

Get a Move On: Movement-Infused Math for Preschool and Kindergarten

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Make Four Elbows

Children form a circle and begin slowly walking in one direction. At a signal from the leader, they stop and listen to instructions. When the leader states, "Make four elbows," the children touch one or both of their elbows to other children's elbows to make a total of four connected elbows. Each group then shares their methods for accomplishing this task. Other directions might include: make 12 fingers, make four knees, and make 12 fingers.

Benefits of Movement

1. Motor coordination, development of body awareness, use of large and small muscles, can be aerobic exercise
2. Addresses needs of kinesthetic learners
3. Provides variety to the day, releases endorphins, improves aesthetic development
4. Activates brain function
5. Fun!

Counting Sequence Movement Activities

1. **Counting Sequence Scarf Movement** (use bandanas too). Use those locomotor movements! Also, balance scarf on shoulder, head, back while you walk heavy, light, tall, short, fast, slow. Toss to a friend and see how many times you can clap before catching. Juggle. Count as you go.
2. **Velcro Ball Count and Catch.** Cover whiffle ball with Velcro patches. Use one fabric glove. Good for hand-eye coordination and gross motor movement. Count by 5s, 10s, etc.
3. **Parachute Play Counting**
 - **Ball Rolling.** Count how many seconds you can keep the ball rolling on the parachute.
 - **Stuffed Animal Toss.** Count how many seconds you can keep the animal on the parachute.
 - **Pompom Toss.** Pour a bunch of pompoms on the parachute. Count how long til they are all off.
4. **Count, Clap, Jump Bags.** Materials: baggies numbered 1-20, pom poms, hula hoops. Instructions: Child chooses bag. Reads the number. Claps that number of times. Jumps that number of times. Runs & counts out correct number of pom poms. Puts them in bag. Next child's turn.
5. **Count the Movements.** Materials: Die labeled with movements, regular die. Instructions: Child tosses both dice. Whole group counts as they do the movements.
6. **Get a Move On Card Game.** Materials: Cards with locomotor (skip, crab walk, etc.) or nonlocomotor movements (bend, sway, etc.) Examples: "Walking through quicksand. 6 heavy steps," "Slide sideways. Value of a dime."
7. **One More, One Less Movement Game.** Materials: clue cards. Instructions: Teacher reads a clue card or displays it on the document camera. Examples: "One more than 5 jumping jacks." Students do 6 jumping jacks. "One less than 10 toe touches." Students do 9 toe touches.

Other Great Ideas

1. **Clap, Snap Patterns.** Have students make a pattern with linker cubes. They then translate the pattern into physical actions. "Act out" the pattern with clapping, snapping, hopping, touching shoulders, or other types of movements. This is a great informal mathematics activity to do while waiting in line for lunch, library, bus, etc.
2. **Hop to It.** Place lots of shape cutouts on floor. Give verbal instructions such as: Hop to a triangle. Glide to a square. Skip to a cylinder. Jump to a cube.
3. **Pass the Shapes.** Children sit in a circle. Start music. Children pass 4-5 shape cards. When music stops, the children holding a shape card hold them up and name the shape. Use 2D, 3D, real-world pictures.
4. **Positional Words Indoor Obstacle Course** (use recycled boxes and crepe paper). Climb over, crawl under, step beside, wiggle between. Have fun!
5. **Serving Tray Pom Pom Toss** (label sections with numbers, colors, shapes). Child step two feet from tray, tosses a pompom into tray, runs down to tray, retrieves it, and tells what section it landed in. Good for gross motor, hand-eye coordination, and throwing skills.

6. **Balloon Treasure Map Positional Words** (use several balloons so kids don't have to share). Give children a simple map with directions such as, "Go Behind the Cubbies. Go Beside the Bookshelf." They scoot their balloon around the area following the map to find a treasure.
7. **Color Match Toss.** Toss colored bean bags onto colored sheets of paper.
8. **Measurement Hunt.** Find 4 things longer/shorter than your shoe.
9. **Body Shapes.** Use your body to make a square, circle, rectangle, etc. Have a friend join you!
10. **Hokey Pokey Shapes** "You put your triangle in. You put your triangle out..."
11. **Construction Flagging Shapes** (available at Lowes and Home Depot) Make 2D and 3D shapes. Send me pictures!
12. **Shape Walks** Find a square and label it with a square sticky note, label rectangles with index cards, label circles with dot stickers.
13. **People Hunts** Find a classmate with the same hair color, different color of shirt, etc. then make human bar graphs with students' bodies.
14. **Number Bonds for 10.** Materials: Linker cubes, name tags labeled 0-10. Instructions: Make a stick of ten linker cubes. Place on front table. Give each child a name tag with number 0-10. Child makes stick to match their number. Children walk around room and find partner whose number sums to 10. Children double check by comparing their stick to the stick on the front table.
15. **Fly Swatter Shapes.** Materials: flyswatters, shape cards. Instructions: Call out an attribute of a shape. Kids try to be the first to swat the correct shape.
16. **Lego Color Match.** Hide Legos around the room. Have children sort the Legos on the floor on the parachute.
17. **Over the Line.** Put strip of masking tape on the floor. Students stand on the line, facing the teacher. Designate one side of the line "TRUE" and the other "FALSE." Show picture of a shape and say a shape name. If students think what you have said is correct, they jump on the True side. If they think what you have said is incorrect, they jump on the False side. Repeat with numbers, one more numbers, etc.

Adapting Movement Activities for Children with Special Needs

- Children participate at their own level
- Sense of belonging to group
- Focus on what the children can do
- Large motor activities are important for strength, endurance, and coordination
- Integrate gross motor activities into daily schedule
- Follow with quiet activities

Suggestions for Encouraging Hesitant Children

- Start with just a few children and hope others will join in
- Give the hesitant child a helper job (Will you blow the whistle at the end of the game?)
- Use repetition and familiarity to help child feel comfortable
- Don't shame or embarrass the child
- Spectators are important, too!

General Tips

- Don't wait for all the children to be quiet and listening before you start. Just start! They'll soon join in.
- When you do need their attention, use another movement activity called **Can You?**
 - Can you reach up high?
 - Can you touch your nose?
 - Can you clap?
 - Can you shrug your shoulders?
 - Can you melt into a tiny puddle and be very, very quiet?

Please email me if you try any of these activities, and I will do my happy dance. Thanks for coming!