

The Grand Old Duke of York

How to use this song

Learning objectives

Stepping Stone

Move in a range of ways, such as slithering, shuffling, rolling, crawling, walking, running, jumping, skipping, sliding and hopping.

Early Learning Goal

Move with confidence, imagination and in safety. **(PD)**

Group size

Eight children.

Props

Chalk or tailor's chalk
Hat with feathers

Sharing the song

This song introduces the ideas of movement, responding to instructions, decision-making and spatial awareness. These concepts can be explored in themes such as 'Let's move', 'Our bodies', 'Jobs', and 'Journeys'. Use the song when the children are moving from one area to another, both indoors and outdoors.

To introduce the song draw a sloping line (a hill) with chalk, if outside, or with tailor's chalk on carpet, if inside. Practise marching on the spot, with everyone swinging their arms. Play the CD, with soldiers individually, or one behind the other, in pairs or groups of three or four, depending on space, marching up, down and halfway along the line. When doing this activity without the CD, you or a child can wear the hat and be the Duke, giving orders to march quickly or slowly, or to jump, hop, skip, jog, stride or walk on tip-toes. The soldiers can also move in a variety of ways, in response to different percussion instruments.

Activity ideas

- Play 'Listening soldiers' asking the children to respond to army orders, given by another child (the Duke), such as 'Quick march!', 'Left, right, left, right!', 'About turn', 'Salute!', 'Attention!', 'Stand at ease!' and 'Stand easy!' (see illustration). **(CLL)**
- Encourage each child to tell a very simple story involving changing their mind, such as 'One morning, I decided to have cornflakes for breakfast. Then I changed my mind, so I had a boiled egg with toast soldiers instead'. **(CLL)**
- Teach 'left' and 'right' by letting children wear lemon (left) and red (right) coloured paper bracelets and anklets, on which are written 'left' and 'right'. Play directional games involving turning left and right, using arrows chalked in lemon and red. **(MD)**
- Using a length of 'roadway', two small-world play people and two toy mobile phones, encourage a pair of children to have a conversation about the play people meeting each other halfway along the road. Alternatively, use a roadway playmat, and ask the children to identify specific buildings which are halfway along a particular 'street', so that the play people may 'meet' in front of the building. **(MD)**
- Make copies of the photocopyable sheet, one for each child, and cut out the soldier outline and the holes. Invite the children to colour in their soldier shapes and show them how to push their fingers through the holes to make their soldier 'march'. Ask them to pretend their Peter Pointer is the soldier's left foot and their Finger Tall is the soldier's right foot. Let them march their soldiers around the track, saying 'left, right' and turning the paper as they go. **(PD)**