exposure, and prematurely awakening the child’s intellect also rob the time and forces needed to create the essential healthy foundation that the rest of the brain—mid-brain and cortex—require to unfold their special gifts.

This book is completely compatible with the wisdom that Waldorf early childhood educators hold as our own foundation and that we so earnestly want the world to understand. Baby Bare is a resource and ally in its commitment to our children’s healthy future. Primarily written as a guide and support for new parents, the book is very readable and accessible in concepts and language. It gives practical suggestions and examples—illustrated through gorgeous photos of amazing babies of many races and skin tones—and it encourages parents to be calm, sensible, and loving; and to follow their baby’s lead, resisting the societal mania to push and rush ahead.

Baby Bare is well researched and provides a clear vocabulary for us to understand and describe this picture of “movement building the brain” with parents. It is ideal for sharing in parent-child classes. It is also an important read for Waldorf early childhood teachers who work with preschool and kindergarten-age children. More and more children are coming to our classes with incomplete development, sensory issues, movement awkwardness, poor coordination, and social challenges. The foundation for each one of these domains lies in the movement achievements and brain development of the first eighteen months. Reading Baby Bare and coming to understand what could have happened and didn’t will give us insight into the children in our care and how we might back-track with them to strengthen the foundation that did not get finished.

Thank you to Stephanie Johnson for this resource. Writing it was a noble deed on behalf of young children. For further information about this book, go to www.babybare.net.

Let’s Dance and Sing!
by Freya Jaffke, translated by Nina Kuettel
WECAN (2017)
Reviewed by Nancy Blanning

It is a joy and privilege to celebrate the publication of master early childhood teacher Freya Jaffke’s Let’s Dance and Sing! (Tanz und singt!) in English by WECAN. Some of these songs and games came to North America years prior to the new translation with teachers, such as Ronna McEldowny, who apprenticed with Frau Jaffke in Germany. After Freya Jaffke gave a weeklong workshop in Spring Valley, New York, in 1987, Susan Howard’s late-night translation wizardry produced the first photocopied version of “Rhythmic Games for Harvest Time,” part of which you will find printed elsewhere in this issue of Gateways. The rhythms, the playfulness, and the engaging language were hallmarks of these first renderings. And now the complete collection of these delightful games and songs is available as a fully-illustrated paperback book.

This new volume contains an assortment of rhythmic games for the seasons: harvest, lantern time, winter festivals, spring awakening, and summer. Games and dances for “anytime” with gnomes and giants as well as hardworking tradespeople also populate these pages. There is inviting material to enrich daily circle times.

In addition, this book is graced with Freya Jaffke’s practical suggestions on how to structure and conduct the circle time itself. She is known
for her common-sense insight into the essentials of the Waldorf early childhood classroom and wise perception of the nature of young children. There are many gems included in this section, which may seem self-evident upon first reading; a bit of consideration to her statements reveals the depths of her practical wisdom, gleaned from decades of working with young children. For example, in discussing the teacher’s gestures during circle, she observes: “Every movement we use in a presentation should be performed with inner participation. The children need to sense that we are engaged with our whole being. It is also beneficial if the movement originates from exact observation of a human task or work activity, the characteristic movement of an animal, or some process in nature, which will make it seem compelling and real.”

She also emphasizes the importance of the teacher’s speech: “It is possible to express the character of something by placing special emphasis on the consonants, for example with words like rumble, scurry, rustle, or hop. If you are unsure of the text or have not thought it out in advance, the children will have a tendency to start misbehaving. Total familiarity with the verses and poems frees you from depending on a written text and instead allows you to concentrate on the children. It will immediately cause the children to feel protected by you and they will joyfully join in with the activity.”

Regarding the children’s speech, she advises: “We always allow the children to live in the game without requiring them to speak or sing along. They are not consciously aware of whether they are singing or speaking along with us, provided we do not call their attention to it.”

Let’s Dance and Sing! and its companion WECAN volume, Play with Us! now create a full body of classroom material, only tantalizing hints of which we have had in the past. Both volumes are now available through WECAN Books.

**Movement Journeys and Circle Adventures, Volume 2**
by Nancy Blanning and Laurie Clark
Reviewed by Ruth Ker

Once again Nancy Blanning and Laurie Clark have collaborated to produce a rich collection of early childhood treasures. This book, *Movement Journeys and Circle Adventures, Volume 2* (and the first volume as well, in my opinion), needs to be on every early childhood educator’s shelf. Both volumes are full of timeless resources, innovative games, circles and important movement journeys for our work.

Nancy and Laurie, who are both still working with the children of our time, show an intimate understanding of the value of meeting the children wherever they are in their development. Working with the wealth of material in these books can help the educator, in a fun-loving way, to bless the children with rich experiences that foster development through movement; meaningful, purposeful content; and fanciful imaginations.

Many of us have worked with Volume 1 for a number of years, and Volume 2 follows the same path of expertise. Whether it is a seasonal game, a new poem or circle that “will be perfect” for a particular child or group, or fresh ideas for circle equipment, Volume 2 will be sure to improve your practice.

I’m hoping that you will take the time to peruse this resource as soon as you get a chance. The children in your care will be fortunate to partake in the result of your efforts.