

from *RAPPIN' ON THE REFLEXES: CD, Songbook and Guide*
Integrating the Senses through Music and Movement
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RAPPIN' FOR BABIES

These songs, raps, and movement games have been written for an audience of children who can already walk and talk. But *Rappin'* is full of information that can help parents of babies to understand and enhance the developmental process. Here are some ways to begin *Rappin'* right away.

Introduction: Movements of Origin is about infant reflexes in general, and how they affect our lives. It is equally relevant to people of all ages.

Blow, Wind, Blow is good to sing with your baby. As you integrate your own breathing, your baby will breathe in harmony.

Body Ball describes rooting reflexes. Notice how your baby searches for the nipple, and stretches to defecate. Watch for spinal activity. You can encourage this activity by holding the nipple or toy just out of reach. (But let them have it once they've wiggled!)

Well, Well, Where's Your Turtle Shell describes a Brain Gym® activity called "Core Activation." Gently touch the baby's shoulders and hips along with this rap to help create a sense of the core.

Turtle, Turtle, Say Hello to Me describes the relationship of core to peripheries. Sing this song to your baby, while you gently touch the body parts described by the song.

Stuck is about mouthing movements. Observe your baby's mouth in motion as s/he vocalizes, sucks, roots, complains.

Coyote Vowels is about the sounds that babies make. Listen to your baby's vowel sounds. Sing them back to your baby. Make sure that you sing all the vowels to your baby, and notice which ones your baby sings back to you.

Elevator is a good song to sing to your baby. Your baby can be the elevator! As "elevator" is lifted up, let your voice slide higher and higher! As the "elevator" goes down, let your voice slide down! Associate the resting tone with cuddling your baby against your chest.

Safe and Sound is a depiction of the *Symmetrical Tonic Neck Reflex*. Watch for when your baby begins to move into this posture (usually around six months). Give your baby lots of "belly time" (babies need to be on their bellies to practice this reflex). Show your baby the *S.T.N.R.* posture, and rock back and forth on your knees and elbows.

Raft and Canoe describes the *Landau Reflex*. Move around the room as your baby has some “belly time,” singing your baby’s name. Does your baby look for you? Look for the raised head and arched back of *Landau*. Are baby’s feet lifting up as well?

I Am A Lizard describes the *Bauer Crawling Reflex*. Give your baby “belly time” on the bed, or a blanket on the floor. Lie on your belly with your head about six inches away. Encourage the child with your voice. Watch to see “scooching” movement toward you. (Be patient. It may take some weeks/months for actual motion to happen. Watch your baby’s body. Are shoulders and hips engaged?)

Walking on My Bottom is something you can do while you hold a baby in your lap.

Shy? Look at how your baby holds fingers in a fist. Compare it to the stages of the Robinson Grasp Reflex. Notice when the hand begins to free up from position to position. You can encourage this growing awareness by playing with baby’s fingers and hand (gently, of course).

Grrr...Mmmm is active every time your baby nurses or eats. Notice correspondences between hand and mouth movements in your baby. Make sure that baby feels safe while eating.

Walking on a Stony Beach describes the *Leg Cross Flexion-Extension Reflex*. Touch the arch of your baby’s foot and notice whether the other leg bends and stretches. If it doesn’t do this, you can gently pattern in the motion.

Robot Rap describes the *Automatic Gait Reflex by Thomas*. Carefully hold your baby under the shoulders. Body should be hanging down, and feet just touching a level surface. Lean baby forward. Watch for “walking” motions. Don’t move baby’s limbs, just encourage a free swinging of the legs from the hips. (It should be fun!)

Pull Up A Bucket describes several reflexes. To activate the *Spinal Galant*, stroke your baby’s side and watch the hips and shoulders on that side curl toward each other. Since the *Spinal Galant* is activated by vibration *in utero*, simply holding your child and singing is also helpful.

The *Spinal Pareze* is activated by running a hand up your baby’s back. This helps to activate the craniosacral pump and get the cerebrospinal fluid flowing.

The *Hands Pulling Reflex* is activated when your baby lies supine. Place your thumbs in baby’s fists, and feel the pull! Baby is trying to lift up. If the baby does not pull, don’t exert any force! Just continue to offer the opportunity of your thumbs, and watch and wait.

Four-Sided Feet activates the *Babinsky Reflex*. Stroke your baby’s foot just to the outside of the arch, and watch the toes spread and the foot pivot in. Play with your baby’s feet in this way, stroking all sides and pressing gently on the heels, the balls, and both sides. Notice when your baby begins to push back. You can’t play this game enough!

Baseball Boogie describes the *Asymmetrical Tonic Neck Reflex*. Notice when your supine baby begins to look to one side. *A.T.N.R.* is essential for turning over, at four or five months old. The turn should always begin with the head, and then be followed by the rest of the body. Baby lands in *S.T.N.R.* position (**Safe and Sound**).

You can encourage *A.T.N.R.* activity by moving to either side of your baby, and making a sound. Watch baby's head turn. You can also place a toy on the floor within the range and outstretched hand, so the automatic turn and reach is rewarded.

A Lot of Pie is fun to play with your baby. Chant the words and tap on your baby's body, sensitizing baby to rhythm and touch.

Play **Mix It Up!** with your baby just as you play **A Lot of Pie**. **Mix It Up!** involves the *Hands Supporting Reflex*. Hold baby around the middle, and invert baby at a 45 degree angle, so that hands touch a level surface – a table, for example. Eventually, baby's hands begin to push off the table. You can also activate this reflex by gently pushing against your baby's hands with your own.

X Marks the Spot sensitizes your baby to rhythm and touch, building important neural connections.

First Breath describes the *Moro Reflex*. Gently lift baby's head from a supine position. Notice whether baby's back spontaneously arches limbs fly out. Notice baby curl into a contracted position. Then hold and rock your baby, creating a sense of safety.

Evolution contains, in a generalized form, all the movement patterns that your baby performs. Watch and notice!