

MOVING THROUGH THE MOONS



Freedom Brass

**Includes Online
Supplemental Materials**

Beatin' Path Publications, LLC BPP-FBMM



As long as humans have gathered together, we have looked at the moon for guidance, meaning, and wonder. Long before calendars were printed or clocks marked our days, people watched the changing moon to track time, seasons, planting, harvesting, and celebration. The full moon became a natural marker as a way to name, remember, and honor what was happening in the world below.

Many names we use for full moons today come from Indigenous tribes across North America and later recorded by early European settlers. These names were deeply connected to nature, survival, and community life. The Wolf Moon marked a time when wolves howled in the winter cold. The Strawberry Moon signaled the short but important harvest season. The Harvest Moon helped provide light for farmers working late into the evening fields. Each name tells a story of land, weather, animals, and daily life rhythms.

Although different cultures used different names, the purpose was the same: to notice, to connect, and to move in harmony with the natural world. The moon didn't just mark time, it invited reflection, rhythm, and relationship. This book marks that same sense of connection.

For some teachers, creative movement feels natural and joyful, or for others, it can feel intimidating, overwhelming, or “out of their comfort zone.” ***Moving Through the Moons*** was created with all teachers in mind, those leading movement for years and those beginning to dip a toe into creative exploration.

Each moon-inspired lesson offers simple and intentional movement experiences for any classroom, space, or comfort level. These activities give students permission to explore, imagine, and move with purpose rather than perfection or performance.

Pairing movement with the stories and symbolism of the full moon allows students to slow down, listen, notice, and connect to music, their bodies, and the world around them. Just as the moon moves through its steady cycle, our students constantly grow and change. Movement gives them a way to honor that process.

These lessons inspire you to look at movement not as something extra to fit in, but as something essential to music learning. May these lessons bring wonder to your classroom, confidence to your teaching, and meaningful moments of connection for both you and your students.

As we move through the moons together, may we remember that music lives not only in sound—but in motion.

Audom Brass



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The Wolf Moon

Wolf Movements and Pathways

Big Idea

The Wolf Moon represents strength, connection, and night-time energy. Wolves survive and thrive through cooperation, communication, and movement as a pack. Through rhythmic play and group movement, students explore how individual actions contribute to the strength and unity of the whole.

Materials Needed - hand drums, tubanos, frame drums, visual checklist for group work

Suggested Recordings - *Heartbeat of the Forest* - David Arkenstone; *Nuvole Bianche* - Ludovico Einaudi



Movement Concepts

- ⌋ **Locomotor Movement** - Traveling movements through space (walk, run, gallop, hop, prowl)
- ⌋ **Flocking** - Group movement (individuals travel together in same direction maintaining spacing and awareness)
- ⌋ **Call and Response** - Musical structure (one rhythm or movement answered by another)
- ⌋ **Percussive Movement** - Sharp, accented movements with clear starts and stops
- ⌋ **Flowing Movement** - Smooth, continuous transitions between movements
- ⌋ **Freeze** - Stopping movement instantly (holding clear, intentional shape)

Wolf Wake-Up (Individual Movement Exploration)

Students begin alone, waking their wolf bodies. Practice following wolf-inspired movements in a variety of ways: slow, quick, percussive, sustained, or holding five seconds before flowing into the next movement.

Wolf Movements

- ⌋ **Sleeping Wolf** - Curl body small and low.
- ⌋ **Howling Wolf** - Stretch tall as if howling at moon.
- ⌋ **Shake** - Shake out paws, tail, head, and body.

Play one suggested recording. Students move through actions, matching tempo, mood, and energy of music. Encourage them to think like wolves: silent, alert, playful. After exploring given movements, students create wolf-inspired actions; add them to sequence.

Students combine movements into short sequences, focusing on smooth transitions and continuous flow. Movement remains silent and intentional.



Pack Pathways (Flocking Movement)

Introduce flocking as a way animals move together to stay safe and connected.

- ⌋ Explain flocking rules.
 - ▮ Stay with group.
 - ▮ Move in same direction and speed as flock.

In groups of four-six (wolf packs)

- ⌋ Travel across room in unison.
- ⌋ Explore prowling, stalking, galloping, hopping.
- ⌋ Add freeze shapes (alert ears, pounce shapes, or howl shapes).
- ⌋ Switch leaders on signal. Each student has turn to guide pack.

Rhythmic Call and Response (Pack Communication)

Refer to visual checklist for group work.

Using hand drums, introduce rhythmic communication.

