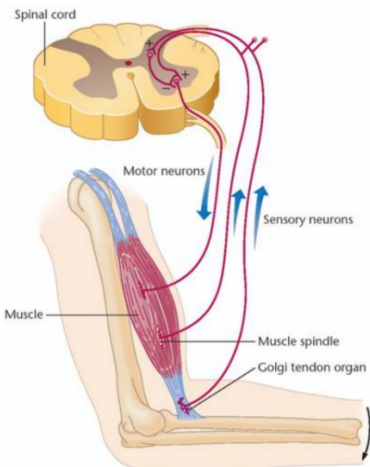


What is heavy work?

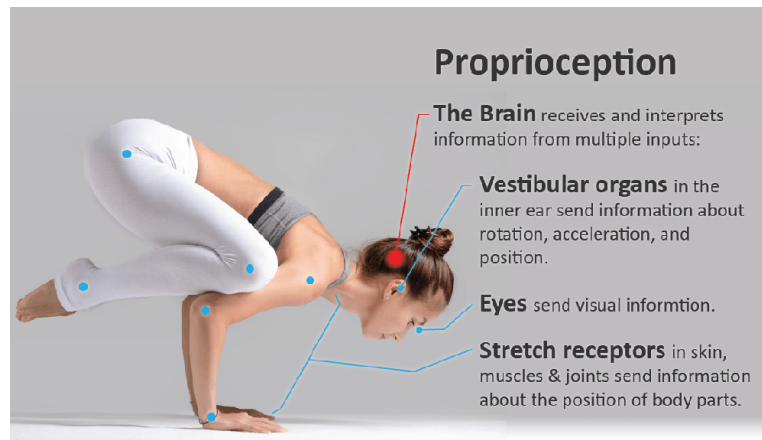
- Heavy work means moving your body against resistance, which activates the *proprioceptive system*.

Why is activating the proprioceptive system important?

- To help us understand where our body is in space (e.g. tying shoes without looking)
- To know how much force we are using and whether we need to use more or less force in order to successfully complete a task (e.g. when colouring, cutting our food or opening/closing a door)



(medicalook.com)



(Chiro.org)

How does heavy work help students?

- Heavy work (working against resistance) generally has a calming or organizing effect.
- It allows students to adjust their arousal level to help them focus and improve performance of daily activities.
- Heavy work helps to improve body awareness, which helps with overall coordination.

How to incorporate heavy work into the classroom?

- The best activities are ones that can be easily incorporated into daily routines and are enjoyed by the students. It would be most beneficial if these activities were offered throughout the day. Try a few of the following ideas and see what works best:

1) Pushing/Pulling Activities:

- Pushing a cart down the hall (weighted with books, recycling, snacks, etc.)
- Singing *Row Row Row Your Boat* with a partner while sitting on the floor and holding hands, then pushing and pulling each other
- Trying to stand up with a partner by sitting back to back, interlocking arms, placing feet flat on the floor and pushing against each other while moving into standing position
- Doing full or knee push-ups, wall push-ups or crawling activities
- Pulling friends outside in a wagon or sled
- Playing in a hands-and-knee position or lying on tummy while reading or doing homework
- Pushing and holding open heavy doors



2) Squeezing:

- Playing with resistive putty or play dough using tools such as scissors, rolling pins, cookie cutters and stampers
- Cutting out items from thick cardstock paper

3) Lifting/Carrying:

- Lifting or taking down chairs from desks or stacks
- Helping to rearrange desks in the classroom
- Erasing chalk or marker on a dry erase board
- Carrying bins full of recycled items or books
- Helping around the school, carrying and stacking books, printer paper or supplies
- Carrying a heavy backpack (wearing one even when not needed)
- Setting up/putting away gym supplies (e.g. hanging mats on the wall, lifting balls into storage bins or hanging rings over post)



4) Climbing:

- Playing on structures with ladders, a rock wall, monkey bars or climbing area
- Going up and down stairs

5) Jumping/Running:

- Playing jumping games like hopscotch or jump rope
- Sitting and bouncing on a hippity hop ball or exercise ball
- Jumping in and out of hoops or hopping on one foot
- Galloping or skipping in the gym
- Playing sports (e.g. soccer, basketball, flag football, gymnastics, ball hockey or volleyball)

6) Chewing/Sucking/Blowing:

- Chewing gum
- Providing chewy foods to eat (e.g. bagels, beef jerky, dried fruit, granola bars, licorice, fruit roll-ups, tootsie rolls or starburst)
- Offering crunchy foods (raw fruit, raw veggies, pretzels, popcorn or pita chips)
- Using a straw to suck or drinking from a suction water bottle
- Blowing bubbles, kazoo, harmonica, whistle, pinwheel, balloons, etc.