

Spring Movement Circle

Nancy Blanning

Teachers everywhere experience that children are changing. They are more alert—sometimes even hyper-vigilant—and awake in the intellect. At the same time more and more children are surprisingly clumsy and uncoordinated, unaware of their movement and its consequences, easily distracted and unable to focus. We also meet children who are “touchy,” both physically and emotionally, who are timid and hold back, not wanting to engage in physical movement or group interaction.

When we look for understanding of these phenomena, both the anthroposophical stream, especially as articulated by Karl König, and the mainstream of sensory integration, point to the same fundamental cause. Both recognize that the body is formed, toned, educated, and made “inhabitable” for the soul and spirit through movement. The way human beings have always worked and played in the past has formed and educated the body through healthy movement. Traditional children’s games, for example, contain spiritual wisdom in their movements. They guide the body to move in healthy ways, to train, and integrate the senses. The freedom to explore, run, climb, balance—to generally challenge the lower senses—has been a part of daily human experience.

But our modern life style has become much more restricted. Our days offer less opportunity for healthy movement. We are more passive and entertainment-bound. Opportunity for free exploration has lessened because the world has become less safe. The movements of ordinary life in the past were bestowing enormous gifts without our being consciously aware of what was happening. It is now, through the void our restrained, inactive lives have created, that we recognize what was happening before.

The movement journey that follows is a response to this situation. Through a playful imagination, a whole class of kindergarten children is led through movements that help to develop a healthy and integrated sensory system. Once a week each class comes

to the large room where the journey has been prepared with the necessary props. They are guided into the imagination with a prologue, and then the movement begins. These journeys are ideally done in a large space where the movement can be free and unhindered by space restrictions. They can, however, be adapted to a smaller space as a circle time with a little ingenuity. Enjoy.

A Pot of Gold

Nancy Blanning

In the springtime, raindrops fall.
It is the nicest time of all.
For when the raindrops sunbeams meet,
The rainbow shines. Its colors meet
To make a bridge across the sky
And call us to adventures high.
At rainbow’s end is a pot of gold.
So say the stories I’ve been told.
And guarding the gold is Tippery Tim.
Let’s try to get a look at him
And see who else we meet this day
As we make our springtime way. .
Spoken in greeting to children at doorway. Arms gesture as rainbow across the sky, crossing midline, arms over the head.

Song:

In spring, in spring
The robins do sing.
The flowers are growing,
The breezes are blowing.
In spring, in spring,
The robins do sing.
Skip around the room in rhythm to the music. Sing repetitively until whole group has circled the room once.

In spring, in spring
The robins do sing.

The bunnies are hopping,
They're jumping and dropping.

In spring, in spring

The robins do sing.

Hop like bunnies with two feet together. At "dropping" jump down into a crouching position, like a bunny jumping down into her hole. Repeat 3x.

In spring, in spring

The robins do sing.

The lambkins so white and fair

Kick their heels in the air.

In spring, in spring

The robins do sing.

Like a lamb frolicking, hold weight on arms and hands and kick feet up behind. Rock back and forth from hands to feet in this frolicking motion. Repeat 3x.

Spoken:

Where is that mischievous Tippery Tim?

How will we know when we've seen him?

Tippery Tim, a fellow so slim,

Is the tiniest creature we know.

Contract to suggest thinness and smallness.

In green he is dressed in his elegant best

From his head to the tip of his toe.

On his head is a hat,

A tall one like that.

On his chin is a beard white as snow.

Gesture from head to toe. Touch top of head. Gesture a tall hat. Touch chin and stroke downwards, alternating hands.

On his chest is a vest stitched by tailors the best

Firmly touch chest.

With gold buttons that gleam down the row.

Gesture round buttons, index and thumb circled, alternating hands going down chest (four buttons).

At his waist, very thin, is a shining bright pin

That holds up his trousers so tight.

And the shoes on his feet curl up very neat

With a small bell that rings oh-so-light.

Indicate where belt buckle would be as though holding up pants. Lean over to indicate shoes which curl up at the toes. Teacher moves around the room very quietly. Rings

small bell in 4-5 different places. Children point to indicate where they hear the sound.

Over here! Running fast

He slipped through the grass

And went down to the roots of the tree.

