LEARNING THROUGH MOVEMENT

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In a sense these papers are Part II of a series begun in 1965 with the paper "Two Left Feet," by Beatrice E. Richardson, Bulletin of the Orton Society, XV, 1965, pp. 58-62 to which readers may wish to return. At the time there referred to, Miss Jacobson was Dance Instructor and Mrs. Jones was Director of the Claremont Graduate School Workshop in Diagnostic and Remedial Teaching. They were pioneers then, as now, in the incorporation of a planned, but creative (not stereotyped) body movement program as part of the school experience of all Claremont children. "The language disability-children?" they say. "Perhaps they profit most because their need is greatest—for help toward rhythmic, integrated functioning."

—Editor

INTRODUCTION

That learning to move freely and joyously is an essential part of growing up for boys and girls, and that this activity deserves to be an integral part of the elementary curriculum is increasingly evident to teachers who work with young children.

However it is approached, whether through dance, music, physical education, or motor perceptual training, its valuable contribution to the development of the whole child is obvious.

Because of the teacher-training courses taught by Anne Lief Barlin, teacher of dance and special consultant at Sycamore Elementary School, a growing number of Claremont teachers are being stimulated to provide movement instruction for their own classes. Some schools have organized cooperatively so that movement classes are taught by teachers with special competence.

Expressing philosophies that strongly support the validity of movement education as an area of the curriculum, the accompanying presentations were made by Claremont teachers at the May 4, 1968 Informational Meeting and repeated March 2, 1970, with an introductory supportive statement by the Deputy Superintendent of Schools.
A strong commitment to the place of movement education in the Claremont Unified Schools is evident in the strategies used by Claremont's teachers. Movement education is a vital part of the sensory motor development schedule planned for each child. It is an integral part of the activities used prior to the initial teaching of reading and accompanies language development, often throughout the grades.

The accompanying articles, written by teachers in Claremont, testify to its importance. In addition, administrative sanction and legitimation accompany these curriculum demands. Curriculum is, of course, best developed by teachers engaged in the teaching activity. This is encouraged in Claremont through a policy of differentiated responsibilities for teachers. Experts in this one area—body movement—such as Virginia Jacobson and Arlene Jones, are encouraged to develop techniques and to assist others in this endeavor.

Miss Jacobson's film [which accompanied her talk] is a down-to-earth pictorialization of how a Master Teacher develops her art. Mrs. Jones' comments will amplify, from a Consultant's point of view, the values of such teachings and add to the general knowledge which all teachers need to know. Mrs. Taylor's article indicates a classroom teacher's feelings.

To be a good administrator, I have but one task—to encourage creative thinking, to provide the wherewithal for it to occur, and "to get out of the light" so that outstanding educators, like Virginia Jacobson and Arlene Jones and Kay Taylor, can do their thing.

Leonard Munter
Deputy Superintendent

A RATIONALE FOR REMEDIATION OF LEARNING DISORDERS

Arlene Whiteman Jones

The development of the human organism follows a sequential continuum which is interspersed with critical periods for learning during the early years of life. Body movement is a cardinal facet of this maturational scale and the first observable dimension in human behavior. Simple levels of maturation must be reached before more complex levels of learning can be undertaken successfully.

Movement is controlled by the central nervous system with the higher brain centers integrating the sensory information input and initiating the appropriate movement output. The nervous system is the agent that discriminates the responses and makes possible the transfer or generalization of learned skills.

The whole person is involved in the learning process and any methodology used in the remediation of this process must take into account the basic needs of the organism as well as that which is to be taught, in this case a skill.