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**Orientation and Mobility: Preschool Style**

By Cecelia Quintana, COMS

Orientation and Mobility is broadly defined as the ability to move safely and efficiently through any environment. At the adult level, this translates into the ability to independently cross streets, to use public transit systems, to go to work, to go shopping, etc. At the preschool level, students need to develop the concepts and skills which make the above mentioned goals attainable later in life.

Several areas of skill development should be included in a preschool O&M program. All individuals should incorporate these skills into the child's daily routine. This allows everyone to be actively involved in the child's growth and development. Parents, caregivers, teachers, related service personnel, as well as Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists will be working on the same, common goal. The ultimate goal of the program is to develop a child into a skilled, age-appropriate traveler who understands basic concepts and can begin to apply learned skills to perform more complex tasks.

Below is a list of skill areas considered to be best practice. These areas should be incorporated into an early childhood O&M program.

* Improve use of visual skills
* Improve use of auditory skills
* Improve use of tactile skills
* Begin learning spatial concepts
* Begin learning environmental concepts
* Improve use of gross motor skills
* Improve use of fine motor skills
* Beginning use of clues and landmarks
* Sighted guide techniques
* Beginning cane techniques
* Limited travel in residential areas

Only a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist should teach the last four items on the above list. Anyone who works with a child with visual impairment is encouraged to incorporate the rest of the skill areas into the child's routine. The following pages are a few games that encourage development of visual, auditory or tactile skills and/or introduce spatial, body, or environmental concepts. Please feel free to use these games as they are, or as a springboard for inventing games of your own. More games will be added as they are invented.

**We're On The Move!   
O&M Games for the Very Young Child**

Presented by

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**Twins**

**Skill(s) Targeted:** Visual scanning

**What you will need:**

* Large squares of brightly colored material (approx. 10 X 10)
* Index cards

**To set up:** Determine what positional concepts will be targeted. In the following example we will use, "On" versus "Under". On the index cards write "Find my twin \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_". In the blank write things like: "on the desk," "under the chair," "on the shelf", etc. In the door of the room place one piece of material. In the room place the material wherever specified on the card.

**How to play the game:** In the door of the room, the student will find the material, and the teacher will read the card to them. They will then visually search the room for the matching material and retrieve it.

**Modifications:** For more advanced students, place 2 pieces of the matching material in the room, only one of which is in the proper place. For example, place a piece of material both on **and** under the chair and they are supposed to determine which one they should take, and which one they should leave.

* Find my twin   
  Under a chair
* Find my twin   
  On a chair
* Find my twin   
  On a desk
* Find my twin   
  Under a desk
* Find my twin   
  On a shelf
* Find my twin   
  Under a window

**All of Me**

**Concept(s) Targeted**: Body Awareness, concept development of orientation words

**Ideas:**

**Body part identification**

* Even while your child is very young, you can begin to help him/her become more aware of his/her own body. Children develop this skill in a specific order: his/her nose, another person's nose, a doll or stuffed animal's nose.
* When naming body parts, put your child's name in front of the word. Sherri's nose.
* Touch various parts of your child's body with different textured fabrics or a feather and name them as you do. Let your child do the same to you.
* Play finger and toe games like "This Little Piggy", "Do Your Ears Hang Low" "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes".
* Use a mirror to see your hair, your nose, your eyes, etc.
* **Adaptations:**
  + For older child: place a sticker on a body part and let child name it as she pulls the sticker off.
  + Use hand puppets to find body parts.
  + As child master's body parts on a doll, you can increase the complexity of the task while still reinforcing the identification of body parts. You can ask your child to feed the baby and then wash her face. You can play silly games where you try to feed the baby by putting the bottle in her ear and letting your child correct you.

