



Connect 12

Twelve Fast, Fun, and Effective Lessons
to Enhance Focus & Academic Success



Individualized Activities for Home

A Companion Booklet for Focus Moves Activities

DR. DEBRA EM WILSON

Developmental Reading Specialist and Founder of S'cool Moves, Inc.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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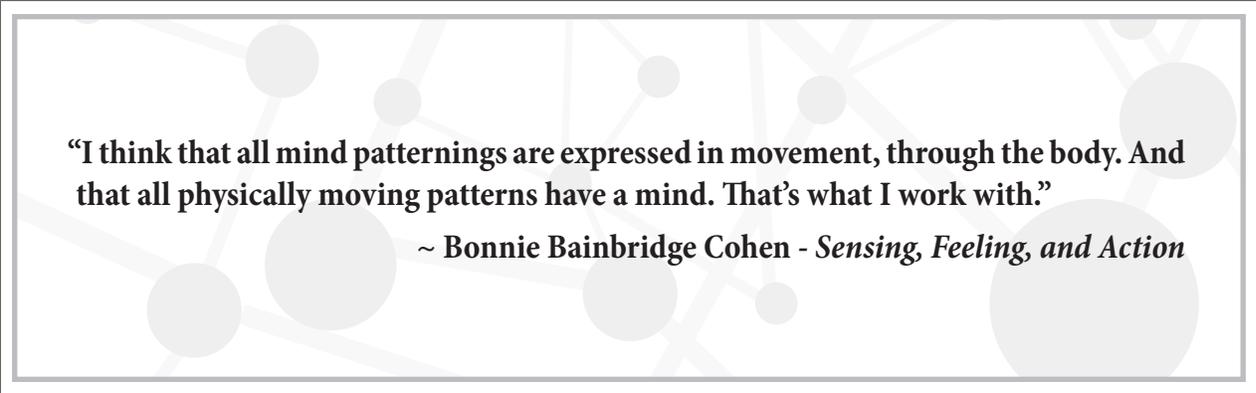
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MEDICAL DISCLAIMER

This program is not intended to diagnose serious medical or learning conditions, nor is it a replacement for occupational therapy, vision therapy, or other specialized services. If a child has a medical condition, seizures, autism spectrum, mental condition, or syndrome, rely on his or her physician or therapist to determine if participation in this program is safe and appropriate. Children should be under direct supervision of an adult when participating in S'cool Moves activities.

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“I think that all mind patternings are expressed in movement, through the body. And that all physically moving patterns have a mind. That’s what I work with.”

~ Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen - *Sensing, Feeling, and Action*

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INTRODUCTION



“All the best educational programs around the world combine elements that stimulate both a child’s physical and mental development—for in truth there is no split between the two.”

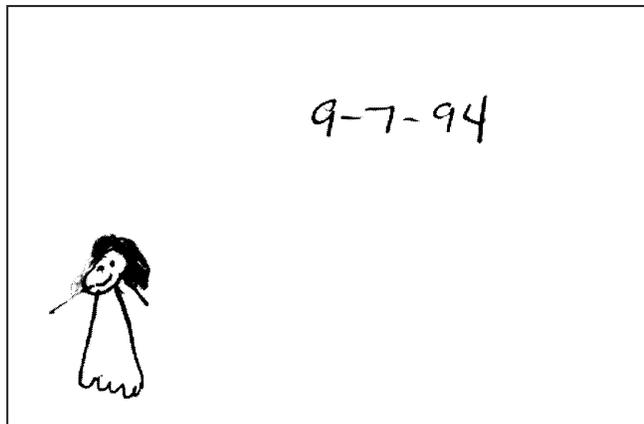
~ Gordon Dryden and Dr. Jeannette Vos *The Learning Revolution*



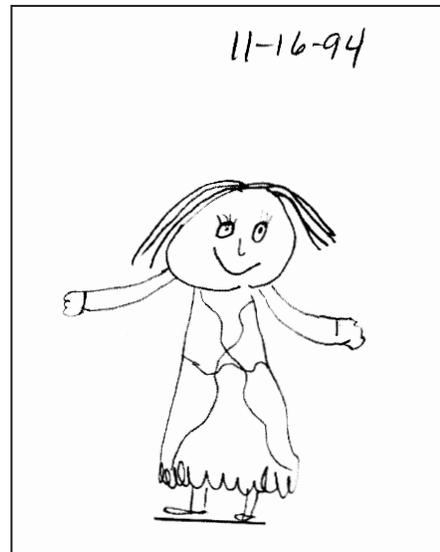
Home involvement is essential for children to keep up with the fast-paced curricula common in most schools today. I know families are very busy between sports activities, dance practice, music lessons, and just trying to find time to have a meal together. For this reason, this booklet describes twelve easy-to-follow activities that provide the biggest bang for your busy buck.

As a parent of a child with special needs, I am here to tell you that these activities dramatically changed the course of my daughter’s life after being told by doctors that she would never walk, talk, or function in a meaningful way. My daughter is an adult who graduated from high school and leads a meaningful life thanks to early intervention that included the activities shared here. Some of the most powerful ways to change the mind-body system are actually quite simple.

HOW TO GET STARTED



Have your child draw a self-portrait before beginning these twelve activities. After teaching all the activities (about 6-8 weeks), ask your child to draw another self-portrait. Notice the changes. Usually the portraits become more detailed and take up more space on the page. As the mind-body system changes, usually the self-portrait does as well.



Begin with lesson number one. Lessons one and two are staples, meaning do the two activities daily. During the day use the calming strategies whenever needed and at bedtime, do the Sleep Well routine every night. These activities create the foundation for the other ten activities that follow.

Hopefully, if you've been given this booklet by a school therapist, teacher, or other support staff, it is because your child is also doing Focus Moves at school. Between doing the activities at school and expanding the support to home, your child's growth is unlimited.

Carve out a few minutes every day to begin doing the twelve activities. Each week, try a new one. Just do lessons 3-12 one at a time so as to not get overwhelmed. You don't need to do more than one activity a day except for lessons one and two. These are done daily.

Once all twelve lessons are learned, set-up a schedule to rotate through the lessons as you and your child see fit, in consultation with the teacher, therapist, or support staff who is collaborating with you at home.

Keep it fun and playful. The best advice I ever got while doing lots of therapy with my daughter was to make it fun. I stopped thinking of my time with her as work and incorporated enjoyable ways for us to play together with purpose but taking time to laugh along the way.

Thanks for saying, "Yes!" to helping your child develop the foundation skills that support learning with ease. As Babe Ruth said, "The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime."

Everyone involved with teaching children, from the guardians to the school staff, have to work as a team for children to hit the ball over the fence. Let's encourage our children to swing for the fences. With our support, they can!

A FEW WORDS ABOUT BONDING

Make this a special time for just the two of you. A time with few interruptions or distractions. Immerse yourself fully in the experience of sharing this one-on-one time with your child. It will soon become a time that you both look forward to.

