

Mother Holle Circle

~ Justine Franco and Aaron Joseph

Please create your own movements and gestures to go with this circle. There are many opportunities for different kinds of movement. Unless otherwise indicated, you are also invited to make up your own tunes for songs, in the mood of the fifth.

There once was a mother in a cottage so fine.
One child did the chores, while the other would whine.

One dusted the tables...
...and polished the floors...
and folded the napkins...
and put them in drawers.

SING (to tune of "Here we go round the mulberry bush"):
This is the way we dust the room, dust the room, dust the room.
This is the way we dust the room, so softly in the morning.
Shine the floors...so smoothly in the morning.
Fold the cloth...so neatly in the morning.
Close the drawers...so gently in the morning.
(Hum the same tune once through the verse)

SPEAK
The other would stamp, for chores are no fun,
And hide in the cupboard, till the cleaning was done.

SING (to tune of "Old Brass Wagon"):
Buried beneath a big blue blanket (3x).
Here I'll hide till chores are done.
Bundled beneath a big blue blanket (3x)
If mother should find me, then I'll run.
And run and run, and run and run, and run and run ...
for chores are no fun. Humph!

One morning, Mother said to the first child:

Bring this basket. Fill it with flax.
Spin it and spin it, no time to relax.
Spin it and spin it, until you are done.
Then you shall have time to rest in the sun.

The child sat beside the well and spun the mother's thread.
and spun and spun and spun some more till drops of blood were shed.
The spindle fell into the well and landed with a splash.
The child jumped right in after it, and disappeared, alas.

The child awoke in a meadow so bright
Two eyes beholding the strangest sight:
A baker's oven all full of bread:
"Take me out, take me out, you sleepyhead!"

SING:
This is the way we take the bread...So carefully in the morning. (Sing song 2x through)

The child walked on through the meadow so bright,
Two eyes beholding another strange sight:
A tree of apples all rosy in cheek:
“Shake me, shake me!” The branches did creak.

SING:
This is the way we shake the tree... to harvest in the morning.

The child walked on through the meadow so bright,
Two eyes beholding another strange sight,
Which gave the child a bit of a fright:
A crone whose teeth glimmered like stars in the night:
“Do not be afraid, my child. Stay with me and work a while.”

SING: “Frau Holle Hymn”
*Child, fluff my blankets, lift them high.
Up fly the downy feathers.
Down to earth, they softly float
Like snowflakes in winter weather.*

And when the first child had made the crone’s bed,
The old crone approached and lovingly said:

SING:
*Child, you’ve finished your work with loving care.
Child, you’ve finished your work, it is so fair.*

The child left the old crone in due time,
Longing to visit the cottage so fine.
Through the great gate, the child did go.
From two little hands golden light did glow
Which followed the song of the rooster’s crow:

SING:
*Cock-a-doodle doo, cock-a-doodle doo.
Oh, what a light there shines from you! (Sing verse 2x)*

The next morning, Mother said to the other child:
Bring this basket. Fill it with flax.
Spin it and spin it, no time to relax.
Spin it and spin it until you are done,
Then you shall have time to rest in the sun.

The child sat beside the well, and would not spin the thread.
But pricked a finger till it bled
And threw the spindle in instead.

The spindle fell into the well and landed with a splash.
The child jumped right in after it and disappeared, alas.

The child awoke in a meadow so bright
Two eyes beholding the strangest sight:

A baker’s oven all full of bread:
“Take me out, take me out, you sleepyhead!”

SING:

This is the way we leave the bread...So carelessly in the morning.

The child walked on through the meadow so bright,

Two eyes beholding another strange sight:

A tree of apples all rosy in cheek:

"Shake me, shake me!" The branches did creak.

SING:

This is the way we scoff at the tree... so rudely in the morning (Sing verse through 2x)

The child walked on through the meadow so bright,

Two eyes beholding an expected sight,

which filled the child with secret delight:

A crone whose teeth glimmered like stars in the night:

"I see you are not afraid, my child. Stay with me and work a while."

SING:

Child, fluff my blankets, lift them high.

Up fly the downy feathers.

Down to earth, they softly float

Like snowflakes in winter weather.

On the first day, the other child did make the bed.

But the next day did nothing the old crone had said.

The third day, the child in the cupboard did hide,

But the old crone still found the child and sighed:

SAY (no singing this time):

Child, you did not finish

Your work with any care.

Child, you did not finish your work.

Does that seem fair?

The other child left the old crone in due time,

Longing to visit the cottage so fine.

Through the great gate, the child did go,

From treetops so high, golden sap did flow.

And made the way home oh so sticky and slow

Till the child heard the song of the rooster's crow:

SING:

Cock-a-doodle doo, cock-a-doodle doo.

What did you get yourself into? (Sing verse 2x)

And if things have not changed, they are still the same today.

CLOSING SONG:

In the winter garden

Cool the breezes blow.

Snowflakes falling, calling, falling

Down to earth below.

Oh oh oh oh. ♦

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and along with colleague and department chair Tina Kolkowski, comprise the lead Early Childhood team at the Waldorf School of Santa Barbara.

Aaron Joseph, M.Ed. *has degrees in Religious Studies and Education and Waldorf credentials from WISC. In his 20-plus years, he has taught grades and early childhood classes in public and independent Waldorf Schools. A longtime practitioner of meditation, Aaron is also passionate about bringing inner work to teachers and parents. He is father to four children*

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