**Positional words**

* Just as a child learns her own body parts first, a child first learns about positions (up, under, etc.) in relationship to her own body. It is not possible to give a child too much practice in this area.
* Very young child: Use positional words frequently. "Let's put your sleeper **on.**" "Let's take it **off**."
  + **Early games:**
    - peek-a-boo
    - Where's the \_\_\_\_\_? Name a toy in sight and let child reach for it. "Oh, it's beside your leg." or "It's on your shoe."
    - Where is Thumbkin?"
    - In/Out games: Give child a small container with several objects in it that can be removed. Child will move from dumping to removing one by one. Use out/in often so child will understand the concept.
    - Nesting toys; pots and pans; plastic storage containers all help a child begin to understand positional words relative to something other than his/her own body.
    - As child grows, toys can be hidden under, over, behind, etc. and a game of hide and seek established. Early successes will probably require that the child's body be the location for hiding under, etc. As the task becomes easy for the child, the toy can then be hidden under an object very close to the child and then, with success, further away.
* **The toddler:** Once a child begins to crawl and walk, they enjoy putting their own bodies in relationship to other objects. They like to climb on, in, through, around, behind, etc. It is important to continue commenting on the positional relationships that occur between the child and his/her environment. "You're climbing in the box." "The box is around you." "I can't see you. You must be behind the box."
  + **Games:**
    - Hide and Seek
    - "Where's the Thimble" (revisited)
    - Looking for objects that have been hidden in the beans, inside play dough, picking chocolate chips or small pieces of candy out of cookie dough.
    - Peek-a-boo with a sheet/blanket that covers the whole body
* Once a child is truly a confident walker, they are ready to start following simple instructions that require them to move throughout familiar areas.
* A simple way to get practice in for a child with some useable vision, is to place preferred toys within sight but just out of reach. This helps strengthen distance vision as well as gives a child an opportunity to begin to use positional words him/herself.
  + **Games:**
    - You can send your child to get a diaper (in a familiar location) or send him/her for shoes that are "under Daddy's chair". This builds independence and continues to provide relevant experience for practicing positional concepts.
    - Obstacle courses
    - Swing set
    - Trampoline
    - Follow the String
    - Use hand puppets to tell stories filled with positional concepts. (ex: The puppet can hide behind the box and jump out to startle everyone.)
    - Ring around the Rosie
    - Simon Says
    - Big Ball Fun

**from Linda Lyle ©**

**Balloon Bells**

**Skill(s) Targeted:** Auditory Localization

**What you will need:**

* 10 - 12 medium-sized balloons
* 5 - 6 small jingle bells
* 10 - 12 pipe cleaners or long twist ties
* String

**To set up:** In order to play this game, your ceiling must have some aspect that will allow you to hang the balloons from it. If you have the standard dropped ceiling with the metal runners and the foam-like tiles, the set-up will be easy. Take the pipe cleaners or twist ties and insert them between a tile and the runner, leaving a small loop that a string can fit through. I like to space them about 3-5 feet apart, and 2 balloons to a small room. Insert a small jingle bell in half of the balloons, and inflate all the balloons. Tie a long piece of string to all balloons, run the string through the ceiling loops and pull the string so that the balloon is hanging just below the ceiling. Make sure that one balloon of each pair has a bell, and the other does not have a bell. If there will be other people using the rooms before or between sessions, tape the strings up high on the nearest wall.

**How to play the game:**The object of this game is to have the student pull both strings at the same time and be able to tell you which balloon has the bell in it.

**Modifications:**If it is too difficult for the student to tell which one has the bell, then have them pull the strings one at a time.

**from Cecelia Quintana ©**

**Find the Timer**

**Skill(s) Targeted:** Auditory Localization

**What you will need:**

* One or two kitchen timers that make a ticking sound
* A number of small toys (Optional)

**To set up:** Place a number of small toys in various places around your building.

**How to play the game:** The object of this game is to have the student find the timer, and thus the accompanying toy. This works best if you have 2 timers, and several different rooms in which to work. Turn on the timer and place it on or next to the small toy. The student must listen for the ticking sound to find the timer and the toy. If you have 2 timers, you may hide the second timer while the child is distracted by looking for the first timer.

