



and you and me

MOVEMENT GUIDE

corinna luyken



dear parents and educators,

What follows is a loose script and movement guide, to accompany *ABC and You and Me*.

It has always been my intention, with this book, to inspire children and adults to get their bodies moving. My inspiration comes from years of dance improvisation training in college. Ever since walking into my first improvisation class, with zero dance experience, I have loved and appreciated the space that dance improvisation creates for exploring mindfulness in motion. Throughout college, I kept taking classes—not because I was great at it, but because I loved what it was teaching me about being an artist and a human being in a body, in the world.

Fast forward twenty years, and the books I make today owe more to my training in dance improvisation than any visual art class I took. Which leads me to this movement guide.

The following script matches the flow of the movement pages in the book. When I am with a school group, I like to read through the entire book once without the movement and then go back through the book a second time, moving as we read. For this reason, there is some text that includes saying the ABC's out loud together as we stretch.



However, I hope you will use this guide in whatever way works best for you. That might mean reading it through once for general inspiration and then creating your own improvised stretches and breathing exercises to accompany the movement pages of the book. Or it might mean printing out the guide and using it as an actual script. Either way, please feel free to make changes to fit the needs of your students. I also encourage you to move along with the young people in your life, even if—especially if—that isn't normally what you would do.

My hope is that this guide will make the process of adding movement to the classroom or home a little easier for teachers, librarians, and parents who might not be comfortable creating a movement sequence of their own. For those of you who are already comfortable with this, perhaps it will spark further ideas.

Thank you for sharing movement with the young people in your life!

With gratitude,
Corinna



hello everyone!

Are you ready to move?

First, let's all stand up together. Make sure you have plenty of space—at least an arm's length—between you and your neighbors.



Now, for starters: Can you wiggle your wrists? You can?

Is it easy? Can you wiggle them a little faster? Faster? Even faster?

Now shake your wrists as fast as you possible can . . .

and . . . STOP!

Now hold COMPLETELY still. How do your fingers feel? Can you still feel them moving?

Next, we are going to twist from our hips. Can you twist slowly like this? Let your arms relax. Can you swing your arms all the way around from side to side?

Now, we are going to lean without bending our knees!

How far can you lean to the right?

How far can you lean to the left?

Is one side easier than the other?



OK, now, read along with me—

A B C D E F G

Now bring your attention to the tips of your toes. Can you feel them? Can you wiggle them inside your socks or shoes? Can you point them?

If you can point your toes, can you use your pointed toes to draw a letter? What letter will you choose? The letter of your first name? Your last name? Your nickname? What about the first letter of the name of your cat or dog or pet iguana?

Now point your other foot and draw the same letter. Is it easier? Harder?

Next bring your attention to your arms. Which hand do you usually write or draw with? Reach that arm up in the air. Then bend it at the elbow, and using your elbow, draw a letter in the air in front of you. When you are done, reach your other arm in the air, all the way up to the ceiling. Then bend it at the elbow, and using this elbow, draw the same letter. Is it easier or more difficult with this second arm?

OK, now you are going to bring your attention to your nose! Can you wiggle your nose? You can? Can you use your nose to draw a letter?

Was that hard? Was it easy? Next try drawing the same letter with your nose without moving ANY other part of your body! How easy was that? Easy? Not easy at all?

Next bring your attention to your knees, ankles, and chin. How close can you bring your chin to your knees?

How close can you bring your chin to your ankles?

Wonderful!



Now, follow along again with me:

H I J K L M N O P

Now bring your attention to your belly. Place your hands on your belly and see if you can feel it rising and falling when you breathe. Do you feel that?

OK, we are going to take a deep breath in for 1, 2, 3. Do you feel your belly filling up? Next, we are going to hold our breath for a count of 3 and then breath out for a count of 5. Are you ready?

Feel your belly rising as you take a deep breath in for 1, 2, 3. Hold for 1, 2, 3. Now breath out for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Did you feel a tightness in your back or belly or chest?

Let's do it one more time. Breathing in for 1, 2, 3. Holding for 1, 2, 3. And breathing out for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

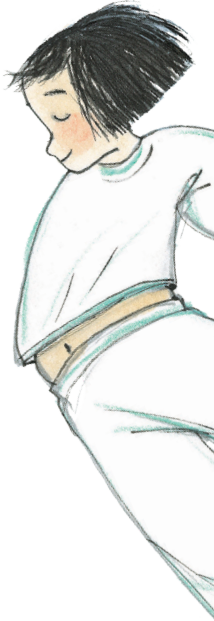


Now shake it out! Start with your wrists. Get them shaking. Next shake your fingertips. Then shake your shoulders. Now shake your hips. Now shake your whole body . . . and . . .

STOP.

Now bring your shoulders all the way up to your ears. Can you make your shoulders touch your ears? What about your cheeks? Can you touch your shoulders to both cheeks at the same time? No? What if you fill your cheeks with air? Still no?

OK, drop your shoulders and relax. Now stretch your head gently from side to side, reaching your ears toward your shoulders, but keeping your shoulders relaxed.



OK, now, read along with me—

Q R S T U V



Now I want you to bring your attention to the back of your neck. Do you feel the teeny tiny hairs there? What about the hair on the very top of your head? Imagine that you are being pulled up toward the ceiling by a very long hair on the very top of your head. Feel it pulling you up, up, up onto your tippy toes.

Then, staying balanced on the tips of your toes, bring your attention to the arches of your feet. Can you feel them working to keep you balanced?

Now lower your heels back down to the floor.

Next, I want you to bring your attention to your whole body. From the very top of your head all the way down to your heels and toes. On the count of three we are going to tense EVERY SINGLE muscle in our bodies. Are you ready?