Place the emphasis on your child's efforts and the strength she's developing and let go of any goals of doing it perfectly. Focus instead on what it is you love about being with your child. Is it her look of determination as she does the exercises, her giggle, or the way her eyes sparkle? Is it his joyful laugh, his perseverance, or the way his eyes light up when he feels good about what he is accomplishing? Be sure to share this with your child!

Last, but by no means least, appreciate and celebrate yourself for all you are doing to support your child.

Connect 12

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“No one part of the central nervous system works alone. Messages must go back and forth from one part to another, so that touch can aid vision, vision can aid balance, balance can aid body awareness, body awareness can aid movement, movement can aid learning, and so forth.”

~ Carol Stock Kranowitz - *The Out-of-Sync Child*



LESSON 1: STAY COOL, CALM, AND COLLECTED

Deep pressure stimulation helps the child get the sense of where his body is in space, and improves his ability to take in information from the environment.

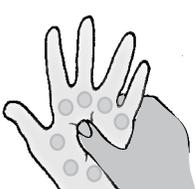
Deep pressure should be done without any added academics at first, until the child is comfortable and ready for more mental tasks.

The body learns ten times faster than the brain, so adding academics to the deep pressure can actually help the child learn faster. Once ready for added challenge, the child can count, skip count, or spell words while doing deep pressure.

Deep pressure techniques can also be added to songs or poems.


Foundation Level

"I Can Calm Myself"



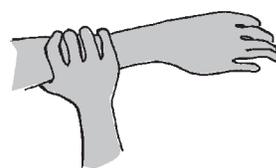
I can do Dots.

Use the thumb to press firmly all around the palm of the opposite hand for a count of 10. Take a deep breath before switching hands.



I can do heart to home.

Place one hand over the heart, the other over the belly, and take three deep breaths. Come to a quiet, focused place in the body.



I can do Squeezies.

Firmly squeeze up the forearms, upper arms, and shoulders. Take a deep breath before switching arms.



I can do Listening Ears.

Gently massage and unroll the ears, moving from top to bottom.

I can do Pretzels.

Interlock fingers in front of the chest. Relax shoulders. Cross legs. Place tongue on the roof of the mouth. Hold for one minute. Uncross legs. Take a deep breath.



I can do Calming Taps.

Cross arms across chest. Alternate tapping the right shoulder and then left shoulder with a slow, rhythmic beat.



Foundation Moves

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LESSON 2: SLEEP DEEPLY

A bedtime routine may be established where deep pressure is used to help a child sleep better and increase the communication between the mind and body.

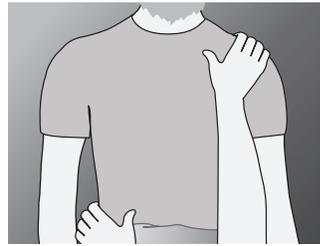
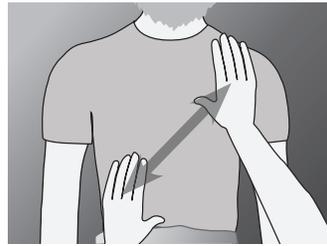
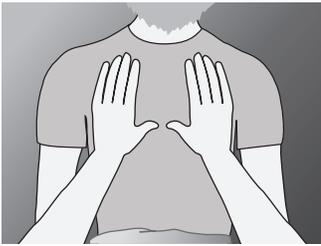
FIRST

Do all movements on the I Can Calm Myself Poster and add the dots (deep pressure) on both feet, doing one foot at a time, then squeeze up the legs, one leg at a time. Adjust the pressure as appropriate. Deep pressure should feel comfortable and never hurt.

NEXT

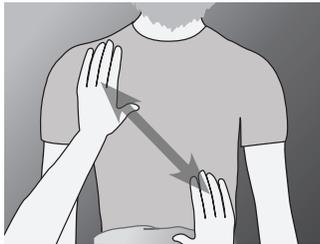
This back routine is a calming way to ready the body for restful sleep.

Begin with both palms touching the middle of the back as shown. With firm pressure, move the palms in opposite directions.



When palms arrive at right shoulder and left hip, provide a firm but comfortable squeeze to the shoulder and hip at the same time.

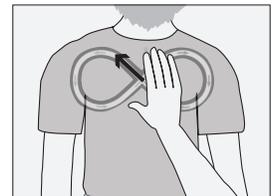
Repeat on the other side by bringing palms back to the middle of the back and moving the palms in the opposite direction to the left shoulder and right hip. Provide a firm but comfortable squeeze to the shoulder and hip at the same time. Have the child take a nice, deep breath between each shoulder and hip press.



Repeat the complete pattern on right and left sides five times or as many times as is needed to quiet the mind and body for sleep.

THEN

End the routine by completing a Figure 8 pattern. With a flat palm and firm pressure, follow a Figure 8 pattern on the back, going up the middle and to the left to begin. Do ten Figure 8's, always going up the middle and around.



VALUING TIME TOGETHER



Conclude your night time routine with a message of gratitude. Tell one another what you are grateful for and something that happened in the day that made either of you feel grateful, happy, or loved.

LESSON 3: GET STRONG

The Foundation for developing vision skills, balance, gross motor, fine motor, and sitting upright at the desk begins with excellent postural stability. These activities are a good place to start. In addition, participation in yoga classes, gymnastics, and martial arts are fun ways to improve postural stability.

Be sure to breathe appropriately while doing these activities. Breathe through every move. Take a deep breath in while preparing for the move, and then exhale when completing the move. For instance, while doing the Cocoon, inhale while in the starting position (knees bent, feet on the floor), and exhale in the curled position.

POSTER INSTRUCTIONS*

(Posters on the following two pages.)

BELLY STRETCHES

Perform each movement for twenty seconds. Beginners may hold position for less time.

1. Basic Extension: arms and legs are off the floor; head and eyes look down.
2. Butterfly Extension: trunk, arms, and legs are off the floor as pictured; elbows are tucked in, head and eyes look down.
3. Boat Extension: arms and legs extend straight out from the body; head and eyes look up. Maintain neutral spine.

Rest between each pattern.

DEVELOPMENTAL SYMPHONY

Begin in the Cocoon position and proceed to complete each movement on the poster.

These movements flow into one another. The Developmental Symphony is performed smoothly with dance-like grace. Perform the symphony as if it were a dance, with each movement flowing into the next.

Reverse the pattern from Standing Balance to Cocoon. Add calming music to these moves to create a beautiful dance.

* Children with Down Syndrome must have a medical release to perform any floor activities.

(Poster instructions on page 9.)