- ⌋ Play one eight-beat rhythmic phrase - "leader wolf call."
- ⌋ Students echo, then take turns leading own patterns.
- ⌋ Each wolf pack creates two eight-beat calls and two eight-beat responses.
- ⌋ In their wolf packs, students create two eight-beat calls and two eight-beat responses, adding simple, memorable wolf-inspired movements that match the rhythms.
- ⌋ Each group decides who will play and who will move, then practices performing their sequence together with a steady beat and clear beginning and ending.

Movement Sequence - Begin with individual **Wolf Wake-Up** movements, transitioning smoothly into **Pack Pathways** flocking movement.

Rhythmic Story - Perform original call and response drumming patterns with matching wolf movements.

Cooperation

Presentation demonstrates unity, leadership sharing, and clear pack identity.

Freedom's Notes and Extensions

- ⌋ Reinforce focus and night-time imagery. Emphasize silent movement.
- ⌋ Limit pack size and model flocking frequently for younger students.
- ⌋ Challenge packs to change tempo or dynamics mid-sequence for older students.
- ⌋ Enhance night-time atmosphere with scarves or low lighting.
- ⌋ Connect lesson to discussions of teamwork, community, or animal behavior.
- ⌋ This lesson pairs naturally with storytelling, poetry, or visual art inspired by wolves and winter nights.



The Beaver Moon

Beaver Builders at Work

Big Idea

The Beaver Moon marks a time of preparation, teamwork, and steady effort. Together beavers use repeated actions, cooperation, and patience to build structures that last. Students explore those ideas by working in teams to build famous structures using their bodies while discovering how movement, planning, and silence can communicate big ideas.



Materials Needed - famous structure postcards (one per group), drum or clapping cue for freezes

Movement Concepts

- ⌋ Space: Pathways, shared space, central focus
- ⌋ Time: Steady pacing, intentional pauses
- ⌋ Energy: Strong, controlled, purposeful
- ⌋ Levels: Low, middle, high
- ⌋ Stillness: Clear freezes (tableau)
- ⌋ Relationships: Cooperation, group shaping, connection

Warm-Up: Beaver Builders at Work

- ⌋ Students spread out in personal space. Guide students through simple, repeated movements:
 - ▶ Reach and pull as if gathering materials.
 - ▶ Carry with careful, steady steps.
 - ▶ Bend low and press down as if building.
 - ▶ Freeze strong to “check the structure.”

Teacher Cue:

“Beavers don’t rush. They repeat strong movements again and again.”

What Is a Structure?

Discuss briefly. A structure is something built to stand strong. Beavers build lodges and dams. People build bridges, towers, and monuments.

Invite students to make quick solo frozen shape that looks strong.

Team Assignment: Builder Groups

- ⌋ Students form small groups (three-five).
- ⌋ One student collects famous structure card for group.
- ⌋ Groups quietly read and discuss information on card.



- ⌋ Where is this structure located?
- ⌋ What does it look like?
- ⌋ How does it make people feel?
- ⌋ Final performance will be silent with movement only.

Planning the Journey (Movement Story)

Before building structure, groups create movement showing their journey.

- ⌋ Use guiding questions to inspire movement choices:
 - ▮ How would you travel there (plane, boat, walking)?
 - ▮ Is it hot, cold, windy, or calm?
 - ▮ Is that place quiet or busy?
 - ▮ How do you feel when you see structure?
 - ▮ Encourage students to show ideas with their bodies, not words.

Build the Structure (Tableau Creation)

Groups end their movement by creating frozen group tableau of their structure.

Tableau Guidelines

- ⌋ Everyone is part of shape.
- ⌋ Use different levels.
- ⌋ Hold still and strong.
- ⌋ No talking or sound

Performance: Beaver Moon Museum

- ⌋ Groups perform one at a time.
- ⌋ The audience watches silently, like visiting a museum.
- ⌋ After group freezes, allow time for audience to guess. "What is this structure?"
- ⌋ Performers remain silent until guessing is complete.

Performance Options

- ⌋ In-class sharing
- ⌋ Gallery-style performances around room
- ⌋ Filmed performances paired with images of structures

Freedom's Notes and Extensions

- ⌋ Emphasize teamwork and patience, just like beavers building together.
- ⌋ Use movement word prompts (travel, freeze, reach, stack) with younger students.
- ⌋ Add clear beginning/middle/end to movement story with older students.



Hand Drum as a Movement Prop

(Process and Expectations for Teachers)

Hand drums are not only instruments, they can be moons, shields, steering wheels, boats, turtle shells, and heartbeat carriers. When used intentionally, they invite students to connect movement, rhythm, imagination, and control.

Big Idea

The hand drum represents the steady pulse of the moon, constant, grounded, and alive. When students move with a drum, they practice balance, spatial awareness, flow, and self-control while embodying rhythm in a tangible way.

