderbolt.

What creatures? Tisp – tisps –

Hold fists (rolled-up fingers forward) with protruding pointers quietly next to each other at chest height. Tip left pointer forward at “Tisp,” and right pointer at “Tisps.”

the Will-of-the-Wisps!

“Throw” both index fingers up into the air, twice!

They tripple – they trapple.

Quickly open both fists and wave both hands (palms down) lightly side to side at waist height.

They skip – pel – lel – lapple.

Wave both hands (palms facing) lightly side to side, a bit higher.

Now whirling – now twirling,

Arms circle outward on the high diagonal on each side of the body, like two cones.

first here – then yon,

Point to the high diagonal with both hands, once to the left and once to the right.

*and wheeee – –
they're gone!*

At “whee,” throw up hand and shake them for the long “eee,” then hide them behind your back. ♦

Excerpted from *Gnomes and Giants: Pixies and Elves: Hand Gesture and Movement Games for Young Children* (WECAN, 2023).