



# ARTS INTEGRATION AT HOME

## EXCURSIONS

Through these arts integration activities we want to offer a few simple, creative, educational, and arts-based ways to spice up your distance learning. The directions for the activity are shared in two ways - for caregivers/teachers and for kids who can read so they can do the activity independently. Have fun, and feel free to share what you do with us.

Tips for how to utilize these strategies:

- Use this strategy today, or print it out for a later date.
- Feel free to use a strategy more than once. Repetition will help students become familiar with the directions and then be able to take more ownership of sharing what they know through the activity.
- Play them for fun - you don't have to stick to talking about school information.

### EXCURSIONS

Excursions is a playful activity that invites participants to practice the skills of observation and presence, and most important their creativity through spontaneity. This is definitely a good one for the entire family - on repeat.



I learned **Excursions** from [Lauria Magovern](#) and [Psalmayene 24](#) when I worked at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. Excursions belongs to the repertoire of [Living Stage Theatre Company](#), which was a venture of Arena Stage from 1966 - 1995.

These activities are curated by Sarah Coleman, Portland Ovation's Director of Engagement | School Programs. Sarah is a theatre educator, an arts integration specialist, and a former classroom teacher who has taught students in grades K - college as well as led professional development workshops for teachers around the country for over 15 years.





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## EXCURSIONS

### DIRECTIONS FOR CAREGIVERS/TEACHERS

What you need: A room, a playlist of a few songs\*

Find a space to play where you live. It can be inside or outside. Find a spot to sit that is to the side - meaning you can see the majority of the playing space in front of you. Explain you are going to play music. Next, stay sitting observe the space and the objects in the space. Then, when you feel moved to make an excursion into the space and interact with it in any (safe and respectful) way without talking or using your voice. Pause here and remind your kid(s) that their choices still have to be safe and respectful to. So they can't throw a chair, climb a bookshelf, or draw on the wall. An excursion could look like opening and closing a drawer, rearranging the couch cushions, getting up and dancing to a song with a jacket, stacking the shoes in one big pile, or taking a book off the bookshelf. When you are done doing the inspired movement you return to sitting and go back to observing until you feel inspired to get up again.

*\*Music tips: Make the playlist at least 15 minutes long and pick songs that aren't familiar. If the music is familiar it can be distracting and become the focus instead of the inspiration.*

### Then what?

- Play again. The more kids practice being in the moment (not planning) spontaneity and creativity comes more quickly.
- Give the excursion a theme. For example, when you make an excursion your movement has to reflect an adverb (slowly, bravely, elegantly, kindly) or verb (hop, skip, crawl) or emotion (happy, sad, surprise, trust, disgust). You can write the words on a piece of paper and put it someplace where it is easy to read. Or maybe you need to be inspired by something green or something soft at least one time during the round.
- Move to another space and repeat.

### Tips!

- Remember that you have to be silent the entire time.
- Remind kids to keep looking, especially when they sit back down. What else do you see? Your observations will give you ideas of what to do.
- It's okay to interact with others but remember not to speak and to make sure that the other player is comfortable. If it's a complicated or specific idea the other person might not know how to follow. It's okay to just end that excursion and restart.
- Be playful! Have fun!

### Follow up questions

1. What did you observe that caused you to make an excursion?
2. How did it feel to do this activity?
3. How might this make you see the space around you differently?

*Follow up questions allow kids to practice [reflection and metacognition](#) (thinking about one's thinking) both of which are key parts of effective learning.*





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### DIRECTIONS FOR KIDS

*Today's at-home activity includes some acting which means you'll practice thinking from someone else's perspective. Who do you want to be?*

You will need a playlist of a few songs (about 15 minutes). Make sure the songs aren't familiar to you. They will work better if you don't know them very well.

1. Find a space or room to play the activity in your house or apartment.
2. Find a spot to sit that is to the side - meaning you can see the majority of the room in front of you.
3. Play the music. Once the music starts playing, there is not more talking. (The activity is more fun if you don't talk.)
4. Observe the room and the objects in it for at least one minute.
5. Then, when you feel inspired, make an excursion into the space. This means you get up and go do something in the room. There is no right or wrong way to do this as long as it is safe and respectful.
6. When you're done doing the inspired action sit back down.
7. Start observing again, until you are inspired to make another excursion.
8. Keep observing and making excursions until the music runs out. You can play as many rounds as you want. Try other spaces in your home or outside.

### Tips!

- This activity asks you to be spontaneous but you still have to be safe and responsible. No throwing chairs!
- An excursion could look like opening and closing a drawer, rearranging the couch cushions, getting up and dancing to a song, stacking the shoes in one big pile, or taking a book off the bookshelf.
- NO SPEAKING. You have to be silent the entire time.
- If you can't think of anything, keep looking. What else do you see? Your observations will give you ideas of what to do. Don't think, do!
- Today's at home activity challenges you to practice your spontaneity and your observations skills. How can you find something new in familiar spaces?
- Be playful! Have fun!

After you play a few rounds of Excursions, think about and discuss these questions.

What did you observe that caused you to make an excursion?

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How did it feel to do this activity?

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How might this make you see the room you played in differently?

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