

MOVEMENT CLASS



Creative Learning Through Movement with Sonja

When the drum plays, the children jump, twirl, skip, hop, run and fly through the air. When the drum stops, they freeze.

How do you "freeze" yourself?
What do you do to hold still?

- Do you squeeze in your belly?
- Do you hold your breath?
- Do you stiffen in your fingers?
- Tighten your arms and back?

They practice moving and freezing, moving and freezing. We slither,

roll, crawl, creep, slide, jump, twirl...and freeze.

How do you feel when you freeze yourself?

- Alert?
- Focused?
- Ready to act?
- Uptight?
- Excited?

Holding their frozen shapes, they travel through space. How do you hold yourself still and move through space at the same time? How does this feel?

- Confining?
- Restrictive?
- Funny?
- Safe?

The children begin to melt in ten counts, pausing every few counts, exploring how they move as they make themselves more and more fluid. They soften, flow, jiggle, flop, undulate through space.

In ten counts, they begin to re-freeze. How do you create more form inside yourself? They explore how they move and feel, inside and



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out as they gather themselves and become more and more solid again.

We play with our continuum of fluid to form. How fluid do you like to move and how does this feel? How do you create more fluidity, adaptability, availability? How do you create more groundedness, thickness, substance? How much form do you like to have?

We all gather back on the rug. They practice the act of scattering and gathering themselves...through the room, while in sitting, and inside their bodies.

When the drum plays, they scatter all over the room and then freeze when it stops. In ten counts, they come back and gather on the carpet. In sitting, they scatter their arms, legs, head, eyes, torso. And then gather them all back together again.

How do you scatter your thoughts? How do you gather them?

We play movement games that explore the physical act of attending, of how we pay attention. Your children gather themselves and then scatter themselves and their focus. They explore how they get excited, and can create and contain their excitement.

The drum is the guide. "Listen...Can you hear the low-to-the-ground rhythm?" The drum plays and the children explore, discover, create through movement as they move in response to the inquiries. One child is slithering slowly on her belly. Another is scooting quickly on his bottom. Someone else is walking on all fours. The children take turns sharing their movement inventions and trying out each others.

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and gross, exploring ways they can move.

SEYMOUR THE SKELETON and FUNCTIONAL ANATOMY: How we use and move our skeletons

Seymour is a larger-than-life-sized skeleton I tape on the floor. Seymour got his name because you can "see more" of his skeleton than we can see of our own. Seymour doesn't have any muscles or organs to help support, protect and move his skeleton like we do. He is all bones.

How would you move if you didn't have any bones? The children wiggle like worms, squirm, jiggle, undulate. They grow bones and explore how their bones support and transmit force through their entire bodies as they stand upright and locomote through space.

The children walk on Seymour, tracing his bones and finding their own.

What part of your skeleton connects your head to your pelvis? The children walk up and down Seymour's spine, exploring how their own spines move.

- Can your spine twist, bend forward-and-back, side-to-side, curve around?
- If you make circles with your pelvis how far up your spine can you feel the movement?
- If you circle your head, how far down your spine can you feel this?
- Where do your ribs attach to your spine?
- How do the movements of your spine affect your ribcage?
- What does your ribcage protect?

They listen and feel the beating of their heart and expanding and contracting of their lungs. How does your breathing affect your ribs and how do your ribs affect your breathing?"

The children investigate how the bones in their arms and legs can move.

Isn't it curious how the skeletal structure of our hands-arms-shoulders resembles the structure of our feet-legs-hips? And our fingers and toes share the same skeletal name -- phalanges?

The children wiggle their fingers and their toes. They walk on their hands and feet, on their feet and on their hands.

Drawing from many years of experience in Feldenkrais®, Formative Psychology®, Aikido and Dance, I developed and teach a somatic (body-based) approach to learning with children called "Creative Learning Through Movement". Classes include a wide variety of group movement explorations and dynamic games which integrate motor, cognitive, and social emotional learning. Classes encourage experiential learning— exploring, researching, developing and creating through movement. The children solve movement puzzles, invent movement solutions, and generate and develop ideas through doing. They explore how they shape their feelings and their behavior. This is Learning In Action.

It is my pleasure to be the guest movement teacher for the Kindergarteners at Park Day.