Focus Moves Belly Stretches

Start **1**

Basic Extension



head and eyes look down, lift arms, legs and chest off floor

2

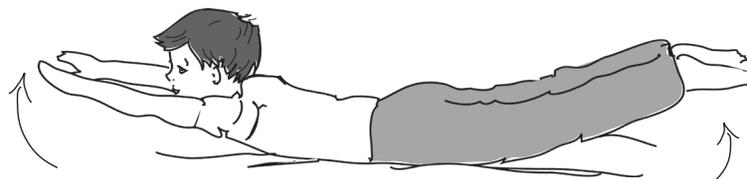
Butterfly Extension



head and eyes look down, lift arms, chest, and legs off floor

Finish **3**

Boat Extension



head and eyes look up, lift arms, chest, and legs off floor

Developmental movements by Margot Heiniger-White

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* Children with Down Syndrome must have a medical release to perform any floor activities.

(Poster instructions on page 9.)

Focus Moves Developmental Symphony

1 Cocoon



2 Cocoon on the side



3 Basic Extension



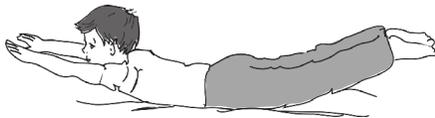
(head and eyes look down)

4 Butterfly Extension



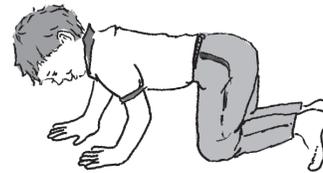
(head and eyes look down)

5 Boat Extension

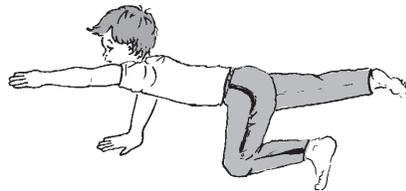


(head and eyes look up)

6 All Fours Balance



7 Pointer Balance



(Point with right arm/left leg, then left arm/right leg.)

8 Kneeling Balance



9 Half-Kneel Balance



10 Standing Position



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Intermediate Level

* Children with Down Syndrome must have a medical release to perform any floor activities.

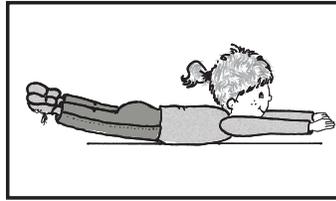
Focus Moves Focus Shapes I

SCOOL MOVES
Beginning Level



Start

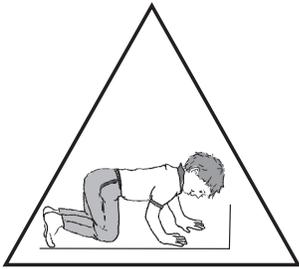
1 Cocoon



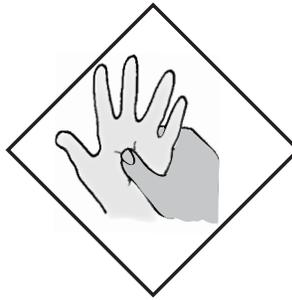
2 Boat Extension



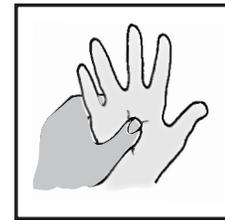
3 Heel Sit



4 Table Top



5 Dots (deep pressure) to palm



Finish

6 Dots (deep pressure) to other palm

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Developmental movements by Margot Heiniger-White

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POSTER INSTRUCTIONS: FOCUS MOVES FOCUS SHAPES 1*

Perform each movement within the shape for a count of ten seconds.

- COCOON:** Curl tightly with arms crossed and hands on shoulders; knees are drawn tightly to chest and toes are pointed toward ceiling. Hold for ten seconds. Roll over into Boat Extension.
- BOAT EXTENSION:** Arms and legs extend straight out from the body and are lifted off the ground. Hold for ten seconds.
- HEEL SIT:** Bottom sits on heels with arms stretched in front of the body, hands touching the floor. Hold for ten seconds.
- TABLE TOP:** Come to the “all fours” position (make a tabletop). Don’t lock the elbows. Hold for ten seconds.
- DOTS (DEEP PRESSURE):** Come to standing position and press all around the palm firmly with the thumb of the opposite hand. Press ten dots into the hand. Dots should be pressed slowly, not quickly.
- DOTS (DEEP PRESSURE):** Repeat as described in #5 with the other hand.

* Children with Down Syndrome must have a medical release to perform any floor activities.

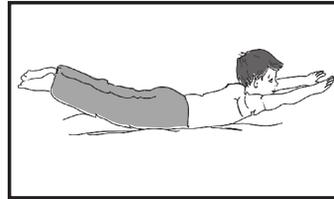
Focus Moves Focus Shapes II

S'cool Moves
Intermediate Level

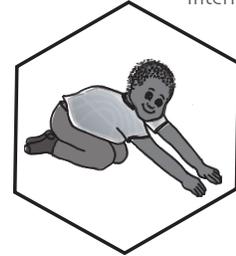


Start

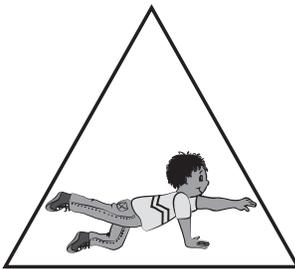
1 Cocoon



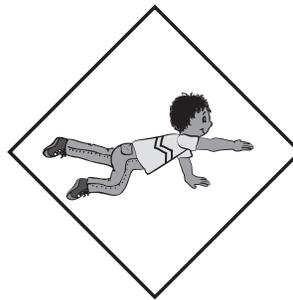
2 Boat Extension



3 Heel Sit



4 Pointer Balance



5 Pointer Balance Other Side



Finish

6 One Leg Balance

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Developmental movements by Margot Heiniger-White

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POSTER INSTRUCTIONS: FOCUS MOVES FOCUS SHAPES 2*

Perform each movement within the shape for a count of ten seconds.

1. **COCOON:** Curl tightly with arms crossed and hands on shoulders; knees are in tightly to chest and toes are pointed toward ceiling. Hold for ten seconds.
2. **BOAT EXTENSION:** Arms and legs extend straight out from the body. Hold for ten seconds.
3. **HEEL SIT:** Bottom sits on heels with arms stretched in front of the body. Hold for ten seconds.
4. **POINTER BALANCE:** While on all fours, lift and point opposing limbs as pictured. Hold for ten seconds.
5. **POINTER BALANCE OTHER SIDE:** Switch sides as pictured. Hold for ten seconds.
6. **STANDING BALANCE:** While standing, lift one leg and place hands on top of head. Balance ten seconds. Balance on the other leg. Hold for ten seconds.

* Children with Down Syndrome must have a medical release to perform any floor activities.