How to Hold a Hand Drum

Before any playing begins, establish a calm and focused introduction routine.

The Silent Hold

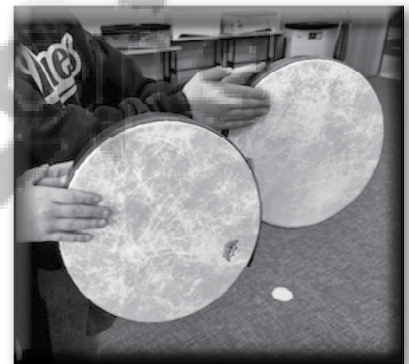
- ⌄ Sit or stand tall.
- ⌄ Hold drum with two hands at 3:00 and 9:00 (like holding steering wheel).
- ⌄ Keep fingers off drum head unless invited to play.
- ⌄ Rest drum gently against body or hold it slightly away from clothing to allow vibration.

Cue language:

- “The moon rests quietly.”
- “Our drum is asleep.”
- “We wake it only when invited.”

Playing Position

- ⌄ Vertical Position (Standing or Kneeling)
 - ▶ Hold drum upright with non-dominant hand.
 - ▶ Play with relaxed fingers tips and thumb (no stiff hands). I tell students to pretend they are dipping their fingertips in paint and then softly “paint” the edge of the drum. Down strokes are with thumb, up strokes are with the fingers.
- ⌄ Technique
 - ▶ Play with relaxed fingers, not a tight fist.
 - ▶ Drum should resonate, not be struck aggressively.



Hand Drums as Movement Props

Preparation

- ⌄ Review personal space.
- ⌄ Practice freezing with drum still and quiet.
- ⌄ Model slow, controlled travel stopping (freeze) on spoken or played signal.



Movement Glossary

A reference for teachers and students

Movement vocabulary, in clear, welcoming language, cues confident movement, thus allowing students to understand and explore with joy.

Basic Movement Types

Locomotor Movement

Movement that travels through space: walking, running, skipping, galloping, sliding, rolling, leaping, crawling, and jumping.

Non-Locomotor Movement

Movement performed in one place: bending, stretching, swaying, twisting, shaking, curling, melting, and reaching.

Space Concepts

Levels - The height of the body in space: low (close to the floor), middle (standing or kneeling), and high (reaching, jumping, lifting arms overhead).

Pathways - The lines a body or body part travels through space. Pathways can be straight, curved, zigzag, spiral, circular, or free-form.

Personal Space - The space around one's own body, sometimes called a "movement bubble."

General Space - The shared space of the room where movers travel while staying aware of others.

Effort and Energy

Energy - How strong, light, fast, or gentle a movement feels.

Push Energy - Strong movement that sends energy outward, like pressing, stomping, shoving, or growing tall.

Pull Energy - Drawing movement inward, like tugging, curling, gathering, or hugging close.

Sustained Movement - Smooth, slow movement that lasts over time.

Burst Movement - A sudden, joyful release of energy—quick, sharp, or surprising.

Flow - How freely movement continues. Flow can be bound (controlled and careful) or free (loose and continuous).

Shape and Body Awareness

Shapes - Forms the body makes in space. Shapes can be wide, narrow, tall, twisted, curved, sharp, round, or still.

Balance - Holding the body steady in one shape or position.

Weight Transfer - Shifting body weight from one foot or body part to another.

Symmetrical Movement - Both sides of the body move the same way.

Asymmetrical Movement - Each side of the body moves differently.

Time and Rhythm



Movement Objectives

The Wolf Moon – January

Students will

- ⌒ Travel and shape their bodies with control.
- ⌒ Move together as a pack with safe spacing.
- ⌒ Create and perform a short movement phrase.
- ⌒ Echo and create simple 4-beat rhythms.
- ⌒ Work cooperatively in small groups.

The Snow Moon – February

Students will

- ⌒ Hold strong frozen shapes.
- ⌒ Move slowly with control and balance.
- ⌒ Show clear contrast between freeze and burst.
- ⌒ Create and perform a short freeze–melt sequence.
- ⌒ Demonstrate focus and spatial awareness.

The Worm Moon – March

Students will

- ⌒ Travel using clear pathways.
- ⌒ Perform twisting and curling floor movements.
- ⌒ Switch smoothly between traveling and grounded movement.
- ⌒ Show contrast in speed and energy.
- ⌒ Create and perform a simple movement map.

The Pink Moon – April

Students will

- ⌒ Move confidently in a steady group of 5.
- ⌒ Perform a movement phrase with a safe high five.
- ⌒ Create and perform a short group

dance.

- ⌒ Show contrasting energy in movement.
- ⌒ Encourage and support teammates.