**Modifications:**If your building is too noisy for a timer to be heard, you may wish to try a metronome, a very small radio or some other sound source. You may also wish to try something such as a talking teddy, so that they have to call out to the teddy and it will echo back the child's voice (which it just recorded). Another option may be one of those gadgets that chirps or beeps when you clap your hands.

**from Cecelia Quintana ©**

**Alligator Bridge**

**Concept(s) Targeted:** Auditory localization

**What you will need:**

* Aluminum foil (18-inch-wide best) or other sound-making surface
* Blindfold
* Sound source (such as a rattle, bells, whistle, etc.)

**To set up:** Place several pieces of the aluminum foil on the ground to make a path, which includes several changes of direction.

**How to play the game:** One child is chosen to be blindfolded. To set the scene, tell the child who is wearing the blindfold that s/he is returning home after dark, and their only flashlight just broke. Now s/he needs to follow the bridge that goes through the bog (the path of aluminum foil is the bridge) without being able to see it. Although many alligators live in the bog, they will only bother someone if they put one or more feet completely off the bridge. It is completely dark outside, and their only clue for making their way across the bridge is a sound source that leads them in the right direction. The person with the sound source should position himself about 3-4 feet ahead of the child with the blindfold and in such a position that walking directly toward that person will keep the child on the bridge. The teacher and/or the students then sing or chant the following words, which allows the sound-maker enough time to get to the correct position.

"The water's cold, so don't fall in, 'cause that is where the alligators swim."

After one recitation of the words, the child with the sound source makes a sound and the child with the blindfold walks forward directly toward the sound until he can touch it. The process is repeated until the child reaches the end of the "bridge".

**Adaptations:**

More challenging - You may wish to use 2 sound sources, one which always indicates the proper direction, and one which is always a "decoy", (perhaps it's an alligator who's hungry and trying to drum up some dinner!)

**Comments/Suggestions:**

This game works better with bare feet, so students can feel the foil as well as hear it.

To involve more students, plant "alligators" at various positions on both sides of the bridge to nip at (tickle) offending toes that may hang over the edge of the bridge.

**from Cecelia Quintana ©**

**Squeaky Toy Tag**

**Skill(s) Targeted:** Auditory Localization

**What you will need:**

* Large, adult-sized sock for each player
* Squeaky toy for each player
* Blindfold for each player

**To set up:** Find a large, open area with no furniture, and a level ground surface. If available, one or more large gym mats could be used for a playing surface.

**How to play the game:** Two students are blindfolded. Prior to putting on the blindfold the students each put on one of the large socks with a squeaky toy inside positioned directly underneath the foot, so that each time he takes a step, the toy makes a squeak. (You may wish to let your students practice walking around like this before beginning the game.) You will need to have a referee who will help set up the game, signal the start of the game, and watch out for safety during the play of the game. To begin this game the referee will **silently** position the players somewhere around the edge of the playing area, facing inward. The players may choose to move their squeaky toy for a moment, or the players may choose to crawl to the new location. The referee will say "Start, and the game then progresses as would a normal game of Tag, with one person who is "It" trying to tag the other person. A "Stop" command must be issued when either of the players comes close the edge of the play area. At the signal, the players will freeze, and the referee will reposition the players at the edge of the playing area once again.

Depending on the ability level of the players, you may wish to have a signal that has the players switch roles; so that the player who was "It" is no longer chasing, but being chased.

**from Cecelia Quintana ©**

**The Penny/Nickel Can**

**Skill(s) Targeted:** Auditory Discrimination/Localization

**What you will need:**

* A can and lid with a slit in the top
* A street with light to moderate traffic from 2 directions.
* A handful of pennies, and nickels
* A folding chair for each player
* 2 small containers such as margarine tubs

**To set up:** Set up your chairs side-by-side on a sidewalk next to a street with light to moderate traffic. One player gets a small container with pennies and the other gets a small container with nickels.