1, 2, 3, now hold it!

Keep tensing every muscle in your body for a count of 5: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 . . . and relax.

Now shake it out.

Next, reach your hands all the way up above your head and begin to draw little o's with your wrists. Then, slowly bend at the waist, and keep making those little o's as you bring your hands all the way down toward your toes. How close can you get your wrists to the ground?

Now, still bending over, bring your hands together and using both hands at once, trace the letter O around your feet, so that you are drawing a circle around yourself. Can you do this while keeping your feet still? What about while moving your feet slowly in a circle?

Then slowly roll back up to standing.

Now, follow along again with me:

W X Y Z

Hooray! We did it! We stretched our way through our ABC's!

Now that we are all warmed up, tell me: Which letter shapes can YOU be?

Can you be an A? B? C? D?

Can you be an L? N? X? Z?

Let's all take a few moments to make some letters.

Which letters are the hardest to make? Which are the easiest?



Alright, let's all come back to standing and bring our attention to our wrists and our fingertips one last time.

Let's wiggle them fast, faster, faster, FASTER, and then . . . STOP.

Take a deep breath in, and a deep breath out.

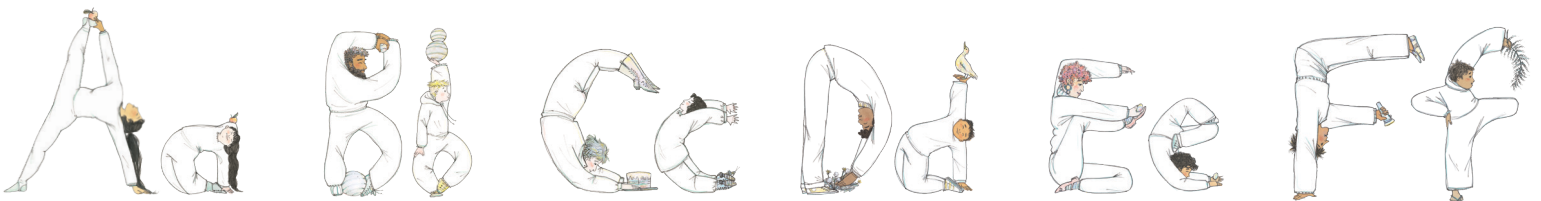
Close your eyes. Even when you are standing perfectly still, do you feel the slight swaying movement of your body? Take a moment to notice this movement even inside of stillness.

Take another deep breath in. And another deep breath out.

Let your whole body relax.

Then open your eyes, and sit down.

Thank you for joining me today in moving to our ABC's!

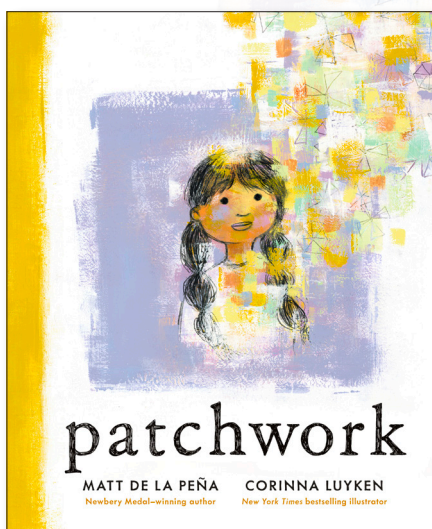
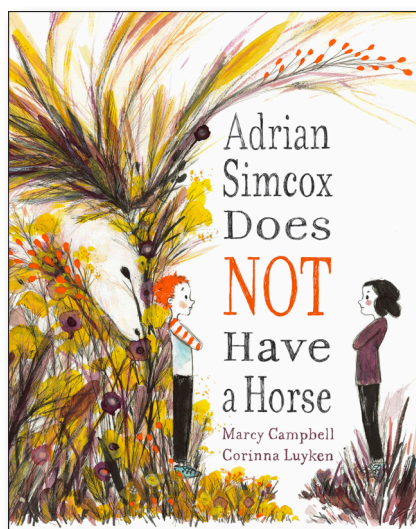
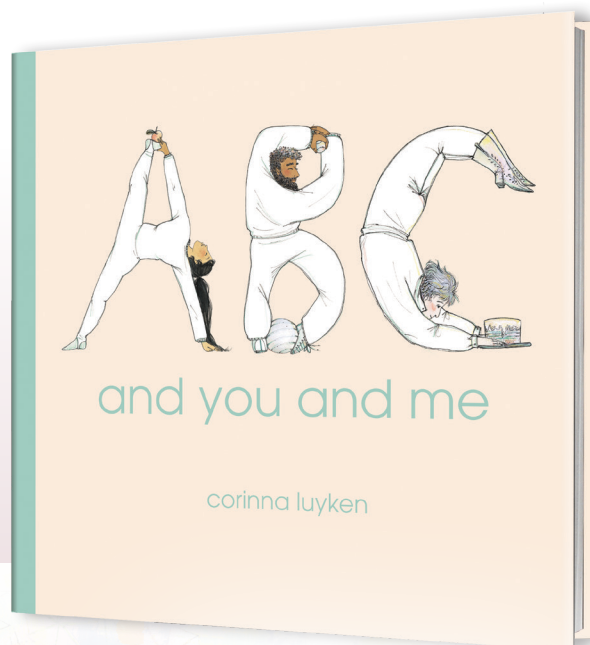


PRAISE FOR

ABC and You and Me

“The book’s greatest strength is its diversity—characters vary by ability, age, skin tone, and size, with a wide range of body types on display . . . an ode to the beauty of the human body.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*



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