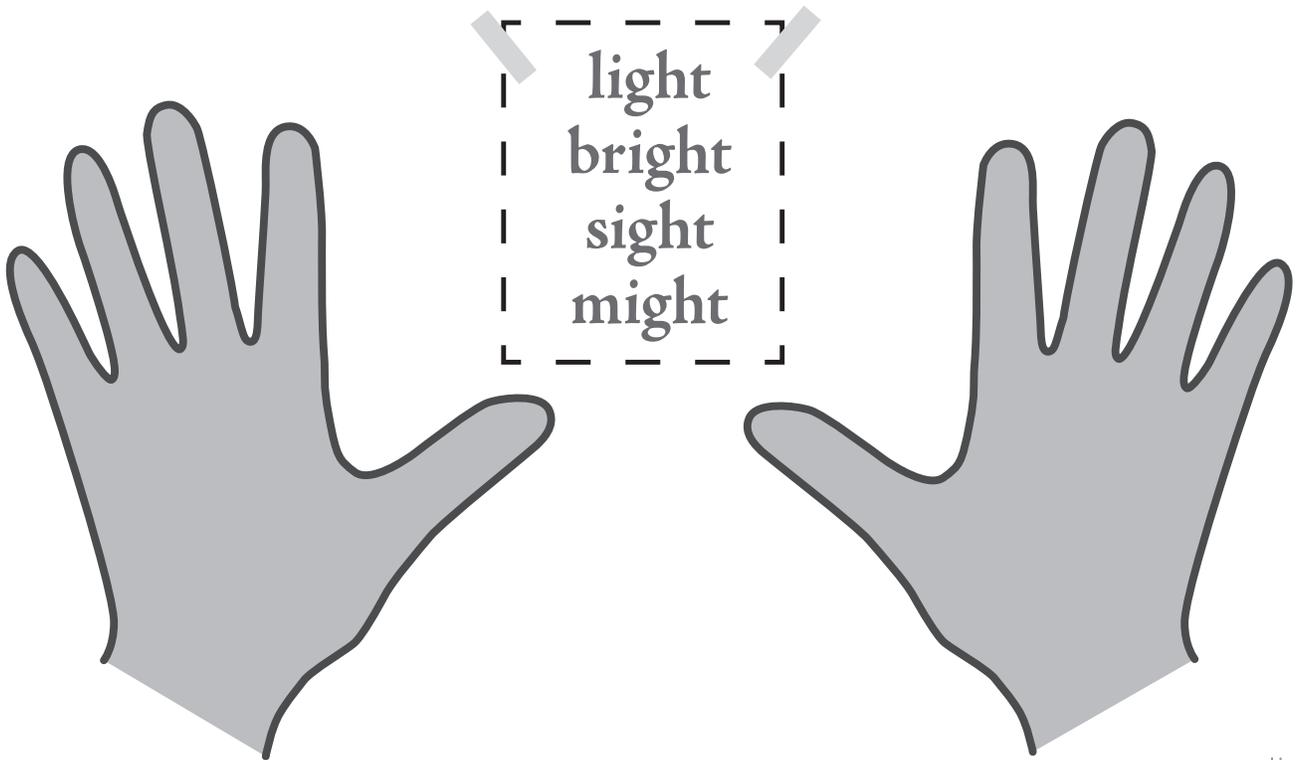
LESSON 4: PUSH OUT YOUR WORDS

Wall Push-ups strengthen the shoulder girdle and core postural muscles. The tendons in the foot are lengthened reducing the fight or flight response when stressed. When posting words on the wall, the visual system gets a nice tune-up as well.

WALL PUSH-UPS

To help the brain remember the words, use red text on yellow background.

Post spelling words on a wall at eye level.



Push against the wall. Elbows bent and tucked in. Legs extended back. Feet flat on floor as in diagram.

The words can be either said in their entirety or said and then spelled. Practice spelling each letter of a word per each Wall Push-up. Say or spell the word while pushing away from the wall.



LESSON 5: PUT ON YOUR WRITING GLOVE

This warm-up improves the physical skills needed for writing and is used to improve focus too. Teach this warm-up and encourage completing the routine prior to writing at home and school.



DEEP PRESSURE STIMULATION: Press the thumbs of each hand into their opposite palms. Press deeply and firmly all over the palms. Next, squeeze the forearms, upper arms, and shoulders by crossing the arms over one another and squeezing the right side with the left hand and the left side with the right hand.



SKIN SENSATION: Rub the palms of their hands together, rub the backs of their hands together, and rub in-between their fingers. Clap the hands loudly. Pat the forearms and shoulders. Give yourself a pat on your back.



MUSCLE SENSATION: Pretend to put on a writing glove. The glove is very long and tight like a superhero or princess glove. Pretend to put the glove on the writing hand. Pull the glove up to the shoulder with firm pressure strokes. Repeat several times. Be sure to get out all the wrinkles in each finger of the glove.



RESISTIVE PRESSURE: Push palms together. Next, grasp fingers together at chest level and try to pull them apart. Pat hands on the table and rub the table.



JOINT COMPRESSION: Press hands into the table. Next, press hands into the thighs trying to press the feet into the floor.

NOW GO WRITE SOMETHING FABULOUS!

LESSON 6: GET CONNECTED

Get connected with the activities in this lesson. The activities enhance essential communication between the two hemispheres of the brain as well as the mind-body system. Good communication creates the foundation for learning with ease.

Deep pressure stimulation is good to do before Snow Angel Taps to improve sensation.

SNOW ANGEL TAPS



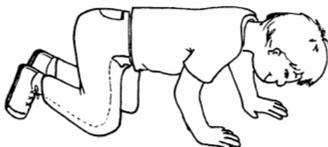
Have the child lie on the back with eyes closed. Tap each limb, one at a time. The child should slide the limb outward, and then slide the limb back to the body, as if creating a snow angel. Always end each movement in “home” position. The home position is with the arms beside the body and legs closed and touching one another. Start in home position between each tap.

Begin with each limb moving separately. After this is easily accomplished, begin tapping one time on two limbs on one side (arm and leg), and then tap once on two opposite limbs (arm on one side of the body and leg on the other side of the body). Next, have the child move the limbs without the tapping cue in a rhythmic manner.

Do the following movements several times each:

1. Begin moving just the arms out and in.
2. Move the legs out and in.
3. Move the arms and legs out and in together, making sure the upper and lower body limbs move at the same time.
4. Move the arm and leg on the right side of the body out and in.
5. Move the arm and leg on the left side of the body out and in.
6. For a challenge, move the opposite arm and leg out and in together.

PUSH-OVERS

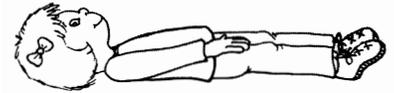


While on all fours with elbows slightly bent, apply pressure resistance to the right shoulder, then left shoulder. Next, the right hip, then left hip. Be sure to apply a light push rather than a constant pressure. The eyes remain open. Say, “Be strong and stable. Don’t let me push you over.” Repeat with eyes closed.

