


At the beginning of the year, Jarrett uses books that will focus children on body parts and the movement of body parts. He has used "From Head to Toe" by Eric Carle as a jumping off point for exploring different ways to move and for introducing vocabulary. The repetitive phrase, "Can you do it?" invites children to try it out. He finds chants and simple songs that will encourage innovation on movements and connect vocabulary to the movement. (Clap, clap, clap your hands, can change to pat, shake, roll, close...)

(See chapter on Assessment for observation strategies.)

Justin leads Sophie and Ruben to the tree stumps. They each stand on top of one and Justin yells, "Let's jump into the land of the dinosaurs!" They raise their arms and jump onto the ground, all landing steadily on two feet. They climb back up and Justin calls out that he is going to try a twirling jump. "It's like you're in a whirlpool twirling in the air. Try it." The others follow, trying it out. Ruben says, "I can do a sideways jump." Justin, "I can do a sider jump too." "I can do a backwards jump." Sophie, "So can I. I can just lean backwards and land on my feet." The three try out different jumps for a few more minutes.

Adapting the Program



English Language Learners: Physical activity and movement set the context or give form to the vocabulary associated with different movements. As children spin, make themselves small, or go over objects they connect the vocabulary to the movements. In the beginning stages, educator gestures or modeling may support children's understanding.

Assessment

Observation of the children engaged in physical activity-in the gym, outdoors, or during movement, will yield valuable information about children's gross motor abilities (as children climb stairs, ride a tricycle, move in different ways during music, or engage with peers throwing and catching). Similarly, watching children engaged in activities that require fine motor skills such as cutting, drawing, building, or doing puzzles will highlight their development in this area.

In revisiting the example from the beginning of the chapter and analyzing it, there is valuable information that can be gathered about each of the children, and Justin in particular. Physically, he is demonstrating control of his movements, jumping off the stump (about 60 cm high), using his arms for balance, bending his knees, and landing steadily on two feet. He is also innovating on movements. Emotionally and socially, he seems confident about what he can do. He includes the other two, *Let's jump...* and encourages them to try another jump. He makes connections, *It's like you're in a whirlpool twirling in the air*. He is also able to name the movements – *sider, backwards, twirling*. Cognitively, he is thinking about different movements that he can make. He persists and retries.

The purpose of assessment is to promote learning.

The following questions could be starting points for observation.

- What skills do children already possess?
- What stands out for a particular child or group of children that might need attention?