

Active Learning

Task Cards

Pass out task cards to involve students in physical activity as they enter the gym or classroom. You can color code the cards, use stickers or numbers to use the cards to organize students into groups for the main part of the lesson. Other movements can be substituted for walking lunges. Students could perform hops, walking lunges, squats, seat walks, and knee to chest curls, dips, etc. [Alliance Resource Database](#)

GoNoodle

A suite of web-based games designed to bring physical activity breaks into elementary classrooms. The games were built on research showing that short bursts of physical activity can positively influence academic achievement, cognitive skills and behavior as well as overall health. Through a partnership with the U.S. Track and Field Foundation, Olympic athletes coach students through one of the games.

<https://www.gonoodle.com/>

Active Literature

Read or have students read excerpts from literature or news articles aloud to the entire classroom and every time the words a, an, the, by and there are heard, the classroom must stand up, jump and then sit down quickly. Source: [American Heart Association – Educator Materials – For the Classroom](#)

Rock, Paper, Scissors with Legs

Students play a traditional game of Rock, Paper, Scissors with their feet. Jump three times with feet together and then choose position: rock = feet together; paper = feet apart; scissors = one foot forward/one foot back. Students play best out of three with a classmate and then find a new partner to challenge.

Source: [American Heart Association – Educator Materials – For the Classroom](#)

True/False

Prepare a list of true/false questions based on class content. Arrange chairs in a circle. Have students walk around the chairs, listen to the question, and determine if the answer is 'True' or 'False'. If the answer is True, find a chair and sit down. If the answer is False, do knee to elbow touches.

Source: [American Heart Association – Educator Materials – For the Classroom](#)

Who's the Boss

Equipment: Playing cards

Procedure:

1. Give each student one card from a deck of cards.
2. Have the students begin walking throughout the activity area.
3. Each time a student passes a classmate, they have to exchange cards. Continue this for about 30 seconds.
4. After 30 seconds, the teacher calls, "Who's the boss?"
5. The students quickly sort themselves into the four suits by going to designated gym corners. The student with the highest card leads the group in a fitness activity.
6. Vary loco-motor skills and repeat several times.

Frozen Vocabulary

1. Begin by having students do an activity standing at their desks:
 - ✓ Jumping
 - ✓ Twisting
 - ✓ Jogging
 - ✓ Jumping jacks
 - ✓ Playing air guitar
2. Students continue activity for 30 seconds or until teacher calls out a vocabulary word at which point the students freeze.
3. Teacher calls on volunteer to use the vocabulary word properly in a sentence.
4. Resume activity or begin a new activity when a student uses the vocabulary word properly in a sentence.

Variations:

- ✓ Students can define vocabulary word.
- ✓ Students can spell the word.
- ✓ Students can name a synonym or antonym.

For math, students can give the sum, difference or quotient of 2 numbers.

Source: [Eat Smart Move More NC Energizers](#)

Catch & Move

Equipment: Ball with movements and equations written on it. Write 5-10 equations that total 20 or less (this will be the number of repetitions) on the ball. Write 5 or 10 action words on the ball.

The game begins with students in a circle. The student holding the ball tosses it to another student circle when the teacher says "Go!" Students continue to toss and catch until the teacher says "Stop!", the student holding the ball leads the group in the movement closest to his/her left thumb. The number of repetitions is determined by the answer to the equation closest to the right thumb.

1. When the number of repetitions is completed, the student resumes by tossing the ball.
2. This can continue for 4-6 minutes.

Variations:

- The words on the ball could be a different theme for academic skill development, such as the name of an animal and making animal sounds.
- This activity can also be modified to run as a relay.
- This can be done in one large group or with several smaller groups (one ball per group).
- Allow students to collaborate together to determine the action words and the equations.
- After a few weeks, use rubbing alcohol to remove the marker writing and start over.

Source: [Move-to-Improve K-5 Physical Activity Program](#)

Desk Relay

Equipment: One beanbag, rubber chicken or other safe object for every row of 5-6 students

1. Have students sit in rows of desks or chairs with the first person in each row holding one object. On the signal to begin, the object is passed over his/her head to the next person and so on until the end of the row.
2. The last student runs to the front of the room, touches the wall and sits in the first desk while everyone else moves to sit in the desk behind them. Continue for 2 minutes.
3. Have each group count how many times they were able to pass the object down the row – then challenge each group to beat their score by two!

Variation: After one rotation, ask teams to display a silent celebration as they finish.

Source: [Move-to-Improve K-5 Physical Activity Program](#)

Simon Says Geometry Style

Students learn math terms such as “parallel lines” by relating it to a movement that the body makes.

Description:

1. Play “Simon Says” by having the entire class stand and participate.
2. Use your imagination and be creative to put specific movements for math terms: line, line segment, ray, parallel lines, intersecting lines, right angle, obtuse angle, acute angle, line of symmetry, congruent, similar, vertex, perpendicular, slide, flip and turn.
3. As the children get better and faster at the game, remember to try and trick them...if “Simon doesn’t say” to do something, and they do it, they are out and have to sit down while play continues.

