Arrow Chart

Arrow activities develop spatial awareness and directionality. These skills are vital for all learning, but essential in reading, handwriting and maths. The arrow chart activities are fun, physical, effective, simple & mentally stimulating. Children with attention deficit disorders especially benefit from these arrows activities in between lessons, or when they are distracted.

Do these activities before maths classes, handwriting lessons, early reading sessions and before any test. I found that these activities help “centre” the child, especially after a break, or after outdoors activities, when they need to settle down.

For quick sessions, especially for groups, call the children to stand up next to their chairs and use both arms to move quickly straight up/down/ left or right. Turn the chart randomly & hold it where the group can see it, and point to a row.

DON’T speak. Simply point. This is a visual activity. (But it can be easily made into an auditory message, if the parent calls out the direction and the child moves.)

In a nutshell ~ the child moves their body (or object in relation to their body) in the direction on the chart.

How it works:

1. Laminate your chart. Place the chart in view, orientated randomly.
2. Describe the action the child must do in the same direction of the arrow ~ e.g.: both arms straight and together point up/ down/ across the body left or right (More suggested actions listed below.)
3. Always start from the left of a row and go across to the right.
4. Once the child gains confidence, start some rows from the top and work vertically down to the bottom of the row. (I almost never work right to left, or bottom to top.)
5. The movement must be quick, clear and decisive.
6. When working one-on-one with a child, the parent/ teacher can simply point along the row. When working with a group, the teacher/ parent must tap each arrow with a pointer. The children must be trained to execute the movement instantly, quickly and then stand ready for the next tap on the following arrow.
Suggested movements:
(You will need: a foam square or a small pillow, about 6 bean bags, a small plastic chair, an inflatable beach ball & a hula hoop. Use your mini trampoline too, if you have one!)

Ideally, the movement should be a **large physical movement**, especially where the child’s **whole body changes** position. Good movements should **cross the body’s mid-line** to stimulate the left and right sides of the brain:

- Stand in a clear space and quickly **stretch both arms straight** up/ down/ left or right. When stretching arms left or right, the one arm will stretch cross the whole body.
- Stand on a **foam square** & **jump** off the square and immediately back into the square ready for the next arrow – jump in front/ behind/ left/ right.
- Stand in a **hula hoop** on the ground and **turn and lean down and touch the ground with both hands** & immediately stand up – touch in front/ behind/ left/ right. (They could also **jump** out of the hoop, and back in, instead of touching the ground with both hands.)
- Place a small plastic **chair** in a clear space and the child must **sit** ready to move. They jump up, take a few **quick steps** to the front/ back/left or right of the chair and then quickly sit down again.
- On a **mini trampoline** mark the centre with a small masking tape **cross** and place a **small arrow** pointing in all 4 directions on the rim of the trampoline. The child stands in the centre, on the cross, and jumps forward/ back/ left or right according to the arrow chart and immediately back to the centre cross.
- Sit on a **pillow or foam square** on the ground and hold a **box of bean bags** in their lap. The child must take the bean bag in the right hand and place it in front/ behind/ left or right on the ground next to the pillow. They can alternate doing a row using the left hand and then a row using the right hand.
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**Throwing and catching** is fun too!

- The child has the bean bags and throws them in front/ behind/ left or right of a target like a foam square/ a hula hoop/ a bucket.

- Draw a **large square with chalk on a wall**. The child holds an **inflatable beach ball** and throws it to the position up/ down/ left or right of the square on the wall. The ball will bounce back and the child needs to catch it again. (I place the chart on the wall near the chalk square and point to the arrows in the row.)

- A partner/ parent or sibling **stands in front** of the standing child. Place the arrow chart on the ground in front of the child. The parent **tosses one bean bag** to the child who catches it and tosses it to the front/ back/ left/ right of **his feet**. He then quickly stands ready to catch and toss the bean bag for the next arrow. When the row is complete, he picks up each bean bag and tosses it back to the parent.

I highly recommend these amazing arrows.

Blessings,

Nadene