



ACTION GAMES

By Carol Read

USING ACTION GAMES IN CLASS

Young children need to move frequently so action games are a great way of turning this need into an opportunity for learning. Action games also help young learners recognise and understand language by associating the language with specific actions and mimes.

FOUR GAMES FOR YOU TO TRY

1 Mime and Freeze

Have ready a tambourine or maracas. Say an activity, for example, *You're driving a car!* and show children that they should move around the classroom miming what you say. Repeat the sentence rhythmically with the maracas or tambourine while the children mime. Stop suddenly and demonstrate that children should freeze in position. Walk around and comment positively on their mimes, for example *What a fantastic driver!*

2 Magic Animals

Say the name of an animal, for example, *Rabbit*. Show children how to make rabbit ears with their hands. Then name another animal, for example, *Bird* and show children how to pretend to fly or say *Frog* and make jumping movements.

Alternate the instructions and get children to respond by doing the correct actions. Speed up as they become familiar with the activity.

3 Follow the leader!

Get the children to stand in a line behind you. Move around the classroom doing actions and asking the children to follow and copy you, for example, *Walk like this. Now touch your nose like this!* Look around and comment positively, for example, *Lovely jumping, Ricardo.*

4 Jump the line!

Choose a space to play in and draw a line with chalk or tape down the centre. Say *This side is for food*. Hold up food flashcards to show what you mean. Say *This side is for animals* and hold up animal flashcards. Name familiar animals and food in turn, for example, *Tiger! Banana!* and so on. Children listen and jump to the correct side of the line. Go faster as children get used to the game!



TOP TIP: Use large, coloured hoops for categorising activities.

For example, children jump inside red hoops when you name a food and blue ones when you name an animal.