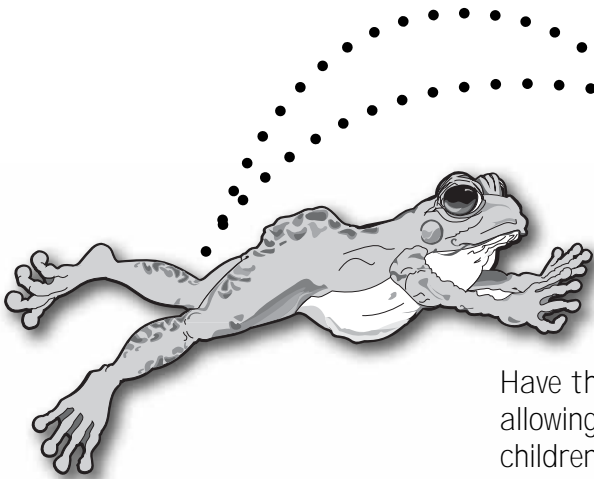


Hopping, Jumping, Creeping



Here is a fun movement activity for children to do indoors or outdoors. Not only will it get the children moving, but they can use their imaginations to pretend to be different animals, insects, or birds. They can also use their observation skills to show you how they think those things move.

Decide on the area of your room or yard for the activity. Make sure there is space for the children to move freely, but set some boundaries for where they may do the activity. This could be an area defined by a rug, taped lines, or a circle on the floor inside. Outdoors you can use a natural barrier such as a tree or bush, string, or even jump ropes to mark the area where you want the children to play.

Have the children form a line, allowing enough space between children so they may move freely without touching each other. Give them a direction of an animal, bird, or insect to imitate. Allow time for lots of movement!

Here are some suggestions to use:

- Hop like a bunny
- Jump like a frog
- Creep like a spider
- Fly like a butterfly
- Gallop like a horse
- Wiggle like a worm

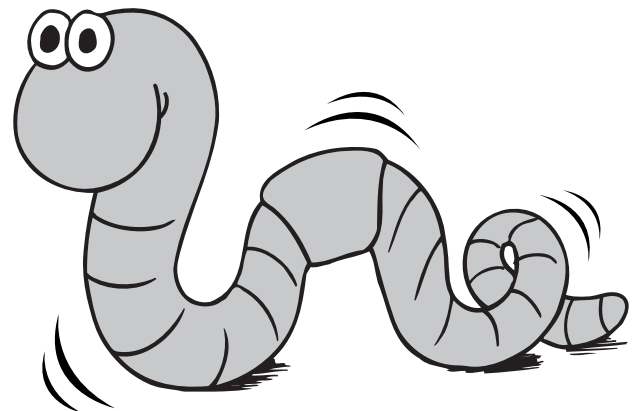
Encourage the children to think of things they would like to imitate and use their suggestions.

Here's a fun finger play to teach the children after you do the movement activity.

Animals

Can you hop like a rabbit?
(Do motions to match words)
Can you jump like a frog?
Can you walk like a duck?
Can you run like a dog?
Can you fly like a bird?
Can you swim like a fish?
Can you sit really still?

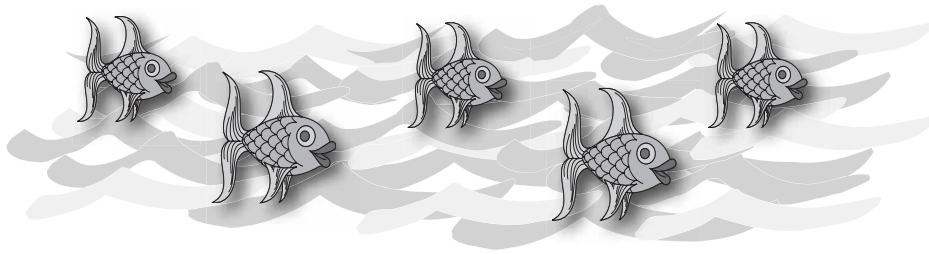
(Sit down with hands in lap)
Watch me, like this!



Peek-a-Boo and Other Important Play for Babies

Simple baby games that many of us grew up with are great ways to stimulate and teach infants. Babies need to see, hear, and touch things to learn as they grow. Lots of repetition is good! Here are some ideas for fun play with babies:

- Play peek-a-boo. Use a small blanket or cloth or even just your hands to play this game that babies love.
- Play patty-cake. For those who need a reminder of the words: Patty cake, patty cake, baker's man. Bake me a cake as fast as you can. Roll it and pat it and mark it with "B" and put it in the oven for baby and me.
- Sings songs to the baby. Rocking chairs are good places to sit and hold a baby while you are singing. This activity is soothing for the baby. It also teaches language and rhythms.
- Offer the baby a plastic container full of blocks or small plastic toys for dumping and filling back up again. (Toys need to be large enough so they are not a choking hazard.) Babies will do this over and over again.
- For babies learning to crawl, place a rattle, toy, or stuffed animal just beyond the baby's reach. The baby will be tempted to move to reach it.



Copy Cat

What you need:

- Drawing paper
- Crayons, pencils, or markers

What to do:

Draw some simple shapes on a piece of paper. Give the children a piece of paper and have them draw what you drew.

To expand this activity, draw just one of something. Then ask the children to draw three or five or two or whatever number is appropriate for them to do. This will help expand math and memory skills.



Counting Finger Play – Five Little Fishes

Five little fishes were swimming near the shore.

(Hold up five fingers)

One took a dive and then there were four.

(Hold up four fingers)

Four little fishes were swimming out to sea. One went for food and then there were three.

(Hold up three fingers)

Three little fishes said, "Now what shall we do?" One swam away and then there were two.

(Hold up two fingers)

Two little fishes were having great fun, But one took a plunge and then there was one.

(Hold up one finger)

One little fish said, "I like the warm sun." Away he went and then there were none!

(Put hand behind your back)

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Sources: www.kidsgardening.com/, www.poison.org/, <http://www.aapcc.org/>