

Left, Right, Up, Down (Levels A-B)

PLAY

To provide a simple, playful, and accessible movement game where students explore direction following, body awareness, and partner interaction through supported imitation and fun physical actions.



Learning Intentions

Attention and Body Awareness:

- Students will practise responding to simple directional cues (left, right, up, down) using gesture, movement, or eye gaze.

Developing Self-Management:

Students will engage in a predictable routine that supports focus, turn-taking, and waiting with adult assistance.

Social Participation:

Students will play alongside a peer, noticing their actions, sharing turns, and celebrating participation.



Success Criteria

Students respond to directional cues using any appropriate action (gesture, pointing, eye gaze, body movement).

Students attempt a simple movement action (e.g., clap, tap, stretch) with support after each turn.

Students show positive engagement, smiling, looking toward their partner, vocalising, copying actions, or taking turns.



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Duration: 5 - 8 minutes

Objective

To provide a simple, playful, and accessible movement game where students explore direction following, body awareness, and partner interaction through supported imitation and fun physical actions.

What You Need

Directional visual cards (Left, Right, Up, Down) (found in PDF resource)

Optional: coloured floor markers or arrows

Optional: sensory tools (fidget, weighted item, textured object)

AAC devices or communication boards with direction symbols or core words ("go," "stop," "more," "left," "right," "up," "down")

Setup

1. Students stand or sit in a semi circle facing the teacher or students can be paired together (or a student plays with an educator).
2. The teacher models each direction using body actions and holding up the relevant card:
 - Left → point or look left
 - Right → point or look right
 - Up → raise hands or look upward
 - Down → tap knees or look down
3. Provide hand-over-hand or side-by-side modelling as needed.
4. Ensure students' AAC systems are open to directional vocabulary or simple action words.

Gameplay

Option One – Seated or Stationary Play

Best for emerging learners or students needing lower sensory demand. Students start in a semi circle formation facing the teacher, seated or standing.



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1. Direction Challenge

Teacher counts: "3... 2... 1..." and holds up a direction card and uses the relevant verbal cue.

Students copy, move or indicate the direction the teacher holds up and calls out, this can be done by:

- pointing
- moving their hand
- shifting eyes
- lifting/ lowering their head
- holding up their own direction card

Option Two – Movement Play

Ideal for students ready to work in pairs.

- Students pair up or work with an educator
- Player 1 chooses a direction card, player two has to complete the relevant movement that matches the direction shown.
- Movement can be completed in any way, pointing, stepping, turning head etc.
- Repeat for 2 - 3 directions and then swap roles.
- See how many correct movements player 2 can get in a row!

Debrief / Reflection

Use visuals, demonstrations, and simple language:

- "Show me your favourite direction!"
- "Did you like up, down, left, or right?"
- "How did it feel to play with your partner?"
- "Show me the direction that made you smile."

Allow gestures, eye gaze, vocalisations, or AAC responses.

Sensory-Seeking Learners Variation

1. Add Whole-Body Movement

Pair directions with larger actions:

- Up → big arm stretch
- Down → touch the floor or knees
- Left → sideways lean
- Right → sideways lean the other way



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2. Use Tactile Direction Cues

Provide textured cards for each direction:

- left = rough texture
- right = smooth texture
- up = soft fabric
- down = bumpy dot mat

Students select by touching instead of pointing.

3. Rhythm-Based Direction Cues

Use claps or drum taps to match directions:

- 1 tap = up
- 2 taps = down
- 3 taps = left
- 4 taps = right

..... Students who rely on auditory cues will remain highly engaged.

4. Regulation Reset

If students become overstimulated:

- use deep pressure (weighted toy, squeeze cushion)
- wall push, chair push, or slow body rocks
- allow a short break and rejoin next round

AAC-Specific Supports

1. Prepare AAC Vocabulary

Ensure symbols available for:

- left
- right
- up
- down
- "more"
- "go"
- "stop"
- "my turn"
- "your turn"



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2. Model Directions Using Aided Language Input

Teacher models:

“Left.” *tap left*

“Go!” *tap go*

“Your turn.” *tap your turn*

Students learn by observing consistent AAC use.

3. AAC Alternatives to Body Movements

Students may show direction by:

- tapping the symbol
- eye gaze to the symbol
- activating a switch programmed with a direction
- pointing to printed symbols

4. Assisted Choice-Making

Provide two-card options for emerging communicators:

“Up or down?”

“Left or right?”

5. AAC Reflection

Use AAC to support the debrief:

“Fun.”

“I like...”

“My favourite direction is...”

“More.”

Accept any method of participation as success.



ARROW CARDS



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