

CROSS CRAWL

In this contralateral exercise, similar to walking in place, the student alternately moves one arm and its opposite leg and the other arm and its opposite leg. Because Cross Crawl accesses both brain hemispheres simultaneously, this is the ideal warm-up for all skills which require crossing the body's lateral midline.

TEACHING TIPS

- Water and Brain Buttons help prepare the body and brain to respond to Cross Crawl.
- To activate the kinesthetic sense, alternately touch each hand to the opposite knee.

VARIATIONS

- Cross Crawl as you sit, moving opposite arm and leg together.
- Reach with opposite arm and leg in varied directions.
- Reach behind the body to touch the opposite foot. (See *Switching On* for more variations.)
- Do a slow-motion Cross Crawl, reaching opposite arm and leg to their full extension (Cross Crawl for focus).
- Skip (or bounce lightly) between each Cross Crawl. (Skip-Across is especially helpful for centering; it also alleviates visual stress.)
- To improve balance, Cross Crawl with your eyes closed, or pretend to swim while Cross Crawling.
- Use color-coded stickers or ribbons on opposite hands and feet for children who may need this clue.
- Do Cross Crawl to a variety of music and rhythms.

ACTIVATES THE BRAIN FOR

- crossing the visual/auditory/kinesthetic/tactile midline
- left-to-right eye movements
- improved binocular (both eyes together) vision

ACADEMIC SKILLS

- spelling
- writing
- listening
- reading and comprehension

BEHAVIORAL/POSTURAL CORRELATES

- improved left/right coordination
- enhanced breathing and stamina
- greater coordination and spatial awareness
- enhanced hearing and vision

RELATED MOVEMENTS

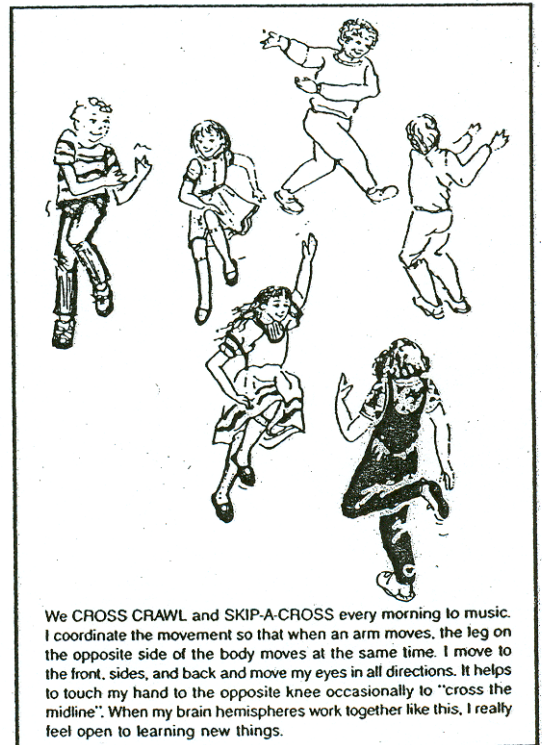
Lazy 8s, p. 5

Brain Buttons, p. 25

The Thinking Cap, p. 30

HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT

As the body grows, interweaving of the opposite sides through movement naturally occurs during such activities as crawling, walking, and running. Over the last century, crawling has been used in neurological patterning to maximize learning potential. Experts theorized that contralateral movements worked by activating the speech and language centers of the brain. However, Dr. Dennison discovered that Cross Crawl activity is effective because it stimulates the receptive as well as expressive hemisphere of the brain, facilitating integrated learning. This preference for whole-brain movement over one-side-at-a-time processing can be established through Dennison Laterality Repatterning (see *Edu-K for Kids*).



We CROSS CRAWL and SKIP-A-CROSS every morning to music. I coordinate the movement so that when an arm moves, the leg on the opposite side of the body moves at the same time. I move to the front, sides, and back and move my eyes in all directions. It helps to touch my hand to the opposite knee occasionally to "cross the midline". When my brain hemispheres work together like this, I really feel open to learning new things.