**How to play the game:**The players listen (and watch, if appropriate) for traffic coming from a specific direction. For example, the player on the right will listen for cars coming from the right, and the player on the left will listen for cars coming from the left. (You may wish to start using the words "northbound traffic," "eastbound traffic", etc. so that your students begin to hear these directional terms.) Each time a car comes by, a coin is dropped into the can. For example, if the student on the right has the nickels and is listening for cars coming from the right, then he will drop a nickel in the can each time a car from that direction passes by. And, of course, the student on the left will do the same with a penny for each car that comes from the left. After a specified amount of time has passed, the players return inside and can then enjoy separating the coins into their respective groups, and then determine whether there were more cars from the left, or from the right (or northbound vs. southbound).

**Modifications:** To make this game a little more complex, you can set up at an intersection and target different concepts, such as: nickels on one street, pennies on the other; nickels for cars that stop, pennies for those that do not stop; nickels for cars that turn the corner, pennies for cars that go straight, etc. This game may also be done under blindfold, if the students are so inclined.

**from Cecelia Quintana ©**

**Let's Get Movin' I**

**Concept(s) Targeted**: Tactile Stimulation

**What you will need**:

* large blanket or quilt on which you have sewn a variety of textures

**How to play the game**: Remove baby's shoes and socks. Place baby on blanket so that arms and legs are able to come into contact with a variety of textures as baby moves.

1. Let baby explore on her own.
2. Occasionally comment, describing the texture she is exploring.
3. Follow her lead.

**Adaptations**:

1. Let baby explore while dressed only in a diaper.
2. Use blanket when working with baby on rolling.
3. Rub baby's body with different parts of the quilt, describing the activity with concept and comparison words (soft, rough, light).
4. On warm days, move blanket out under the trees so baby can enjoy outdoor play on her blanket.

**Comments/Suggestions**: Blanket can be made in squares or strips that are sewn together. As baby grows, additional pieces can be sewn on to increase the blanket's size.

If baby shows a strong preference/dislike for certain textures, this can be reflected in the amount of texture on the blanket or in its pattern. For instance, a narrow piece of burlap can be sewn between two larger, more favored textures. In order to reach the preferred textures, baby must encounter the less preferred. The drive to reach a favored texture can be used to encourage touching a less favored one.

**from Linda Lyle ©**

**Let's Get Movin' II**

**Concept(s) Targeted**: Tactile stimulation; independent moving and exploration

**What you will need**:

* A box, slightly larger in length than your child  
  (Parents report that plastic boxes designed to hold Christmas decorations work very well, are inexpensive, and last longer than cardboard.)

**To set up**: Fill the box about half full of uncooked pinto beans

**How to play the game**: Introduce beans to child slowly (ex: place her feet in them, or let her explore with her hands.) When she is comfortable, place the child on her back in the beans. Let her explore the way her body feels and the sounds that are made when she moves in this bean pool.

Like water, a child should never be left alone when playing in a bean pool.

**Adaptations:**

1. As the baby grows, small toys can be hidden in the beans; a child can learn to measure, pour, place things in and take out of containers while seated in the bean pool.
2. Substitute rice, bird seed, plastic balls, leaves for the beans.

**from Linda Lyle ©**

**Let's Get Movin' III**

**Concept(s) Targeted**: Exploration, tactile stimulation

**What you will need**:

* A heavy piece of cloth (ribbon will do) 2-3 yards long and 1 inch wide (exact dimensions are not necessary;
* Sew a variety of textures onto this strip of cloth (feathers, velvet, pom-poms, ric-rac, bells, etc.) Sew them on well!
* Connect the textures so that there is a continuous flow of textured items along the strip.

**To set up**: Place your baby in a position where he/she is well supported and is able to freely use her arms (a highchair with a tray works well).

**How to play the game**: Stretch the strip across the tray so that your baby can touch the strip in front of her. With her hands on the strip, gently pull so that the strip moves slowly under her hands. Comment occasionally on the textures that get a response from her. Move the strip over, under, around her arms and hands.

