

# For the Classroom, Inside and Out

## Nursery Rhyme Bean Bag Fun

— Movements composed by Laurie Clark

These exercises help with spatial orientation, practicing of horizontal and vertical midline crossing, experiencing planes of space, auditory processing, directionality, body geography, balance, movement, tactile sensing, word concepts, impulse control, motor planning, rhythm, and speech with the wisdom and joy of traditional nursery rhymes. It is fun to begin these games by whispering each child's name while tossing him a bean bag.

### PAT-A-CAKE, PAT-A-CAKE

Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake . . . . . *right hand to left hand to right hand (same rhythm for next three lines)*

Baker's man

Bake me a cake

as fast as you can

Pat it . . . . . *pat bean bag*

roll it. . . . . *roll bean bag with both hands*

mark it with a b . . . . . *"draw" with pointer finger on bean bag*

throw it in the oven . . . . . *small toss in the air and catch the bean bag*

for baby and me. . . . . *It is fun to substitute each child's name for the word "baby."*

### HEY DIDDLE DIDDLE

Hey diddle diddle. . . . . *right hand to left and then left to right*

The cat and the fiddle . . . . . *right hand to left and then left to right*

The cow jumped over the moon . . . . . *palms up near knees—toss bean bag from right hand to left hand over legs*

The little dog laughed to see such a sport

And the dish ran away with the spoon. . . . . *right hand picks bean bag up and "runs" with it and hides it behind the back*

### HICKERY DICKERY DOCK

Hickery dickery dock . . . . . *bean bag goes from right hand to left hand to right hand*

The mouse ran up the clock . . . . . *right hand "walks" bean bag up left arm—bean bag is placed on head*

The clock struck one . . . . . *hold one finger up with bean bag still on head*

Down he run. . . . . *lean head forward, let bean bag drop into both hands*

Hickery dickery dock . . . . . *right hand to left hand to right*

Tick, tock! . . . . . *two light tosses and catch*

### LITTLE NANNY ETTICOAT

*This rhyme is fun to do with a red bean bag.*

Little Nanny Etticoat . . . . . *hold bean bag up in both hands*

In a white petticoat . . . . . *hold the sides of bean bag between pointer finger and thumb with each hand*

And a red nose . . . . . *lean head back and balance bean bag on the nose*

The longer she stands. . . . . *hold bean bag up high in palm of right hand*

The shorter she grows . . . . . *lower bean bag slowly down*

## JACK AND JILL

*Begin sitting with legs out front and bean bag in each hand, moving alternately up the legs to shoulders to the rhythm of the verse.*

- Jack and Jill went up the hill** . . . . . *legs straight out in front—bean bag slowly “climbs” from toes to shoulders*
- To fetch a pail of water**
- Jack fell down and broke his crown.** . . . . . *lift right shoulder and lean forward a little so bean bag falls off*
- And Jill came tumbling after.** . . . . . *lift left shoulder and lean forward so bean bag falls off*
- Up got Jack and off did trot as fast as he could caper** . . . . . *pick up bean bag with right hand, “walking” it up left arm and balance it on head*
- To old dame Dob, who patched his nob.** . . . . . *stand up trying to keep bean bag balanced on head without letting it fall*
- With vinegar and brown paper.** . . . . . *while standing, lean head forward, letting bean bag fall into both hands*

## UP THE TALL WHITE CANDLESTICK

*Start in the standing position, then bend down while holding bean bag on right foot.*

- Up the tall white candlestick crept little Mousie Brown** . . . . . *move bean bag up body starting at toes*
- Way up to the very top** . . . . . *bean bag reaches top of head*
- But he could not get down** . . . . . *carefully move head in “no” gesture while balancing bean bag on head*
- So he called to his Grandma**
- Grandma! Grandma! Grandma!** . . . . . *with hands around mouth turn to right/left/behind calling “Grandma”*
- So he curled himself into a ball** . . . . . *hands folded round each other*
- And rolled and rolled and rolled himself down** . . . . . *fisted hands roll round each other as body moves to crouching position while still balancing bean bag on head—on word “down” drop bean bag from head into hands that are open together on the floor*

When the bean bag games are finished, a big basket can be placed in the center of the circle for each child to toss the bean bag into as her name is whispered. This helps auditory processing development. Another fun way to collect the bean bags is to have the children stand and put the bean bag on their heads. The teacher comes behind and touches the upper back of each child with the basket as the child leans the head backwards and tries to make the bean bag land in the basket. This encourages the sense of touch and vestibular sensing. Another way to get the bean bags to the basket is to pick them up with the toes and put them in. This helps ground the children by bringing consciousness down to their feet. ♦

**Laurie Clark** is the co-author with Nancy Blanning of the two-volume series, *Movement Journeys and Circle Adventures*, the second of which was published by WECAN in 2016. She has been teaching Waldorf Preschool Kindergarten for 27 years. She mentors Waldorf teachers around the country and teaches in various training courses for teachers.