ROBO-PATS VARIATIONS

ROBO-PATS

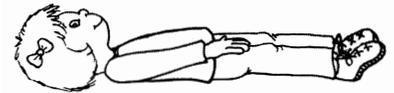
While lying on the back with arms at the side and legs together, lift each arm and leg one at a time a few inches off the ground, progressing from the right arm, left arm, left leg, and right leg. After this is accomplished in a fluid pattern, begin with a different arm or leg and proceed to lift in the same pattern (left arm, left leg, right leg, right arm).



After this movement can be done fluidly, do the movement while listening to someone talk, while carrying on a conversation, and while vision tracking to integrate the auditory and visual systems. The vision tracking lesson is taught later so don't worry about doing the tracking activity with this lesson, but revisit this lesson and do the tracking after lesson 10.

DOUBLE ROBO-PATS

While lying on the back, with arms at the side and legs together, pat each arm and leg two times. The arms and legs should come a few inches off the ground, starting with the right arm, left arm, left leg, and right leg. After this is accomplished in a fluid pattern, begin with a different arm or leg and proceed to lift in the same pattern (left arm, left leg, right leg, right arm). The movement pattern is the same as single pats with the exception of patting each limb two times.



CROSS CRAWL ROBO-PATS

While lying on the back, in the same position as in former movements, pat the arm and leg on the opposite sides of the body two times. Alternate between the right arm/left leg and left arm/right leg. Changes between the sides of the body should be smooth and fluid. Increase the difficulty by changing the pattern to two taps on one side and then one tap on the other side. Have the child say, "Tic-Toc," while doing this pattern. Fun!



LESSON 7: GO TO A BALL GAME

A group of children were doing these Focus Moves Cross Patterns movements and started singing, “Take me out to the ball game.” The name and activity became a favorite for children.

Ball-Games (Cross Patterns) are done in three steps and put together rhythmically while moving from one step to the next. Do the moves in half-time to allow time for the full movement in each step. First teach each step until mastery and then add the next step. Put it all together moving from one step to the next, while singing the tune.

POSTER INSTRUCTIONS: CROSS PATTERNS

STEP 1:

While standing, the child does Cross Crawls.

SING: *Take me out to the ball game. Take me out with the crowd.*



STEP 2:

While standing, extend right arm overhead and left leg out to the side in opposite directions. Bring both limbs back together. Switch sides and alternate sides so there is a flow and graceful change between the sides of the body. The feet come together on the floor between side changes.

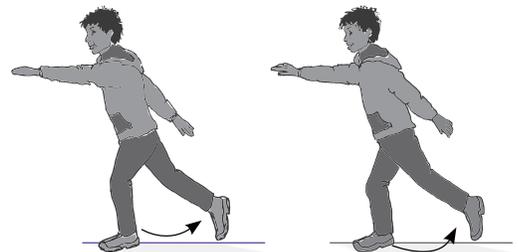
SING: *Buy me some peanuts and cracker jacks. I don't care if I never get back.*



STEP 3:

While standing, take a step backward. The right leg will move backward and the right arm will move forward, stretching the opposite side of the body in opposite directions. Do this movement one time and switch sides. The left leg will move backward and the left arm will move forward. Keep alternating from side to side in a fluid motion. Feet come together on the floor between side changes.

SING: *Let me root, root, root for the home team. If they don't win it's a shame. For it's one, two, three, strikes you're out at the old ball game!*



Focus Moves Cross Patterns

1



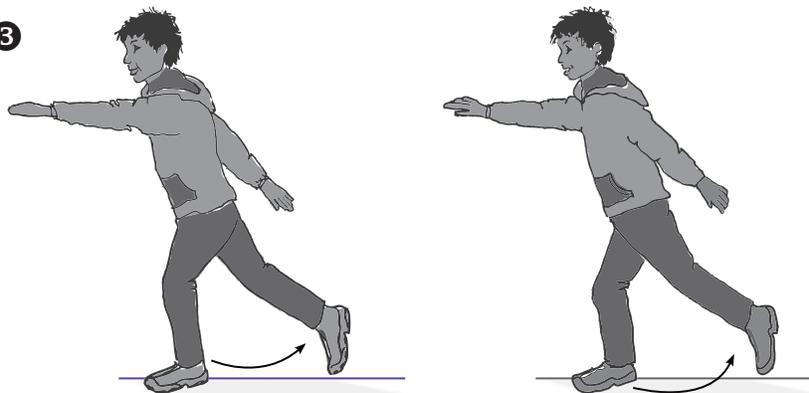
2



Lift your leg off the floor.

Lift your leg off the floor.

3



Lift your leg off the floor.

LESSON 8: DO THE ACADEMIC TWIST

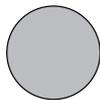
Twister Puzzles (also referred to as Balance Puzzles) support the development of midline skills, body awareness, directionality, core strengthening, vestibular activation (inner ear system that tells us where we are in space), balance, spatial skills, and math concepts.

POSTER INSTRUCTIONS: TWISTER PUZZLES (Posters on the following two pages.)

Perform each numbered movement. For young children, the use of the appropriate right or left limb is not essential.

When able to perform the movements easily, pay attention to the picture and use the appropriate right or left limb of the body.

The shapes represent body parts that are touching the floor. The pictures translate as follows:



Head

= head on floor



Seat

= bottom on floor with feet off floor



Feet

= feet on floor



Hands

= hands on floor



Knees

(feet off floor)

= knees on floor with feet off floor



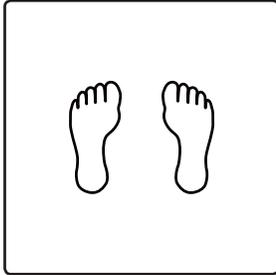
Elbows

(hands off floor)

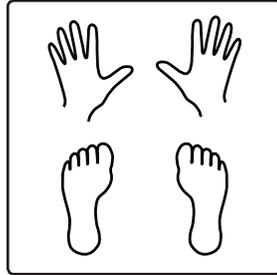
= elbows on floor with hands off floor

Focus Moves Twister Puzzles I

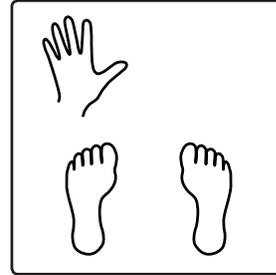
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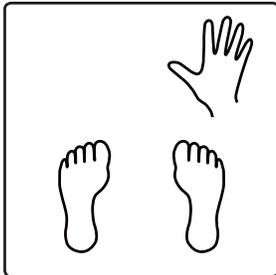
2



