

WHY IS MOVEMENT NECESSARY?

LANGUAGE

Think about the word *on*. The children are *on* the bus...or are they really *in* the bus? The cat jumped *on* the table. You *put on, move on, go on, walk on, step on, stumble on*. All *ons* are not created equal. We ask children to sit down and sit up. We say, "Stand in a line" and "stand in a circle". Does "stand in a circle" mean to form a circle or to stand inside the circle?

Think about left and right. Why is this a difficult concept to learn? It all depends on your orientation. My left is not your left if we are standing facing one another, but if we are next to each other, it is. If you look in a mirror, is your left hand still your left hand?

The ball may be in front of you, but it is also between you and the fence and it is in front of the fence.

How do children learn these things? Through movement. Children learn about top, bottom, up, down, middle, front, back, left, right, vertical, horizontal all by moving and experiencing the differences. As children experience directionality and have lots of experiences with it, it all begins to make sense and they develop an understanding of the concepts. If you haven't experienced them, you can't understand them.

This understanding is necessary in order for a child to look at a white board where the teacher has written a letter to be copied. The child has watched the teacher write something on a vertical plane and must now keep that image in her mind while transferring it to a horizontal plane (her paper on her desk).

MATHEMATICS

1. Counting: In order to count you must understand the concept of before and after.
2. Addition, subtraction, multiplication and division: you must understand more and less.
3. Sequencing: you must understand the difference between big and little.
4. Diameter and circumference: you must understand through and around
5. Fractions and percentages: you must understand partway
6. Horizontal and vertical: you must understand left and right and up and down

What's the best way to develop understanding of these concepts? Movement! Activities! Digging in the sandbox, moving through an obstacle course, hanging from the monkey bars, moving rocks and sticks, building with blocks and other manipulatives. The list goes on and on. The more a child experiences the concepts, the deeper the understanding of them.