



## Just Keep Swimming, Just Keep Swimming!

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### Why Water?

- Animals and objects in water have a sense of buoyancy to them.
- Even our youngest students can relate to the sensation of being underwater.
- Fish are in constant motion and they flow at different tempi.
- By asking students to imagine they are moving underwater, they can use that sense of buoyancy as they move.

### “Charlie Over the Ocean”

- Use this song (and game) to have students think of different sea creatures.
- Later, this song can be using for solfege (uses patterns of DRM and DL<sub>1</sub>S<sub>1</sub>)

### Use Water to Inspire Your Movement.

- Use the sea creatures from “Charlie Over the Ocean” or ask students to name sea creatures.
- Sea creatures move in a variety of ways. Some are non-locomotor like corals, seaweed, anemone, and starfish. Others are locomotor and move in different tempi.

### Ideas for Piano Improvisation

- The Damper Pedal is your friend. It is the pedal located on the right hand side. Hold it down and keep it down. This gives a shimmer sound. Impressionist composers like Debussy used the blurry pedal technique often in their piano works.
- Use the Whole Tone scale, where the entire scale is built out of whole steps. This is easy to play on the piano if you use groupings of three. In one hand, play the three black key grouping. In the other hand play C, D, and E, which is a grouping of three white keys that surround the two black key groupings.
- If the idea of playing the piano is overwhelming, use a metallophone from your classroom. Let the metal bars ring to create the shimmer sound.

### The Crab and The Seaweed

- This is a game I play very early in the school year. It uses the concept of Beat versus No Beat.
- Use a hand drum. Tap a steady beat for the crab. Students can shape their hands like the crab claws. Crabs move side to side, which may be a new direction to move for your beginning movers. Gently scrape the fingernails along the hand drum for the seaweed sound. Feet stay in one place and the body flows in the water. Body movement should extend through the arms.
- This is a quick reaction exercise. The crab motion shows steady beat, while the seaweed motion shows no beat.

### Recorded Music for Water Movement

- “Aquarium” from *Carnival of the Animals* by Camille Saint-Saens
  - Consider showing a video of animals moving freely about an aquarium.
  - Using scarves can help students use their arms as the scarves become fish fins.
  - For an added layer of difficulty, blow up some balloon “air bubbles” and add them into the mix.
- “La Cathedrale Engloutie (The Sunken Cathedral)” from 12 Preludes Book 1 by Claude Debussy
  - Starts piano, but builds over time.
  - Connect with a writing prompt where students can describe what they saw underwater.
- “Underwater Theme” from Super Mario Brothers by Koji Kondo
  - Anytime Mario has to swim in a level, the “Underwater Theme” will be heard.
  - Mario’s feet kick and the player must maneuver him through the level.
  - Create your own Mario water world that students can swim through in the classroom.
- *Finding Nemo* Original Motion Picture Soundtrack by Thomas Newman
  - Sustained tones and shimmer sounds. The entire soundtrack is beautifully written.
  - Students can come to the center one at a time and create a giant pose together. When the final student enters, the entire group can flow and then freeze upon cues from the teacher.

- Think about the sea anemone that was Nemo's home and safe space.

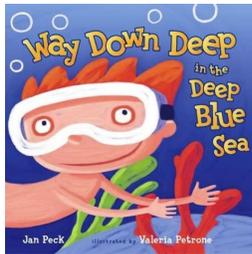
Extend These Movement Ideas with Literature.



Swimmy  
Author and Illustrator: Leo Lionni  
ISBN: **978-0399555503**

Swimmy the fish experiences a tragedy when a big fish eats all of his friends. He is very sad and lonely. He swims through the ocean and meets many different sea creatures. One day he meets some new fish friends and he teaches them a very important lesson for survival.

This book could be turned into a performance piece by having students represent the different animals. Swimmy has a very important job at the end, and one student could play the role of Swimmy by moving through the classroom and meeting other classmate sea creatures.



Way Down Deep in the Deep Blue Sea  
Author: Jan Peck, Illustrator: Valorie Petrone  
ISBN : **978-0689851100**

This book is more appropriate for our youngest students. In the book a boy dives down in the deep blue sea and visits different sea animals. There is a repeating refrain of "Swim Away." Students could start with a partner and then swim away and find a new partner (partner 1 would be the boy first, partner 2 would be all of the different sea animals, then switch roles).



If You Ever Want to Bring a Piano to the Beach, Don't!  
Author and Illustrator : Elise Parsley  
ISBN: **978-0316376594**

This is a very silly book about a girl who wants to play piano at the beach. Most of the book takes place on land, but the girl has to push the piano to the beach. This is an excellent opportunity to move with heaviness. The piano does end up in the water and bobs up and down and moves away from the girl. In an act of desperation, the girl uses a fishing pole to retrieve the piano. It is a hilarious book with many opportunities for movement.