Let us, too, quickly go. Please don't be slow.

Is the gold buried there? Let us see!

Down between the roots we travel,

Crawling in the dark.

Not a bit of gold is glowing

Not one tiny spark.

Teacher beckons to area where tunnel is indicated either by apparatus or children can crawl through any space which suggests a tunnel. Continue crawling around in this imagination (or have set up a course of pieces of wood arranged to suggest roots of a tree.

Back to daylight let us go.

In bright sunshine what's next we'll know.

Crawl back out through tunnel.

Now there I see a flit of green.

Across the bridge Tippery Tim is seen.

Follow him both up and down.

Let's hope our treasure will be found.

Walk balance beams arranged with one ascending and another descending.

Now he's by the river path

A waterfall is rushing fast.

The rainbow beckons. Come, let's go.

Don't worry if we wet our toe.

Long jump rope is turned by one or two teachers. Children move under the turning rope (without stopping to jump), as though trying to run through the waterfall without getting wet.

Tippery Tim is such a scamp.

He's run away to his gold-pot camp.

Let's call the rainbow fairies bright.

Perhaps they'll help us in our plight.

Everyone sitting on floor for a momentary rest.

Verse:

Two little clouds one sunny day

Went flying through the sky.

They went so fast, they bumped their heads
 And both began to cry.
 Old Father Sun looked out and said:
 "Oh, never mind my dears,
 I'll send my little fairy folk
 To dry your fallen tears."
Hand gestures to suit the text.

One came in pink and one in red,
 The next in orange bright.
 In yellow, green, blue, violet,
 They make a pretty sight.
 They changed the rolling, crying tears
 And then the fairies laughed and said,
 "We thank you, rain and sun."
 (p. 22 in *Summer, A Collection of Poems, Songs and Stories for Young Children*, Wynstones Press, 1999.) At this point, move arms in arc above the head, crossing the midline, to reflect each color in the rainbow.

The rainbow is again aglow.
 Let's follow. To its top we'll go
 Then roll down rainbow's other side
 Into Tim Tippery's valley wide
 And jump and jump, for in our glee,
 A shining pot of gold we see!
Have children roll down an elevated mat on a plank, if possible, like logrolling down a hill. If not, gesture as though climbing, then roll each child like a log in a mat on floor. Jump up and down on both feet when the roll is finished.

At last we've ended our long quest.
 Tippery Tim's made us his guest.
 To show our thanks for this fine day
 Let us dance a roundelay.
Gather into a circle to prepare for circle dance.

Dance: *Appropriate gestures as indicated by the text.*

Come, my sister, dance with me,
 Both my hands I give to thee:
 One step here, one step there,
 Turn around as light as air.
 With my finger tick, tick, tick
 With my head I nick, nick, nick.
 One step here, one step there,
 Turn around as light as air.
 With my hands I clap, clap, clap.
 With my feet I tap, tap, tap.

One step here, one step there,
 Turn around as light as air.
 (p.26 in *Spindrift, A Collection of Poems, Songs and Stories for Young Children*, Wynstones Press, 1999.) *Sit down at end of circle dance.*

Now take a piece of shining gold.
 Remember here all you've been told.
 The rainbow's arc shining so fair
 Brought us to the treasure there.
 Through water falling swift and fast
 On running feet we quick did pass.
 Up Tim Tippery's bridge and down
 We traveled for this treasure found.
Teacher gestures to give pieces of gold. An actual pot with gold cut-out rounds or gold angel tears would turn this into a festival-type experience.

Crawling 'mongst the roots so dark
 No treasure there gave any spark.
 We listened for Tim's tinkling bell
 To find the gold pot hidden well.
 And with the lambs and bunnies gay
 We greeted this fine springtime day.
 Now we'll have a little rest.
 This day has surely been the best.

Sing quiet song or lullaby of choice or:
 Sing a song of sunny hours
 Dreaming with the bees and flowers.
 Sing a song of babbling brooks,
 Dancing on by shady nooks.
 Sing a song of softest breeze,
 Blowing gently through the trees.
 Sing a song of joyous light,
 Making all the world so bright.
 Sing a song of happy praise,
 Thanking God for sunny days.
 (*Summer*, p. 23)

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