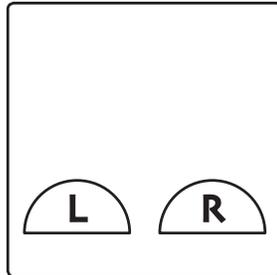
3



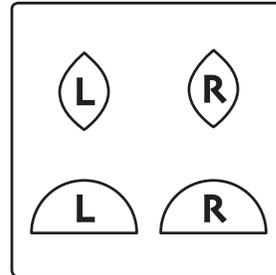
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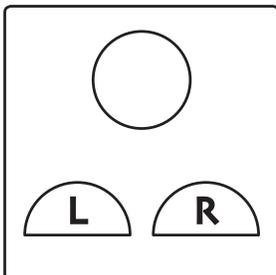
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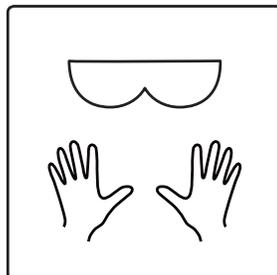
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7

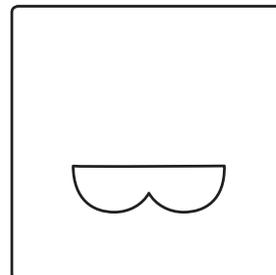


8



9

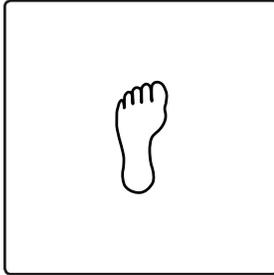
Finish



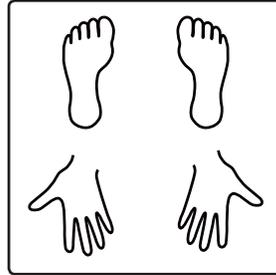
(Poster instructions on page 20.)

Focus Moves Twister Puzzles II

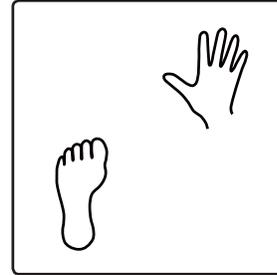
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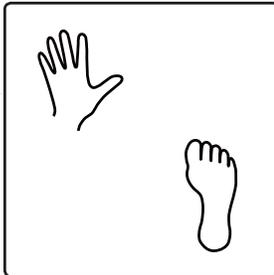
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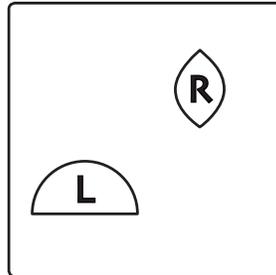
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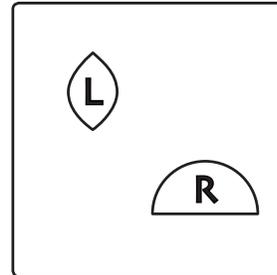
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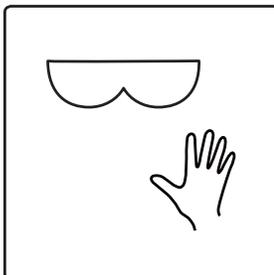
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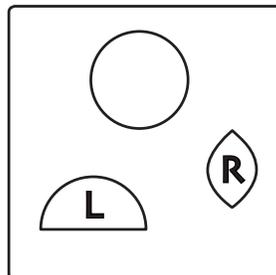
6



7

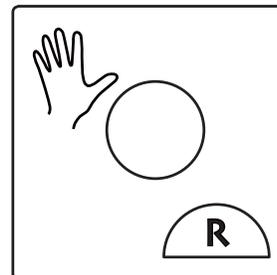


8



9

Finish



LESSON 9: FIND YOUR INNER GPS

Being able to use two sides of the body together or separately shows that the mind-body system is integrated. This is very important at school to be flexible with changes in the daily routine and learning with ease.



Focus Moves Hands & Feet I

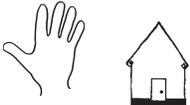


Hold the arm(s) straight up with hand(s) over the head.

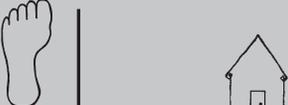
1

Start



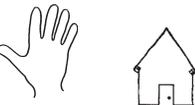


2



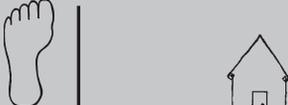
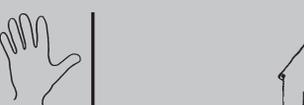


3





4


Finish

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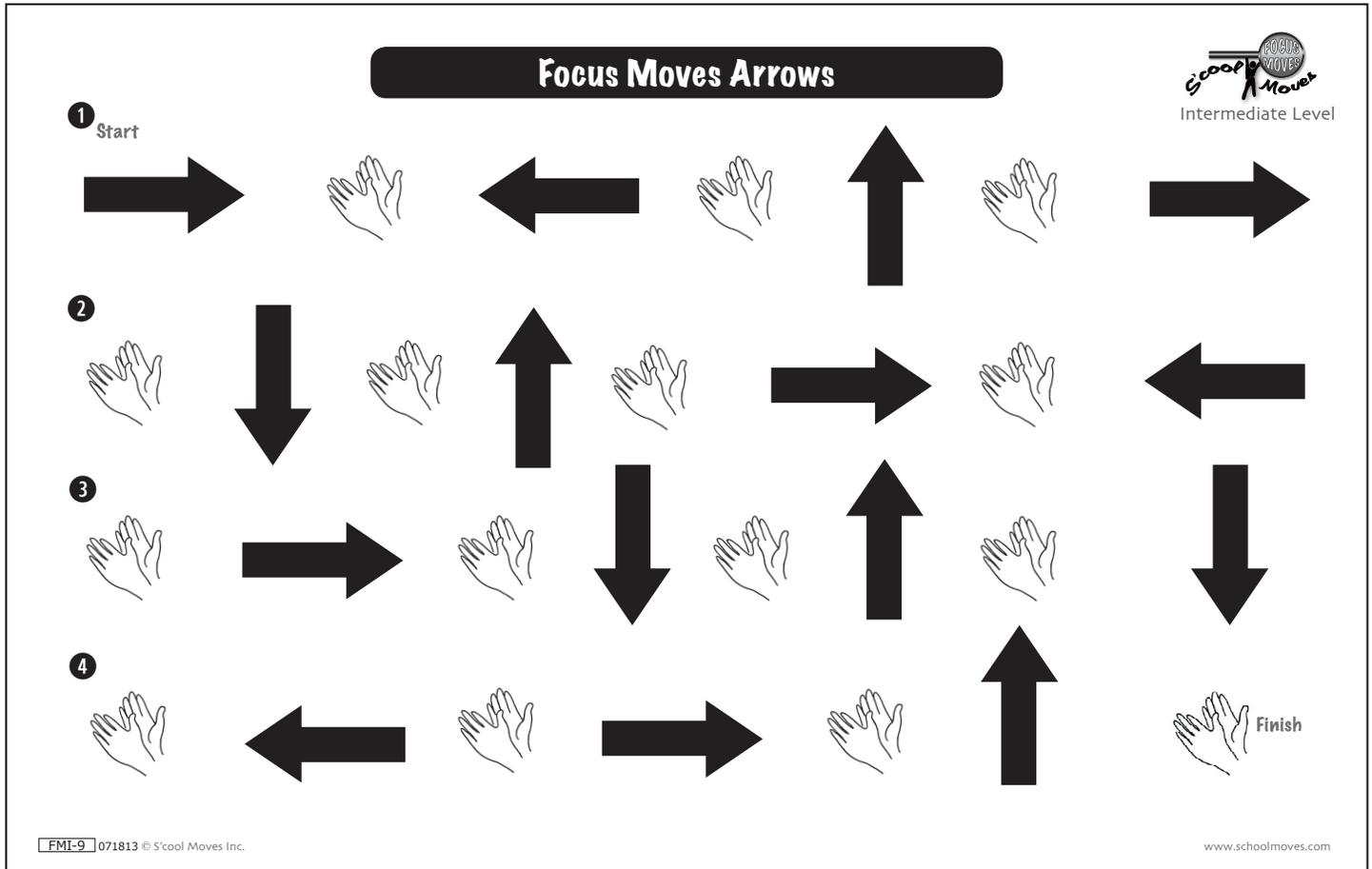
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POSTER INSTRUCTIONS: FOCUS MOVES HANDS & FEET 1

