

Activity Guide #6 – Traveling: Walking, Skipping, Hopping, Galloping, Trotting, Running

Book: *Ask Mr. Bear* by Marjorie Flack

Introduction

A child's mind and body develop together in an interrelated way. From the time they are born, children use their bodies to learn, making physical development vitally important to all areas of development and learning.

However, today there are a number of challenges to supporting a child's physical development, including their gross motor skills. Children have easy access to screens (e.g.: television, cell phones, tablets) and many live in areas where there may not be space and/or safe opportunities for them to engage in physical activities. Therefore it is important that children enrolled in child care programs have daily opportunities to develop their gross motor skills.

Although gross motor skills will largely develop on their own, there are ways in which early childhood professionals can encourage these skills to help children play confidently, engage in fun physical activities, and develop a strong foundation for a healthy, active lifestyle that carries into adulthood. This includes both opportunities for children's free exploration and practice of traveling skills and through planned experiences that are featured in the guides included in the supplemental curriculum, **B.A.M.M.M.!**

Begin by providing time each day for outside play, weather permitting. Make sure there is sufficient indoor and outdoor space for children to safely practice and refine their traveling skills, including walking, skipping, hopping, galloping, trotting, and running.

In this **B.A.M.M.M.!** guide, children are introduced to the traveling skills of walking, skipping, hopping, galloping, trotting, and running when they hear the story, *Ask Mr. Bear*, followed by activities that involve them in teacher-guided traveling activities that support the **Physical Development and Health Domain**, plus additional activities that support the **Language Development** and **Emergent Literacy Domain** as well as other Domains.

Teacher Note: *Information for this introduction was adapted from the introduction to the **Physical Development and Health Domain** in the Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards: Birth through 60 months (April 2016). The developers of **B.A.M.M.M.!** recommend that everyone using these guides review the entire introduction.*

**Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards:
Birth through 60 Months**

Domain: Physical Development and Health
Domain Component: Gross Motor

Learning Goals (with Strands and Skill or Indicators)

PH1.1 Demonstrates locomotor skills (*traveling*)

- Changes speed or direction while moving
- Moves with control, avoiding obstacles and people while moving (e.g., moves through obstacle courses, steers wheelchair into small spaces, stops at intended location when running)
- Walks and runs smoothly and with balance
- Shows increasing ability to coordinate complex movements (e.g., galloping, sliding, hopping, and later skipping and leaping) smoothly and with ease

PH1.2 Shows Stability and Balance (*core stability*)

- Shows increasing ability to maintain balance while moving from one position to another, changing directions, or stopping abruptly (“freezes” while running)
- Hops and leaps with increasing skill and control (e.g., hops forward on one foot without losing balance)

Materials to Collect and Make

- ✓ Book: *Ask Mr. Bear* by Marjorie Flack
- ✓ Develop felt or magnetic storytelling figures as a vehicle for presenting the story to children. See Attachment: [Ask Mr. Bear](#)
- ✓ Carpet squares or personal space markers
- ✓ Gift box (not wrapped)
- ✓ Photos of horses that are galloping and trotting
- ✓ Photos of children walking, running, hopping and skipping
- ✓ Old fashioned stick horses

Introduce the Activity

Learning Goals:

CD3.2 Engages in symbolic and abstract thinking (*abstract thinking*)

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child’s home language) (*vocabulary and language comprehension*)

Directions:

- Children sitting on carpet squares or personal space markers.
- Show empty and unwrapped gift box to children and say, “*Pretend that it’s your mother’s birthday and you want to give her a gift to go in this box. What would you put in the box to give to your mother?*”
- Allow each child who wants to a turn to tell you what he/she would put in the box. Accept all answers.
- Say, “*We’re going to read a story about a little boy and his animal friends, and the surprise birthday gift he gave to his mother.*”

Present the Story

Learning Goals:

SE2.2 Interprets and responds to the feelings of others (*emotion understanding*)

CD3.2 Engages in symbolic and abstract thinking (*abstract thinking*)

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (*vocabulary and language comprehension*)

EL1.1 Shows interest in language experiences (*engagement in literacy experiences, variety of interests*)

EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*book knowledge*)

Directions:

- Prepare to read the story, *Ask Mr. Bear*.
- Show the cover, give title and author. (Explain that author is person who writes the book.)
- Tell children, "*The boy on the cover is named Danny. Can you name the animals you see on the cover? Where do you think they're going?*"
- Read book with children sitting so all can see the pictures.
- Pause after Mr. Bear whispers a secret into Danny's ear and ask, "*What do you think Mr. Bear whispered in Danny's ear?*"
- Allow children to predict what the bear whispered to Danny. Continue the story.
- Follow up with questions such as "*Were your predictions about the secret Mr. Bear whispered in Danny's ear correct?*" "*Why do you think the animals didn't want to go with Danny to meet Mr. Bear?*" "*How do you think Danny's mother felt about her birthday gift from Danny?*"
- Show the empty box to the children and ask, "*Do you think Danny's gift to his mother can be put in this box?*" Allow children to explain their answers.

Extend the Story

Learning Goals:

PH1.1 Demonstrates locomotor skills (*complex movement*)

PH1.2 Shows stability and balance (*core stability*)

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (*vocabulary and language comprehension, follows directions*)

Directions:

- Recall with children that Danny, the hen, the goose and the goat galloped.
- Ask children what other animal gallops. (horse)
- Show photo of galloping horse if available.
- Explain that they are going to gallop like a horse.
- Introduce galloping to the children as follows:
"Start with a step and slide the other foot behind the lead foot. The lead foot is the leader and the other foot never goes in front of it."
- Remind children to move safely and not get too close to other children.
- Reinforce the stop and go signal you have established: clapping hands, striking a drum, striking two rhythm sticks together are examples. When children hear this signal, they are to freeze like a statue.
- *"Pretend you're riding a horse, so hold on to the reins.
You're going to gallop in a straight line.
Start with a step on the leader foot and slide the other foot behind it.
Now go faster."* (When children increase speed it will automatically become a gallop.)
- Allow children to practice galloping.
- Observe children and assist those who are having difficulty galloping.
- Show children an old fashioned stick horse and explain that stick horses will be added to the playground so they can practice galloping.

