

LESSON 8

The Movements 2

BRIEF LESSON SUMMARY:

- Definition of the movements: the three directions.
- Game activities to refine spatial perception of the three directions.

EQUIPMENT: GIANT CHESSBOARD – NAME CARDS AND HOLDERS – TAMBOURINE - COLOURED HOOPS - COLOURED CONES - WHISTLE – SOFT TOY ON A PEDESTAL (BOLETUS THE GNOME).

ACTIVITY 1

THE CARRIAGES CROSS THE CASTLE IN EVERY DIRECTION

Main instructions for the children

- Remain in your carriage in the carriage house until you get the go signal (whistle or verbal).
- When you hear the go signal, your carriage moves around the castle.
- When there is one beat of the tambourine, cross the castle vertically in either direction.
- When there are two beats, cross the castle horizontally.
- When there are three beats of the tambourine, cross the castle diagonally.
- Don't enter and leave on the same side of the castle.
- If you come across a carriage that crosses your path, let it pass or change to a new diagonal.
- When there are a series of light tambourine beats, quickly return to the carriage house.
- When the carriage returns to the carriage house, the carriage driver goes to the back of the carriage and the next in line becomes the new carriage driver.

Activity details for the teacher

- a) This game activity is made more complex by the presence of a greater

number of sound signals that must be recognized and associated with the different directions.

- b) 4-5 carriages are formed with 4-5 children in each; the carriages cross the chessboard in different ways that correspond to various cues given by the tambourine.
- c) 1 beat of the tambourine and the children cross the chessboard vertically; 2 beats - horizontally; 3 beats - diagonally.
- d) The carriages leave the chessboard and turn around to enter for the reverse journey of a direction.
- e) When there is a quick series of light beats, the children return to the carriage house (in the same way as in the previous lesson).
- f) During vertical or diagonal crossings, the children can rest their hands on the shoulders of the companion ahead; when crossing horizontally sideways, they can either hold hands or not.

NOTE:

The sound signals are presented to the children one at a time, with the children repeating the same direction several times. When the children have sufficiently mastered the various sound signals, they can be mixed up at random.

VARIATIONS:

1. Cross with hops, legs reasonably close together.
2. Cross hopping on one leg
3. Cross with eyes shut, led by the carriage driver with eyes open.

ACTIVITY 2

HOW MANY STEPS MUST I MAKE?

Main instructions for the children

- Move between the two different coloured cones using the Castle Step.
- Say how many Castle Steps you made and the name of the direction you used to reach the second cone.
- The first room is not counted as a step, but the room you stop on is counted as a step

Activity details for the teacher

- a) Two cones of different colours are placed on the board, with a reasonable distance between the two.
- b) A pair of children go on to the board and use the Castle Step to travel together from one cone to another; they then say what direction was taken and how many Castle Steps were used.
- c) The square the child is standing on when they start is not included in the count. Once they have gone from one cone to the other, they have to say the number of steps done and the name of the direction.
- d) Change the position of at least one cone every time a child does the activity and specify the start and destination cones. Get the children to do all the possible movements (including backward vertical).
- e) The other children can help the child doing the activity, especially one who is having difficulty.
- f) 6 -8 children can individually repeat the activity to make sure everything has been understood.

ACTIVITY 3

HOW MANY STEPS BETWEEN ME AND THE QUEEN?

Main instructions for the children

- Go into the castle and enter a room of your choice, but one that is in the centre of the castle.
- Say all together to the queen: "I have to travel from here to visit you my queen, but how many steps are there in between?"
- Go between the cones using the Castle Step following the instructions given by the queen (me).
- Once in front of the queen say the number of steps and the direction, then bow.
- Having received a bow from the queen, they leave the castle.

Activity details for the teacher

- a) All the children are seated outside the chessboard on the opposite side to the queen (the teacher), who is standing next to Boletus.
- b) A group of 5-6 children occupy squares of their choosing in the central part of the chessboard (so that they do not immediately leave the

chessboard).

- c) They call out the following question to the QUEEN: *I have to travel from here to visit you my queen, but how many steps are there in between?*
- d) The queen (the teacher) guides the children with instructions such as vertical, horizontal or diagonal and the relevant number of squares (only a few steps at a time so as to keep all the children on the board and to make it easier to guide them to the horizontal row of squares in front of her.
- e) When they arrive in front of the queen, they exchange greetings with her and then bow or curtsy.

CLOSING CHANT: “From here to there to see my Queen, but how many steps are there in between? 1, 2, 3, yeaaaaaah!

OBSERVATIONS

CARRIAGE GAME: THE VALUE OF LISTENING AND SILENCE

This game activity involves some elements from the previous activity: operating in space and how we perceive it. There are additional variations that are made more difficult as a result of extra sound signals that indicate different directions.

This type of activity is all about a little word of large importance: *listening*. Listening is not simply hearing; the child is in movement, guiding their little group and must pay close attention to changes signalled by the various beats (they have to remember the instructions for the tambourine beats given before the activity, connect these with the current situation, and make the right movements).

To do this they have to connect the signal with the appropriate movement, with a visible result for them individually and also the group they are leading: above all it is the carriage driver who must remain silent in order to be able to hear the sound signals.

The idea of silent listening is given particular emphasis by the teacher during the activity and goes well beyond just simply respecting the rules and politeness.

Keeping silent is not just a matter of keeping your mouth closed. True silence comes when you listen to your thoughts' voice, when there is not the distraction of trying to get a result, when perception broadens and includes others present in a shared space. Listening occurs when you have confidence in your inner voice, allowing you to express yourself, to make intuitive choices without conscious internal judgement.

When exactly does a child have sufficient time to do all this? In reality, children are continuously attempting to trust what they hear, make choices, and think in a way that for them is effective for achieving a goal.

The addition of silence allows a child to think in this 'precise moment' (here and now) and to learn how to decide in a way that is entirely spontaneous.

VARIATION 3

‘Except for the carriage driver, everyone crossing the board must keep their eyes closed...’. We have already indicated the value of working with eyes shut to sharpen children’s proprioception capacity; in this variation trust is required to a far greater degree, and it exists in direct proportion to the increased level of responsibility of the child who is guiding.

Here the physical contact between the participating children (hand on the shoulder of the companion ahead) makes them feel more united and provides a greater sense of security during the movements. With eyes shut the children cannot ‘copy’ the moves of the other carriages, instead they have to find creative and entertaining alternatives, which stimulates and enriches the game activity.

HOW MANY STEPS BETWEEN ME AND THE QUEEN?

The main difficulty for some children in this activity is counting aloud. As the child is under a certain amount of scrutiny by the rest of the group, performance, a sense of embarrassment and even fear of being the focal point of the game activity all become factors. The teacher can deal with this by asking the group to help a companion in difficulty, or otherwise get a pair of children to do the activity together.