**Adaptations**: Vary the movement (sometimes pull, then stop and wait; see what she does with the fabric. Does she look for a favorite part? Does she reach for something on it that she wants? Do her fingers scratch, poke, etc.?)

Other long, narrow items can be used in the same way (ex: hose from the vacuum cleaner, belt, a piece of chain)

For children with some useable vision, consider the things they are able to see and incorporate them into the strip. Consider high contrasting colors (blue/yellow; black/white; red/yellow). For instance, sew red pom-poms onto a strip of bright yellow felt.

**from Linda Lyle ©**

**Other Ways to Get Movin'**

**Concept(s) Targeted**: Tactile discrimination, exploration

**Ideas:**

* Mobiles: What to use/Where to hang them
  + Very young infants lay with their heads turned to the side and one arm out. At this age, a mobile can be hung to the side and very low so that the child can use her vision to see the movement of the mobile. The very young child with some vision may notice the high contrast of black/white or black/white/red mobiles.
  + Over the course of 2-4 months, the mobile can be moved so that it is more directly over the baby's head. Again, placing it very low in the crib encourages vision use and will encourage early swiping at the mobile (early arm/hand use and mid-line play).
  + **Adaptations:**
    - Consider using reflective balls or beads (from a Christmas tree); high contrasting colors.
    - If you notice your baby has a preference for a certain color, use that color (along with others) as a way to attract her visual attention.
    - Look for a mobile that can be wound up to make music. The music can attract her attention as well. If the music component is above the mobile, it can usually be separated from the mobile when she outgrows the toy and a different kind of mobile can be used.
    - Wind chimes make good mobiles.
    - Real objects that your child will need to learn about make excellent mobile toys (ex: measuring spoons, an infant spoon and cup, a pacifier, a favorite rattle).
    - If your child notices light, you can wind a string of Christmas tree lights around the mobile to attract her attention.
* Jungle gym toys
  + Many of these are commercially available and are not expensive. Before purchasing one, it is helpful to consider whether you will be able to adapt the toy in order to get the toys close enough to your child for successful play.
  + If not, it may be easier to make a frame. To make a jungle gym, you can use a piece of PVC pipe, to make a frame. Instructions can be found on page
  + Some parents have reported success using a heavy cardboard box. They have hung toys from the ceiling of the box and the baby lays on her back in the box for play.
  + Lilli Nielsen has designed a box called a Little Room that provides this type of play space as well.
  + Toys can be hung using pieces of elastic. As your baby becomes more skilled at reaching, she can hold a toy and the elastic permits her to pull the toy toward her for more exploration. When she lets go, it returns to its place and she can find it again (early object permanence).
  + **Adaptations:**
    - It is a good idea to vary your child's position when playing with these toys. In addition to her back, she can lie on her side, sit in her car seat or another seating system, and even play with them while on her stomach.
* Keeping things close!
  + Pin interesting textures such as pieces of ribbon, bells to your child's shirt in the center front. Her little hands can begin exploring at mid-line as she plays with these toys.
  + Bright colored socks with a bell sown on them can be used to encourage looking at feet as well as pulling legs up to reach with hands.
  + Hang a crib-safe mirror in your baby's crib and place her close enough to it that she can see herself.
* Learning to like movement
  + Not all babies enjoy movement in the beginning. For some, the experience stresses their sensory system. For many, because of their low vision or blindness, they do not recognize the signs that they are about to be moved and are caught off-guard. This makes the experience frightening for them. For the baby who cries each time she is moved, the following may be helpful:
    - Give her information before any movement happens. Touch her body with your hands in the places where you touch her to pick her up. (Most babies appreciate a firm touch.) Tell her what you are going to do. Give her a few seconds to process the information. You will be surprised how quickly she learns that this touch means "up" and responds to it by shifting her body to say she is ready for the move.
    - Babies generally feel safer when moving in their parents' arms. Gentle rocking and swaying can be used in the early days to help her adjust to the feel of her body moving in space.
  + Other movement sources:
    - Baby swing
    - Vibrating baby seat
    - Water bed ***STYLE="text-decoration: underline">(Never leave a child unattended on a waterbed)***.
    - Baby hammock
    - Swinging in a blanket held by two adults (6 months or older)
    - A ride in the family car