Teacher Note: Play the song "She'll Be Coming Round the Mountain" as children are galloping.



Conclude the Session

- Lead the children in a finger play.

My Legs

*My legs like to walk.
My legs like to run.
My legs think walking
And running are fun.*

*My legs like to gallop.
My legs like to hop.
But when my legs get tired,
My legs say STOP!*

Try these additional traveling activities

Learning Goals:

PH1.1 Demonstrates locomotor skills (*traveling, complex movement*)

PH1.2 Shows stability and balance (*core stability, jumping, hopping, and leaping*)

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (*vocabulary and language comprehension, follows directions*)

Hopping

- Reread the story, *Ask Mr. Bear*, with the children.
- Recall with children that Danny, the hen and the goose all hopped along.
- Explain to children that they are going to practice hopping.
- Introduce hopping as follows:
"When you hop, you hold one leg off the floor and hop up and down on the other. Can you hold one leg off the floor and hop up and down on the other? Now switch legs and hop on that one."
- Allow children to practice hopping frequently.
Keep practice brief.
- Practice hopping in place, then hopping from one spot to another.



Teacher Notes:

- *Children may have difficulty hopping because they lack the strength and balance to hold one leg in the air while hopping on the other.*
- *If children are having a difficult time hopping, try this: Have them lean against a wall with one hand, lift one foot in the air and hop on the other foot.*
- *Children must be able to hop before they can begin skipping, which is the most difficult motor skill to develop.*

Skipping

- Reread the story, *Ask Mr. Bear*, with the children.
- Review with the children the different ways Danny and the animals traveled: walking, skipping, hopping, galloping and running.
- Explain to children that today they will practice skipping.
- Introduce skipping by showing a photo of a child skipping and say the following:
*“Take a step forward and hop on that foot.
Now, take a step forward on the other foot and hop on it.
Continue to step and hop on one foot, then the other.”*
- Play the song, “Skip to My Lou” as children skip around the room.
- Allow children to practice skipping regularly.



Teacher Notes:

- o *Remember that children must be able to hop before they can skip and that skipping is the most difficult motor skill to develop. Only introduce skipping if you think children are ready for this.*
- o *Avoid frustrating children if they are unable to skip. Some five year olds will be able to skip while others will not develop this skill until later.*

Going to See Mr. Bear

- Reread the story, *Ask Mr. Bear*, with children.
- Review the ways that Danny and the animals moved: walking, hopping, galloping, skipping and running.
- Explain to children that they will move around the room like Danny and the animals.
- Remind children to move safely and not get too close to others.
- Reinforce the stop and go signal you have established: clapping hands, striking a drum, striking two rhythm sticks together are examples. When children hear the signal they are to freeze like statues.
- Say, *“Can you walk around the room and stay as far from other children as you can?”*
- Sound stop signal.
- Say, *“Can you gallop around the room without bumping into others?”*
- Sound the stop signal.
- Say, *“Can you hop on one foot? Now hop on the other foot.”*
- Sound the stop signal.
- Say, *“Now skip around the room without bumping into others.”*
- Sound the stop signal.
- Say, *“Can you run around the room in a curved path without bumping into others?”*
- Sound the stop signal.
- Say, *“Can you walk safely back home?”*

Teacher Notes:

- *You may choose to introduce these traveling activities one at a time before involving children in this Going to See Mr. Bear activity which combines all of the traveling skills in the story.*
- *This activity may be more appropriate to do outdoors, especially if indoor space is limited.*

Additional Literacy Experiences

Learning Goals

LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (*vocabulary and language comprehension, follows directions*)

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences (*engagement in literacy experiences*)

Activity: *Ask Mr. Bear, a Clothesline Story* See Attachment: [Ask Mr. Bear](#)

- Tell the story, *Ask Mr. Bear*, as a clothesline story.
- Attach characters from children's left to right as they appear in the story.
- Retell the story and allow children to attach characters in order as they appear in the story.
- Add the clothesline and story figures to the Library Center and allow children to tell the story independently.

Activity: *Ask Mr. Bear, a Felt or Magnetic Story*

- Use felt or magnetic storytelling figures and a storyboard to tell the story to the children
- Retell the story and allow children to place the characters on the board in order as they appear in the story.
- Leave the storyboard and storytelling figures in the Library Center and allow children to tell the story independently.

Teacher Note: *Consider attaching the photos of different traveling skills to a ring and place in the Library Center. Observe to see if children look at and discuss the photos.*

Playground

- Add old fashioned stick horses to the playground.
- Observe children to see if they are using the stick horses to practice galloping.

Additional Books

- A Birthday for Frances* by Russell Hoban
- Albert's Birthday* by Leslie Tryon
- Happy Birthday, Moon* by Frank Asch
- Max's Birthday* by Rosemary Wells

Resources

- ✓ Personal space markers can be ordered from equipment catalogs and from school supply catalogs.
- ✓ Stick horses can be ordered online.

Teacher Notes:

- Children need to hear the same story read to them several times.
- Children also need frequent opportunities to repeat and practice movement activities.
- Plan to reread the book, *Ask Mr. Bear* by Marjorie Flack, and include a variety of the suggested movement activities.
- It is important that stories and activities be repeated with children at different times throughout the year.