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MOVE & GROOVE

in
English

Practical language teaching activities
with interaction, rhythm & movement



**Everything we learn
we learn with our body.**



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Introduction

Everything we learn we learn with our body.

Human beings are complex, and all parts of our bodies are wired to several regions of our brains, constantly processing input and responding to our environment. This is a fact that we have to be aware of as teachers, and may well use to our advantage as learners. Although our education systems hardly cater to the fact that we learn by processing a variety of sensory inputs, there is a range of possibilities to support language learning in a multi-sensory, interactive way. This book offers some suggestions.

Thinking along these lines, music, movement and rhythm, together with language/voice can form the basis for an integrative and creative approach to language teaching. In this book, a range of hands-on, engaging activities using these elements propose a point of access to vocabulary, topics and grammar that is alive and learner-oriented. Thinking in a holistic, multi-disciplinary way and taking group dynamics and learning psychology into account, we can transform our classrooms into positive learning environments... and have a great laugh!

Anita Gritsch



How to use this book

The exercises in this book were developed for and form part of a seminar with the same title that I have been offering in teacher training over the past couple of years. All of the games have been tested in a number of contexts, with different target groups.

The activities were inspired by body music games I use in my teaching practice, principles of Rhythmics/Music and Movement Education and ideas from improv theatre. Some I collected or got inspired by through other people and adapted for the specific purpose of language teaching, some I developed by myself.

We start with a short and sweet section on the background for this book, moving on to the practical part. Preceding the activities, you find a number of important hints for working successfully with the games offered here. Should any questions arise around the procedures, feel free to contact me.

The description of each game starts with an overview of the setting, the materials you might need and their focus regarding language learning. The games are grouped together in sections according to their most prominent feature. Of course, there is no black-and-white distinction and you will find that most activities are multidimensional.

At the back of the book, you find a register of the games in alphabetical order. I also provide a concise list of literature offering additional information.

I would like to thank all the people I met on the path, the teachers and students that inspired me, taught me and contributed to making this book possible. I hope it will inspire you, as well!

3 BODY & MOVEMENT GAMES

This section contains activities that primarily work with the principle of connecting sensory experience and movement to language content. This way, we can create anchors in the body that support our memory. Language gains a physical dimension and becomes more concrete and in line with everyday experience. As pointed out in the background section, on the physiological level, brain areas that process language are also responsible for controlling motor skills. Some possibilities of putting this into practice in language learning games are offered here.

superglue

- o Form: classroom setting
- o Material: lively music
- o Time: 5 min
- o Focus: vocabulary (human body), questions & answers

The group moves around to music. When the music stops, the teacher names a body part, and everybody finds a partner to 'glue' the respective body part together with. A variation of the game is to 'glue' it to a wall or object. After you tried out and familiarized your group with the basic version, you can vary the game and let the participants pass around an object while the music is playing. The person holding the object when the music stops names the next body part.

Another variation of the game could be: while glued together, participants exchange information about topics cued by you, e.g. *What's your favourite colour? How many brothers/sisters do you have? Where would you like to travel?* Directly after the game or at a later moment

of class, you can test your students' memory by collecting information from the group about individual participants.

body parts

- o Form: circle or classroom setting, in pairs
- o Materials: -
- o Time: 10 min
- o Focus: vocabulary (human body)

This is a great activity not only to work on the topic of body parts but also to use as an in-between to warm up in the beginning of class or take a break between intellectually challenging activities or new content.

Depending on the level of your students and familiarity with the topic, you may start with a brainstorm on the blackboard to make sure students know the relevant vocabulary. Then, the participants form pairs according to sympathy. Let students always swap roles after a couple of minutes.



Alphabetical list of games

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