The line between the hand and feet represents the midline of the body. When a hand is pictured, raise the hand in the air (like asking a question). When a foot is pictured, stomp the foot on the floor or raise foot in the air (with knee bent and sole of foot pointing to the back wall). Stomping the foot increases joint sensation, a lower-level skill. For added challenge, lift the leg with foot pointing to the back wall.

Two hands or two feet on both sides of the line means to raise both hands and/or jump with both feet at the same time.

After each movement, bring the arms down and slap the sides of the thighs saying, “Home.” Without this deliberate step, the motions become sloppy and timing is lost. When the movements are mastered, say directions along with performing movements. For instance, call out, “Right, home, left, home, both, home,” while performing the corresponding movement.



POSTER INSTRUCTIONS: FOCUS MOVES ARROWS

Arms come across the body and both hands point right, left, up, or down, following the direction of the arrows.

In between each arm movement, clap by bringing both hands back to the center of the body. The clap is very important for maintaining rhythm.

Once able to perform the movements smoothly and rhythmically, begin to say aloud, “Right, clap, left, clap, up, clap, down, clap,” to correspond with the direction of the arrows.

It is okay to bend the knees.

For added challenge, touch the ground on the down arrow and reach up on tiptoes for the up arrows.

For added challenge, jump right and jump left, as directed by the arrows.

POSTER INSTRUCTIONS: FOCUS MOVES RHYTHMIC TRACKING

Focus Moves Rhythmic Tracking

① R L ___ B B L L

② L R L R ___ B B

③ B ___ R L B ___ L

④ ___ R R L ___ B B

⑤ L R ___ R B R B

⑥ R L B ___ B ___ L

⑦ B ___ L ___ R L B

⑧ R L L R R L B

“R” means raise right hand. “L” means raise left hand. “B” means raise both hands.

The dash (___) means to hold for one count and pause without moving any limbs.

After mastering this activity, in place of the “pause” spin around in place and come back together to continue movements.

An advanced way to use this activity is to complete the activity using two tennis balls or preferably racket balls. Hold a ball in each hand and bounce the balls rhythmically while reading the letters.

Eyes should focus on the letters while doing the activity and then refocus on the balls while bouncing the balls.

This activity works on strengthening the ability of the eyes to focus on near objects and far objects.

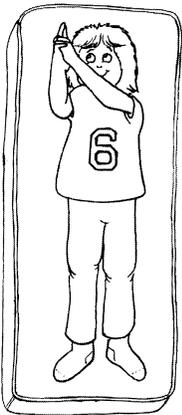


LESSON 10: SEE WITH EASE

Compared to another child with the same academic ability, the child with a visual processing problem has to work a lot harder. Problems with eye focusing and teaming can put higher level visual processes at risk. This would include but not be limited to visual memory, visualization, rapid naming speed, executive functioning, eye-hand coordination, logic, attention, and reversal frequency. One or a combination of these challenges may keep a child from working at expected levels and adversely reduce classroom performance.

Making sure vision skills are optimized for learning is an often overlooked strategy. The activities included in this section can help shore up vision skills but, of course, in no way replace a good developmental optometry exam and prescribed therapy.

PARTNER VISION TRACKING



Lie on the back so the trunk and neck do not have to work against the force of gravity. Track objects while in this position. Vision activities should not be more than a few minutes in length. The eyes tire easily. More is not better in this case.

While lying on the floor, follow a large object (a ball or toy) with the eyes. Once this can be done easily, track small objects, such as a pencil eraser.

Using the eyes and hands together can assist tracking. Grasp two hands together with index fingers touching. Follow the object by touching the fingers to the object as it is moving.

Next, focus on objects in different positions above and below the midline in the vertical plane, as well as on the sides of the body in the horizontal plane. Finally, hold a small tube or cup in different positions and place the index fingers inside the tube or cup as it moves through different planes (a small ketchup cup from a fast food restaurant works well). Be sure to move the arms back to midline after tracking each time.

For fun, change places and roles. After these activities can be done in a lying position, progress to doing them in a sitting position.

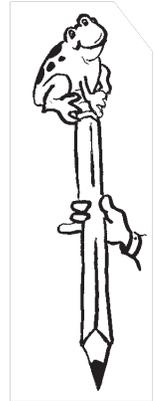
“My eyes swim like dolphins through the words of books.”

~ A fourth grade student’s comment after improving vision skills

ONE MINUTE WARM-UP FOR READING

One simple way to get the eyes moving and warmed-up for reading is to follow this simple one-minute procedure. Use the eraser end of a pencil for the following activities. A fun pencil topper is optional, the eraser can work just fine. This is by no means a replacement for vision therapy, but it does help children needing a vision tracking tune-up.

Do the activities with each eye separately and then together. Cover one eye with the hand while tracking the pencil with the other eye. Switch eyes. Then track with both eyes.

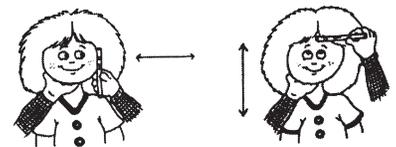


CONVERGENCE: Move the pencil straight toward the nose to a comfortable point, not too close. Move the pencil away from the nose. Repeat three times.



NEAR TO FAR AND FAR TO NEAR FOCUS: Move the pencil in a straight line toward the nose then move it in a downward arc away from the nose, at arm's length away. Repeat three times. Reverse the movement, and take the pencil away from the nose in a straight line and then bring it in a downward arc toward the nose. Repeat three times.

SIDE TO SIDE AND UP AND DOWN TRACKING: Watch the pencil as it moves at eye level from the left side to the right side and from the right side to the left side, checking for comfortable midline crossing (the point where the eyes meet in the center above the nose). Repeat three times. Move the pencil up and down at the midline. Repeat three times.