**from Linda Lyle ©**

**Tactile Signs**

**Skill(s) Targeted:**

* Environmental awareness, signs
* Tactile Skills,
* Fine Motor Skills

**What you will need:**

* 4-5 rooms where a small activity can be set up
* 4-5 small containers
* 4-5 activities which have several parts
* 4-5 materials of different texture
* Blindfold for each player
* Rubber cement or other removable adhesive

**To set up:**Cut each of your pieces of material into 2 pieces. Affix one piece of material to the right side of the doorjamb, where a sign would be placed, or at about shoulder level for the little guys. (I have found that rubber cement is quick, easy to use, effective, and is easily removed from most surfaces including painted walls, paneling, and metal.) Place one part of an activity in that room. Affix the matching piece of material to the lid of one container. In that container, place the matching parts of the activity in that room.

For example:

* In the room place a shape sorter--in the container, place the shape pieces.
* In the room, there is a metal file cabinet--in the container, magnetic letters/numbers.

**How to play the game:** The student travels to the door with whatever mode of travel is appropriate for him, then independently locates the piece of material. He then scans the lids of the containers to find the matching material. He is then taken or directed to the area where the activity is set up, and completes the task.

**from Cecelia Quintana ©**

**Follow the String**

**Concept(s) Targeted**: Depth perception, positional concepts

**What you will need**:

* A long piece of string (5-10 yards);
* high contrast with the flooring if needed;
* a toy with wheels that can be pushed along the string; barriers (blocks, pillows, etc.)

**To set up**: Spread the string across the floor; place several barriers across the string.

**How to play the game**: Explain that the string is a road and we are going to drive our cars on the road. Follow the path of the string, going over or around the barriers. Use positional words related to the action taken around the barrier.

**Adaptations**:

* To increase difficulty:
  + Spread the string out in a way so that the child has to travel under, over, behind furniture in order to push the car along the string.
  + Together, create a path with building blocks and drive cars along the blocks. Barriers can be made with blocks as well.
  + Include a step or other changes in surface area when spreading string.
  + Use a raised surface like a balance beam.
  + Make a line in sand with your fingers and try to follow it.
  + Use the string to make wriggly lines.
* For the child with depth perception problems:
  + Provide additional time to explore all changes in texture, surface area, etc.
  + Use solid barriers that cannot be moved (ex: the edge of a step, a couch leg) so that child can tactually experience and confirm the differences she is seeing.
  + Tape high contrast paper to the floor and let the child push a shopping cart along it. Let him/her crawl, pushing a ball along the paper.

**from Linda Lyle ©**

**More Fun with String**

**Concept(s) Targeted**: Object permanence, follow directions, memory

**What you will need**:

* A favorite toy or small treat,
* a long piece of string

**To set up**:

* Tie one end of the string to a favorite toy or small treat
* Hide the toy out of sight
* Weave the string around the furniture in a way that the child can follow it.

**How to play the game**: Give child the end of the string and have them follow it to find a surprise at the other end.

**Adaptations**:

* If child has language capacity, have them provide a running commentary of their actions, as if he/she were a news announcer on television. "Now I am going around the chair; I am climbing over the pillow, etc."
* Have the child move in the direction the string is taking him/her and have them predict where they are going. "I think I am going to have to go to the chair next."

**from Linda Lyle ©**

**Wall Pockets**

**Skill(s):** Positional concepts

**What you will need:**

* Several pieces of scrap paper
* Rubber cement
* Several pictures and matching-sized blank paper, **or**
* Several strips of Braille paper, some with Braille, some without Braille
* Post-it notes

**To set up:** Use the rubber cement to affix sets of 2 pieces of scrap paper to the wall, one above the other. Only use the cement on 3 sides, leaving the top side open, so that you have a pocket. (You may wish to test your walls to see of the rubber cement will come off. In most cases, I believe it will.) In each pocket you will place a piece of paper with the top sticking out. For each set, one pocket will have a picture or Braille, and the other will have a blank piece of paper. Next to each set, leave yourself a Post-it note that says which pocket has the picture or Braille in it, either the top or the bottom.