The Flower Moon – May

Students will

- ⌒ Show growing and blooming through expressive movement.
- ⌒ Move smoothly with balance and control.
- ⌒ Explore different levels in space.
- ⌒ Travel in curved and circular pathways.
- ⌒ Create and perform a seed-to-bloom phrase.

The Strawberry Moon – June

Students will

- ⌒ Move with joyful, celebratory energy.
- ⌒ Keep a steady beat with body percussion.
- ⌒ Travel lightly and safely through space.
- ⌒ Show contrast between gentle and energetic movement.
- ⌒ Create and perform a pick-and-celebrate phrase.

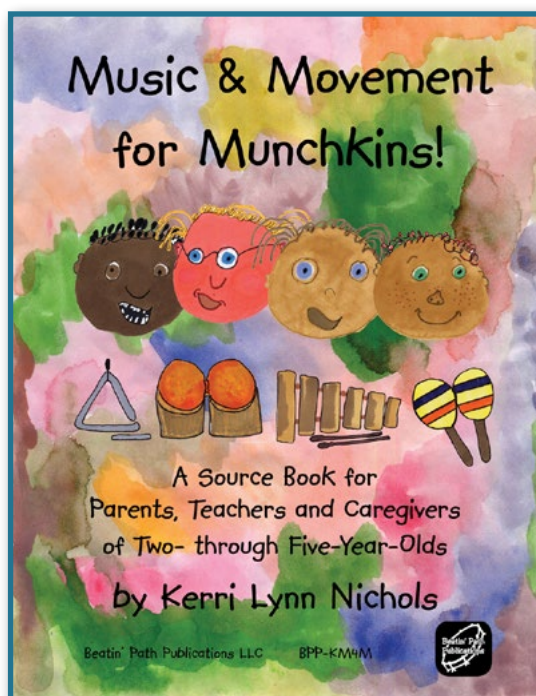
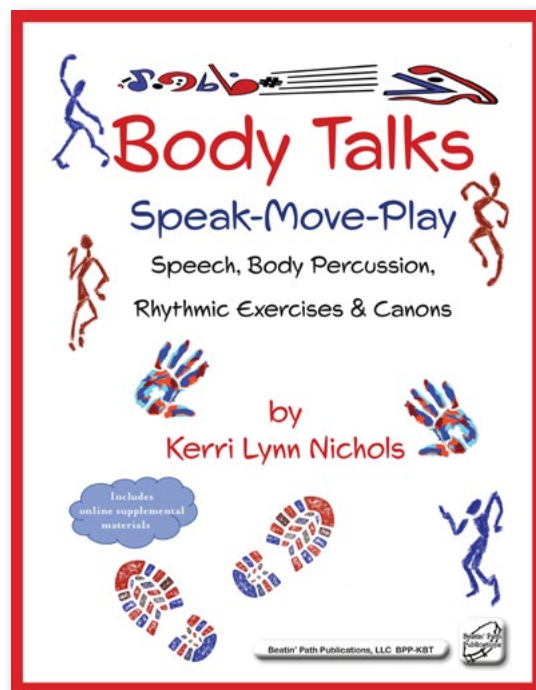
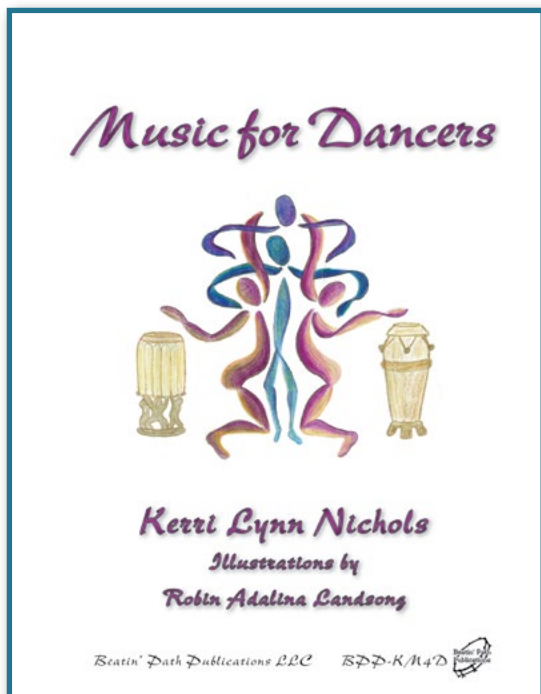
The Buck Moon – July

Students will

- ⌒ Move boldly with strong direction.
- ⌒ Balance while shaping “antlers.”
- ⌒ Show contrast between power and pause.
- ⌒ Perform a steady rhythmic pattern.
- ⌒ Create and perform in small groups.



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