CIRCULAR TRACKING: Watch the pencil while it is moving clockwise in a circle and then counterclockwise once, keeping it within comfortable field of vision at arm's length.

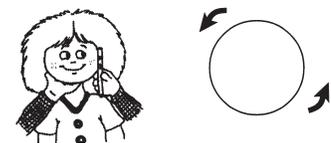
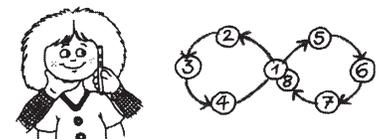


FIGURE 8'S: Have the child watch the pencil while it is moved in the Figure 8 pattern.



LESSON 11: THE NEED FOR SPEED

Rapid automatic naming is the ability to quickly name aloud objects, numbers, letters, or colors. This ability may relate to a child's reading fluency. The research doesn't really tell us how to improve rapid automatic naming, but with the brain being able to improve itself through practice, it makes sense to practice and attempt to improve naming speed.

POSTER INSTRUCTIONS: ROCKET READER

Track from left to right, naming letters or numbers as fast as possible. Do not use the finger to track across the page. Use eyes only and attempt to keep the head perfectly still so only the eyes move.



Rocket Reader

Track from left to right, naming letters or numbers as fast as possible.



FOCUS MOVES
School Moves
Foundation Level

K S T K N C T S C	8 3 5 4 2 7 5 8 3
S N A T K C N A K	4 8 7 5 2 7 3 5 2
K A N S C K T S A	2 8 5 3 5 8 4 3 5
T C K S N A C N T	7 3 5 8 4 2 7 7 3

FMP-18 Lesson 8

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Foundation Moves

Academic Link: Observe rapid naming speed to determine reading readiness

☆

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POSTER INSTRUCTIONS: FOCUS MOVES SHAPE TRACKING

Focus Moves Shape Tracking

1

Start

2

3

4

5

A

Z

6

C

7

T

H

8

N

L

D

9

X

P

B

M

Finish



Beginning Level

Shape Tracking is a more advanced activity. Do not use fingers or pointer sticks; use only eyes to track across the page.

Place the fingers of one hand on the chin to help keep the head still while tracking. Parent should say, "Only your eyes move. Keep your head very still and just move your eyes."

Call out each shape and letter in the order presented in the activity.

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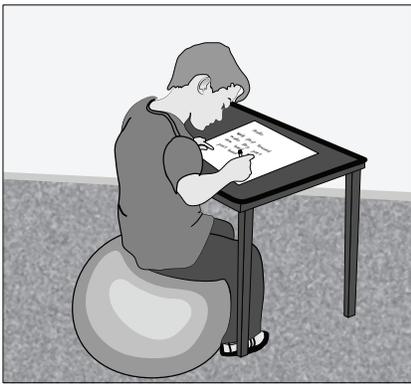
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LESSON 12: MAKE ACADEMICS A MOVING EXPERIENCE

The body learns ten times faster than the brain and forgets ten times slower. Children learn faster when movement is involved in the learning process. Included in this lesson are some simple ways to make academics a moving experience. The mind-body system is designed to work as a team. Adding movement to the learning process increases focus, motivation, and ups the fun factor.

TEN BOUNCES AND SETTLE IN



When sitting at the table or desk, sitting on an exercise ball may increase alertness and provide necessary input to the brain to make learning easier for children who have focusing challenges. For children who do not have focusing challenges, the extra movement while in a seated position for writing, may actually be distracting. Observe and determine if the exercise ball appears to support or hinder learning. If excessive bouncing is detracting from work performance, use the “ten bounces and settle in” rule. Allow ten bounces and then sitting still while doing

homework. When focus starts to wander, encourage another ten bounces and then stopping again. Be sure the feet touch the ground and the child is positioned as shown.

WORD PING-PONG

Learn to read new spelling, vocabulary, or sight words by playing the Word Ping-Pong game. Divide words to be learned into two different lists. Write the words from one list of words individually on index cards or on pieces of paper. Write the words from the second list individually on index cards or on pieces of paper. Take turns reading from cards. Now do a movement each time a word is said. The movement can be as simple as one jump in place for each word, bending knees and touching the ground, or doing a jumping jack.



ACADEMIC ARROWS

Refer to the Focus Moves Arrows poster in Lesson 9. Spell or say words while completing the Arrows activity.

BOUNCE AND SPELL

Grab any ball that might be around the house. Bounce the ball back and forth while spelling words.

WORDS OF WISDOM

May all children reach their maximum learning potential through participating in home and school programs that focus on the integration of body, mind, and well-being. The following words of wisdom were printed in *The Learning Revolution* with credit given to Chen Jingpan, author of *Confucius as a Teacher*. These words remind us that there is much to relearn from the past. Blending the past with the exciting new methods available today enhances learning for all children.

As Confucius said 2,500 years ago:

Blend the best of the new with the best from the old.

Learn by doing.

Use the world as a classroom.

Use music and poetry to learn and teach.

Blend academic with physical.

Learn how to learn, not just facts.

Cater to different learning styles.

Build good values and behavior.

Provide an equal chance for all.

Connect 12

Twelve Fast, Fun, and Effective Lessons to Enhance Focus & Academic Success

A Companion Booklet for Focus Moves Activities



Therapists and teachers want quick and effective activities to share with parents that enhance focus and learning. Inviting families to participate in just one lesson at a time, makes the Focus Moves extension activities for home doable.

No stress. No added guilt about not doing enough...just one lesson a day for as long as it takes to complete the twelve lessons.

- quick and effective activities therapists and teachers can share with parents
- twelve lessons provide the biggest bang for time-crunched families
- enhance focus and learning
- requires no equipment or extensive instructions to understand

"My two boys were struggling in school. I did the Focus Moves activities with them. It made all the difference. I saw their focus and ability to learn improve within weeks of starting the activities. Now, as adults, my boys have completed advanced education and are thriving. Thanks for helping me understand the importance of an organized mind-body system for learning with ease."

~ Gloria Dubois, Parent

DR. DEBRA EM WILSON,

Founder of S'cool Moves

Debra Em Wilson is a graduate from the University of Southern Queensland Professional Studies Research Program. Her dissertation uncovered attributes of successful collaboration between occupational therapists and general education teachers working together in the classroom environment. She is a Reading Specialist who possesses teaching credentials in the areas of biology, physical education, multiple subjects, and reading and language specialist. Debra has taught at the college, high school, and elementary levels. She consults with districts, focusing on collaboration between support staff and teachers. For fifteen years, Debra's workshops have provided evidence-based strategies to support all students in the classroom. She is the author of numerous books and instructional materials integrating therapy techniques with academic standards. Debra's experience as the mother of a child with special needs enhances her understanding of children who learn differently and have a difficult time fitting in with their peers.

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