Examples:

- “Line”: extend arms on each side with palms opened, indicating that a line goes on in both directions
- “Line Segment”: extend arms on each side with fists closed, indicating that a line segment has 2 definite end points
- “Parallel lines”: show arms looking like train tracks
- “Right Angle”: extend left arm over your head (close to your left ear) and extend your right arm out to the right side of you

Source: [Active Academics](#)

Deal or No Deal

Equipment: A minimum of five envelopes with one exercise listed on the outside of each envelope

Suggested exercises for the outside of each envelope: Seat crunches, pushups, elbow to opposite knee touches, jumping jacks, arm circles, jog in place, forearm jabs, heel raises, toe raises, weight training with textbooks: arm curls, overhead press.

1. Inside each envelope, place repetition variations on separate pieces of paper or cardstock (e.g. One More, 5 more, 10 more, none, times 2, one less, -5, divided by, square root of 36).
2. Teacher chooses an envelope and states a feasible number of repetitions.
3. Teacher makes a deal with one student at a time. All students participate in each deal.
4. Teacher: “My deal is 20 crunches. Deal or No Deal?” Student: “Deal – the entire class perform the physical activity or exercise.” OR “No Deal - the student chooses a card from that exercise envelope and the students perform the new number.”
5. Students are challenged to design a movement activity to integrate the concepts or vocabulary of the subject area.

Source: [Tennessee Physical Activity Handbook - Healthy Students, Healthy Schools, Healthy Tennessee](#)

Reflection Walk

Instructions:

- Use with students to incorporate movement, socialization and reflection during instruction.
- Have students form small groups.
- Explain that groups will be taking a walk together. On their walk, they should share something with the group about the current class content or review yesterday’s content. You may determine the topic depending on the type of session you are leading. Some examples might be:
 - Share at least one thing you remember from class.
 - Share something new or interesting you learned this morning/afternoon.
 - You can also create a specific list of questions you want students to discuss.
- Send them on a walking course outside (weather permitting) or throughout the building. Be specific about the return time and possibly have a song or signal to guide students back to their seats.
- Upon returning to the session, allow 2-3 minutes for students to write down items they want to remember from their walk.

Activity: Poetry in Motion

Equipment/Organization: poems that include action words or use an action verb and write simple poems using words that rhyme with that action word. Here are two simple examples using the action words run and hop.

- Let's run, run, run
- And have some fun, fun, fun
- Let's run, run, run
- Under the sun, sun, sun
- I like to hop
- I don't want to stop
- I will hop until I pop, and drop and begin to flop

Directions: Divide students in groups, students select a poem and review. After reviewing the poem add motions to it to make it come alive.

Stand Up, Hand Up, Pair Up

Strategy Description:

Use to organize students into groups, giving them an opportunity to stretch and move. Also use to review lesson content or to prompt collaboration.

1. Walk 10-15 steps (to get blood out of feet and seat-- this is the number of steps needed to get blood and oxygen to the brain).
2. Head up with a smile (the brain does not know a real smile/laugh from a fake one, this boosts serotonin and mood).
3. Partner shoulder to shoulder (this is less threatening than face-to-face).
4. Pick a characteristic to determine who goes first. Some examples: which person lives closer to ____, which person ate Mexican food most recently, etc.
5. Have them introduce themselves, share lesson content and reflect on what they learned. It is helpful to have a timer. Have each person share for a limited time and then switch to ensure no one is able to dominate the conversation and that all are learning.

NOTE: When you need groups of four have partners pair up. Partners put hands up and find another group of two.

ALTERNATIVE: Have students raise their hand up with a number of fingers and then they have to find a partner who has the same number of fingers up.

Gallery Walk

On the walls around the room, post chart paper. Have students use Post-it notes to answer critical thinking questions about the lesson. Allow students to use some time during the lesson to take a gallery walk. Music can be used to begin and end the activity. Students can also use markers to write directly on the chart paper.

Find Your Partner

Strategy Description:

1. Use to review for a test
2. Come up with 3-5 review questions and answers.
3. On an index card, write the questions.
4. Students are scattered throughout the classroom. The teacher will say start with question number 1 and walk to a partner across the room.
5. Each student will walk briskly to find a partner and identify the answer to that question.
6. The teacher will then say start question number 2. tippy toe to a different partner.
7. This continues for three to five minutes.
8. As a review, the teacher can say find your question number 1 partner and students will find their original partner relative to that question.

Variations: Use different movements to find a partner. Have students create the questions. Use music as students are finding a partner. Time students (e.g., give students ten seconds to find a partner

Lazy Eights

Strategy Description:

Use these strategies to get students up and out of their seats. Ideal for breaks after intense or mentally challenging activities.

1. Extend one arm in front of you with your thumb pointing upwards.
2. Trace the shape of a figure eight in the air. The eight should be on its side and as you trace it out in large, slow movements focus your eyes on your thumb. Without moving your head trace three eights in successively larger movements.
3. Now do it with your other hand and then clasp them together and do it with both hands

Fit for a Healthier Generation Videos

A video series to add movement to your day! Our fitness team, Billy Blanks, Tara Stiles, Bob Harper and Zumba have worked to create 3-8 minute videos to get you and your students on their feet and moving. These exciting physical activity breaks require no equipment and used in limited space areas. Use these free videos to get your students, family, or team up and moving! [Alliance Resource Database](#)

WatchKnowLearn

Free Educational Videos – Brain Breaks - [WatchKnowLearn](#)

Colorado Education Initiative

Secondary Classroom PA Breaks. [Teacher Toolbox](#)

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