

# ***Make That Letter Shape!***



## **Prepare:**

Use an open space without obstacles, if available.

Read *From A to Z with Energy!* by Connie Bergstein Dow, Free Spirit Publishing, 2019. This is a book that uses ideas and illustrations to inspire children to be active and healthy. These ideas are included in the guide in the back of the book.

## **Begin the dance story:**

Re-read the story stanza by stanza. Try out the activity/ideas named, along with the pictures, as you go through each line, making sure that the children have enough time to try out all of their ideas before you go to the next stanza. Before you move on to the next letter, finish each stanza by asking the children to make that letter shape in their bodies. For example:

Read: ***A is for Activity. You're busy all day long!***

Show the illustration on this page, of the children climbing on the jungle gym and swinging from rings. Say, *Imagine you are doing this, just like the picture. And what other activities do you like to do? Now make your body into the shape of the letter "A."*

***B is for our Bodies, so let's work to keep them strong.***

Show the illustration. Say: *Can you imagine you are doing a pull-up on a bar? What else might you do to keep your body strong? Now make your body into the shape of the letter "B."*

***Clapping starts with C. Let's go! We'll skip and jump and prance.***

Say: *Can you imagine you are jumping rope like the three children in the illustration? Can you clap and skip? Clap and jump? Clap and prance? Now make a "C."*

Continue this process throughout the whole story.

## **Finish:**

The book ends quietly, so after this lively session, the children will lie down and imagine they are sleeping after a busy day, like the picture for the last stanza.

**Note:** There are 10 ideas for movement activities at the end of the book to supplement the story. Many of them include ideas for learning early literacy concepts using movement.

# Run Rhymes With Fun!

Activity based on lesson from *One, Two, What Can I Do? Dance and Music for the Whole Day* (Dow, 2011, Published by Redleaf Press, [www.redleafpress.org](http://www.redleafpress.org))

## List of action words paired with a rhyming word

|               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| <b>Walk</b>   | <b>Chalk</b>   |
| <b>March</b>  | <b>Arch</b>    |
| <b>Run</b>    | <b>Fun</b>     |
| <b>Gallop</b> | <b>Scallop</b> |
| <b>Slide</b>  | <b>Wide</b>    |
| <b>Shake</b>  | <b>Bake</b>    |
| <b>Twirl</b>  | <b>Curl</b>    |
| <b>Jump</b>   | <b>Bump</b>    |
| <b>Climb</b>  | <b>Rhyme</b>   |
| <b>Hop</b>    | <b>Top</b>     |
| <b>Prance</b> | <b>Pants</b>   |

## Add for ages 5 & 6:

|             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Skip</b> | <b>Dip</b>  |
| <b>Leap</b> | <b>Deep</b> |

Guide the children through the activity:

Gather the children in a line across one side of a large room or playground. Read the above list, and let the children hear the rhyming pairs.

In random order, call out one of the rhyming words. Ask the children to name the rhyming action word. Then prompt them to do the action across the floor. Repeat as long as the children are engaged in the activity.

Finish with a free dance to music (if available), and ask the children to do as many of the action words as they can while they are dancing.

# Read and Dance: Water Is Water Dance Story



Activity by Connie Bergstein Dow

## Prepare:

Use an open space without obstacles, if available.

Read *Water Is Water*, by Miranda Paul, Roaring Book Press, 2015. This book is about all of the various forms or water: liquid, steam, ice, etc.

Play some quiet instrumental music for the background of the activity. Use the text of the book, along with the following movement prompts as you retell the story and add lots of ideas for children to explore.

## Guide the children through the dance story:

*Water is water . . . Can you imagine you are water? Flowing, slowly, then faster. Think of all of the different places you have seen water, and move like the water as it travels slowly in a river, or quickly over a waterfall, or in waves like the ocean.*

*Steam is steam unless . . . It cools high in the air. Can you imagine you are a cloud? Can you change slowly from one shape to another, just like a cloud on a lazy summer day? Move silently across the sky as you change shapes.*

*Clouds are clouds unless . . . they form low . . . imagine you are misty fog. Twist, curl, uncurl, float high and feel light, and low as you feel heavy.*

*Fog is fog unless . . . it begins to fall. What is it? Rain! Fall fast and slow, heavily and lightly. Blow back and forth in the strong wind. Now put on your raincoat and boots. Run as the fat raindrops fall on you. Now let's splash in a puddle!*

*Rain is rain unless . . . the puddles freeze! Let's imagine the floor of the room is covered in a sheet of ice. Put on your skates! Skate forward, backward, make patterns like circles and figure 8's with your feet. Can you balance with one leg behind you? Can you turn? Faster? Let's play ice hockey!*

*Ice is ice unless . . . it is snowflakes! Imagine you are a snowflake. What shape snowflake are you? Let the cold wind carry you, as you glide, turn, swirl, and blow. Gently fall to the ground. Make footprints in the snow. Now let's make snow people! Pack the snow and roll, first a big section for the base, then make smaller sections, and put one on top of another. What will we use for the face? Let's go sled riding. Now let's throw snowballs!*

*Snow is snow unless . . . spring comes back! Let's imagine we are a creek. We begin as melted snow. Then we come tumbling down the mountainside, over rocks and waterfalls, and rushing through the valley. Now we will play in the mud. Imagine you are barefoot. Squish, slip, slide!*

**Finish:** *Like the children in the story, go for a swim in all of that lovely, soft water on a late summer day. Float on your back and look at the clouds as they drift across the sky.*