**How to play the game:** The object of this game is for the student to find the picture on the first try, after the teacher tells them which pocket contains the picture or Braille, either the "top" pocket, or the "bottom" pocket. They get to take home the pictures or a small toy after the lesson.

**Modifications:** You may wish to change the positional concept to "left" and "right", or "high" and "low", or even "north" and "south" (with north being on the top, as it would be on a map).

**from Cecelia Quintana ©**

**Positional Racetrack Builders**

**Skill(s) Targeted:**

* Positional concepts
* Visual scanning

**What you will need:**

* Multiple pieces of a car or train track
* A vehicle which can travel on that track
* Index cards

**To set up:** Determine which positional concepts will be targeted. In the following example we will use, "On" versus "Under". On the index cards write "We are resting \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_". In the blank write things like: "on the desks," "under the chairs," "on the shelves", etc. Also include a number on the cards (a number between 1 and 5 works best). Place a card on the floor of the doorway of each room used for the game. Place the correct number of pieces of the racetrack in the rooms in the places specified by the card.

**How to play the game:** In the door of the room, the student will find the card, and the teacher will read it. The student will then use to clue given to find the pieces of racetrack hidden in the room.

Once all of the pieces have been collected, the student then gets to assemble them and play with the racetrack for a while.

**Modifications:** If the student prefers to build puzzles, the pieces of a puzzle may be hidden in the rooms. Or multiple pieces of a single game may be hidden in different rooms.

**from Cecelia Quintana ©**

**Eastern Star, Western Sun**

**Skill(s):** Cardinal directions, Matching

**What you will need:**

* A number of small toys
* Envelopes
* A large, simple picture of a star
* A large, simple picture of a sun
* Several sets of smaller matching pictures of the star and sun
* 2 small boxes

**To set up:** Affix the picture of the star to one of the boxes and place the box on the eastern end of a large table or on the eastern side of the room. Place the picture of the sun on the other box and place it on the western end of a large table or on the western side of the room. Place a toy and one of the small pictures in each envelope.

**How to play the game:**The object of this game is for the student to identify the picture and place both the picture and the toy in the box with the matching picture. (At the end of the game, you may wish to let the student choose one toy from each box to take home.) The teacher's job is to reinforce the use of the words "Eastern" and "Western". Eventually, the pictures will be replaced with and "E" for East and a "W" for West.

**Modifications:** For the student with no vision, use textures or shapes, rather than the pictures.

**from Cecelia Quintana ©**

**Boat Dock Shuttle**

**Skill(s) Targeted:** Cardinal Directions

**What you will need:**

* A large bowl or small tub with water
* A medium sized plastic lid that will float on water
* A toy phone or real disconnected phone
* A toy bus or car
* A dozen or more small, light-weight toys
* A small sign for each of the cardinal directions - "north", "south", "east", and "west"

**To set up:** Set up your signs in the appropriate places, either around a large table, or in a moderate-sized uncluttered area. With each sign place an equal number of the toys. Fill the bowl or tub with water and place the lid so that it floats on the water. (This is the boat and the loading dock.) Place your phone and the bus or car (this is the shuttle) near the loading dock.

**How to play the game:** The student is the shuttle driver, and the teacher plays the role of the passengers. The teacher "calls" the student on the toy phone and asks to be picked up at one of the shuttle stations (north, south, east, or west). The student then takes his shuttle to the correct location, picks up one of the toys, and takes it to the boat dock, where he "loads the passenger" by placing the toy on the floating lid. This procedure is repeated until all of the passengers have been delivered to and loaded onto the boat.

