

# Copy Cat Moves (Levels A-B)

PLAY

To build early imitation skills, joint attention, and social engagement through a playful movement routine where students copy simple actions made by the teacher or peers.



## Learning Intentions

### Imitation:

Students will explore copying simple movements with support.

### Turn-Taking:

Students will practise taking part in a shared routine where they follow or lead with help.

### Social Connection:

Students will experience joy, shared focus, and awareness of others through playful movement.



## Success Criteria

Students attempt to copy one or more simple movements (clap, wave, tap, stretch).

Students participate in at least one turn as a follower or supported leader.

Students show enjoyment, smiling, vocalising, looking toward peers, or moving their body.



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**Duration:** 5 minutes

## Objective

To build early imitation skills, joint attention, and social engagement through a playful movement routine where students copy simple actions made by the teacher or peers.

## What You Need

Movement Picture Cards (found in PDF resource)

AAC devices with action vocabulary ("clap," "wave," "go," "stop," "more," "happy")

## Setup

1. Print out the Movement Picture cards
2. Students sit or stand in a circle or semicircle.
3. Teacher models simple moves slowly using exaggerated gestures: (hold up the relevant movement picture card at the same time)
  - clap hands
  - wave
  - tap knees
  - stretch arms up
4. Provide hand-over-hand or side-by-side modelling for students who need additional support.
5. Ensure AAC devices are open to action pages.

## Gameplay

### 1. Model the Game

Teacher says: "Copy me!"

Teacher chooses a movement picture card and performs the simple action such as clapping or waving their hand.

Students copy in their own way, gesture, partial movement, eye gaze toward the action, or using AAC.

### 2. Copy Together

Perform 2 - 3 teacher-led moves:

- clap or wave
- stretch arms up high
- tap knees
- wiggle fingers or feet

Teacher celebrates: "Great copying!"



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### 3. Take Turns (Supported Leadership)

Invite a student to choose a move. They can do this by choosing a move they feel comfortable with or by randomly drawing a card from the pile of movement picture cards.

They may:

- physically show the move
- point to a picture card or hold up the picture card
- select an action on AAC
- move with adult support

The rest of the group attempts to copy the move together.

### 4. Rotate Leaders

Give students one or two turns each at leading the movements (as regulation allows).

For students needing strong support:

- adult prompts a choice between two actions
- adult models the movement for the student to "lead"

### 5. Add Variety

Include fun and gentle movements:

- wave high
- tap feet lightly or stomp feet loudly
- side stretch
- gentle body spins
- pretend animal moves (wiggle like a fish, flap like a bird)

Focus is on shared joy, not accuracy.

### Debrief / Reflection

Use simple visuals and gestures:

- "Show me your favourite move!"
- "Did you like following or leading?"
- "How does your body feel?" (happy/calm/excited visuals)
- "Do you want to play again?" (yes/no)

Celebrate ANY attempt, smile, noise, eye gaze, or movement.



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## Sensory-Seeking Learners Variation

### 1. Add Movement-Based Input

Provide bigger, rhythmic actions:

- big claps
- arm swings
- marches
- stomps
- reaching side to side

### 2. Offer Sensory Props

- scarf for waving
- beanbag for tapping
- ribbon for stretches
- textured ball for rolling or passing

### 3. Predictable Rhythm

Add rhythm cues such as:

- "1-2-3 clap!"
- drum taps
- clapping patterns to follow

### 4. Regulation Breaks

Between leaders, allow:

- deep pressure squeezes
- wall push
- weighted item
- gentle rocking or wiggle break

Then rejoin when ready.



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## AAC-Specific Supports

### 1. Prepare AAC Vocabulary

Include symbols for:

- clap
- wave
- tap
- stretch
- more
- stop
- go
- happy
- my turn / your turn

### 2. Aided Language Input

Teacher models during play:

- “Clap.”
- “Wave.”
- “My turn.”
- “Your turn.”
- “More.”
- “Happy!”

### 3. Action Choice-Making

Students choose a move by:

- tapping symbol
- pointing to visual
- eye gaze
- using partner-assisted scanning

### 4. AAC for Leading

Students can “lead” by pressing a symbol such as “clap,” and the group copies.

### 5. AAC Reflection

Students respond using:

- “I like \_\_\_\_.”
- “Happy.”
- “More.”
- “Finished.”



# MOVEMENT PICTURE CARDS

PRINT AND CUT OUT. SHOW A CARD, SAY THE MOVEMENT, AND MODEL THE ACTION SLOWLY. STUDENTS COPY THE MOVEMENT IN ANY WAY THEY CAN—GESTURE, PARTIAL MOVEMENT, POINTING TO THE CARD, OR USING AAC. TAKE TURNS LETTING STUDENTS PICK A CARD FOR THE GROUP TO COPY.



CLAP



WAVE

the art of  
**PLAY**



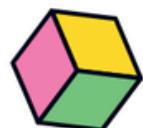
STRETCH UP HIGH

the art of  
**PLAY**



TAP KNEES

the art of  
**PLAY**



# MOVEMENT PICTURE CARDS



WIGGLE FINGERS



WIGGLE FEET

