

HANDOUT- Moving with 4–7-year-olds

Considerations for this Age Group

These will depend on the context you are working in, but can include general aspects such as:

- Children are learning about everything – learning how to be with and relate to others, how to make friends, how to be in school, how to follow rules, how to play, how to express emotions, how to regulate, learning how to learn, learning language, reading and writing, learning English as a second language, etc.
- Children’s bodies and minds are growing and developing. (See supplemental readings.)
- Specific themes/ challenges/ objectives for the child/children you are working with, and in the specific context you are working in.

Session Objectives

- Learn simple approaches for framing and developing movement sessions that have a beginning, middle, and end.
- Experience an arc/progression of what a session might include, (that can be adapted depending on the context and objectives of your practice).
- Experience example expressive and creative movement activities for both individual and collaborative exploration.
- Consider examples of props and books that are suitable for this age group.
- Consider the changing role of the educator / facilitator.

Example Simple Arc

- Beginning and warming-up (including the B of BESS).
- Scaffolding children’s confidence, comfort, and range of movement with explorations of that include aspects of BESS.
- Developing expressive and creative explorations with children having greater autonomy.
- Sharing, ending, rituals.

Beginning & Warming-Up

- Consider how to begin spatially as a group (*e.g. in a circle*).
- Consider opening rituals that help children settle and feel safe.
- Consider practicing ways to calm down. (*We used a chime bowl to become small and quiet.*)
- Consider how to warm-up:
 - Moving safely and freely in personal SPACE. (*We blew up our bubbles, painted them, and moved inside them.*)
 - Warming up the BODY, which might include patterns of body connectivity at a low level or a standing level, with or without imagery. (*We moved through the patterns with underwater imagery.*)
- Consider your role within the warm-up.

- Consider how warm-ups would be adapted or be completely different with a small group, an individual, a group with a particular objective or need, etc.

Exploration & Scaffolding of Movement Skills & Expression

- Consider how to interest children in the array of possibilities in how they can move and extend their movement range, with permission to be creative, (and loosening any school conditioning about sitting on chairs, getting things right, etc).
- Apply aspects of BESS to support movement explorations.
- *(We moved and were still with SHAPE, EFFORT and SPACE, we explored in our kinespheres, we introduced a book as a stimulus, and we moved through space with an explorer theme.)*
- Consider your role in helping children begin to explore their expressivity and creativity.
- Consider how movement exploration would be adapted or be completely different with a small group, an individual, a group with a particular objective or need, etc.

Developed Explorations with Greater Autonomy

- Consider the types of activities for children to have freedom to spontaneously express and create on their own, to relate to and create with a partner, and/or to relate to a larger group.
- Consider your objectives for the session – this is the part of the session where you hope children are engaging with these objectives.
- Consider how to give children the opportunity to express a dynamic range of movement – EFFORT. And which other aspects of BESS might help an activity become more full and rich.
- Consider how to support children in relating to themselves and relating to others – developing empathy by being aware of, kind to, and sensitive towards others.
- *(We focused on example activities in relationship with another(s), with sculpting, mirroring, and a development of mirroring in partners, and statue and movement game as a group. We included images and a book.)*
- Consider how these developed explorations would be adapted or be completely different with a small group, an individual, a group with a particular objective or need, etc.

Sharing and Ending

- Consider how children might share and celebrate their movement with others (if they would like to).
- Consider how you might help children reflect, calm their energy, and integrate their experience.
- Consider how you might end with a simple ritual.

Props, Books, Music

Consider: props, e.g., fabrics, scarves, yoga mats, chalk, balls, feathers; books (*we moved with “I am enough” by Grace Byers*); pictures/images as stimuli (*we used some snowflake pictures*); words and vocabulary cards; simple musical instruments that adults and/or children can play, e.g. tambourine; including rhyme, music, and singing.