**Modifications -** If the student is not yet ready for all of the directions, use only 2 or 3 stations. If this is still too difficult, place a different colored piece of cloth at each station. This way the teacher can ask, for example, to be picked up "at the north station with the pink parking lot" or the "west station with the striped parking lot".

**from Cecelia Quintana ©**

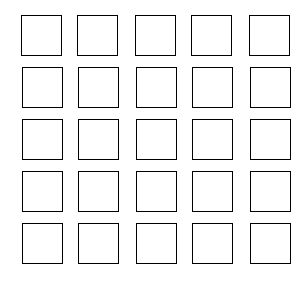
**Directional Squares**

**Skill(s) Targeted:** Cardinal directions

**What you will need:**

* 25 of any one of the following items: carpet squares, or chairs, or towels, or cafeteria trays or any other item that can clearly mark a small area.
* 24 index cards, 3 copies of each of the following phrases:
  + Move 1 space north
  + Move 1 space south
  + Move 1 space east
  + Move 1 space west
  + Move 2 spaces north
  + Move 2 spaces south
  + Move 2 spaces east
  + Move 2 spaces west

**To set up:** Align the carpet squares (or whatever you are using) in a 5 X 5 grid pattern, (see the diagram below) with enough space between the squares to clearly separate them from one another, but close enough so that one can reach out and touch the surrounding squares.



**How to play:**This is a gross motor adaptation of "Directional Checkers" fromSTYLE="text-decoration: underline">Simon Says Is Not the Only Game, page 31,(Leary & Schneden, American Foundation for the Blind, 1982). Each child begins in the exact center of the grid. Whoever has been selected to be the "caller" (the person who will be reading the cards) selects an index card from the top of the deck. The caller reads the card and the child moves the appropriate number of spaces in the correct direction. The first person that gets a card where the correct execution of the directions makes them move off of the grid is the winner.

**Adaptations:**

More challenging - it is possible to separate the cards into 2 piles: the north-south pile and the east-west pile, and then have the caller draw 2 cards. This will result in secondary directions (such as northeast, southwest, etc.), thereby requiring the students to identify 2 directions and move in a diagonal direction.

**from Cecelia Quintana ©**

**Sniff 'n' Turn**

**Skill(s) Targeted:** Olfactory

**What you will need:**

* 2 distinctly different scents
* Change of direction indicators (self-adhesive colored dots do well)
* Route directions (for the teacher)

**To set up:** Set-up and preparation for this game takes much longer than the actual playing time. The teacher must decide on a route and write out the directions as detailed below.

**How to play the game:** This game involves executing a route based upon scents provided. You may choose to use easily available scents such as spices and extracts. The extracts work well if you soak a cotton ball in the extract, and then wrap it in foil; the spices may be left in their original containers, with the label masked. Each scent indicates a change of direction. For example, oregano could mean "execute a left turn", and cinnamon "execute a right turn". (You could choose to use 3 scents. Then one of the scents indicates that the student should continue in the same direction. However, then you may be risking "sniffer burn-out")

The instructor will need to plan a route that includes several changes of direction. At each change of direction, some kind of marker will need to be placed on the floor (we will call this a Station). For particularly long stretches, you may wish to include a station where you continue on straight. Fluorescent Color Coding Labels which may be purchased at most grocery and/or "super" stores, are self-adhesive, easy to remove, and come in a variety of colors so that it will be fairly easy to find a color to contrast almost any floor color. The teacher should have a route card that indicates each change of direction. It may read something like this: "Station 1 - Lobby - right turn - cinnamon" The student will need a the teacher or another partner who will let him know when he has reached a station (if residual vision is not appropriate for the task) and present him with the appropriate scents. At each station, the partner presents the student with whichever scent is needed until the route has been completed.

**Comments:**While playing this game, I have found that after about 10-12 sniffs, the nose gets tired and it becomes more difficult to tell which scent is which. Also, I tried 3 different brands of plastic bags, and each had a residual smell which overrode the smell of the item placed inside.

**from Cecelia Quintana ©**