

Energizers and Brain Breaks

Brain Breaks Defined:

Benefits for Students

Social-emotional development

Cognitive development

Physical development

Benefits for Teachers

Effective management

Builds positive community

Can be used for engaging academics

Continued ►

Scaffolding for Success

Teach students expectations:

- ▶ Beginning and ending movement breaks

- ▶ Participation

- ▶ Use Interactive Modeling

Consider risk and complexity

Considerations for Use

- ▶ Developmentally appropriate for your students. (Use the “Highlights of Child/Young Adolescent Development” chart below to identify information that could impact which movement breaks you choose for your students, and record it here.)

- ▶ Timing

- ▶ Social and academic uses

Highlights of Child/Young Adolescent Development

<p>5-year-olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a lot of physical activity • Respond well to clear and simple expectations • Like to copy and repeat activities 	<p>10-year-olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a great deal of physical activity • Work well in groups • Enjoy cooperative games • Extra recess/playtime a must
<p>6-year-olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noisy, often in a hurry • Want to be first • Tremendous capacity for joy • Enjoy being active 	<p>11-year-olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restless and energetic • Need lots of food, physical activity, and sleep • Need a lot of time to interact with peers • Moody, self-absorbed, and sensitive
<p>7-year-olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong likes and dislikes • Improved physical abilities • Need structure • Don't like taking risks 	<p>12-year-olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need lots of food, physical activity, and sleep • Enthusiastic and uninhibited • Both playful and serious • Love to play class games but can have serious discussions a moment later
<p>8-year-olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full of energy, need physical release • Love group activities • Enjoy socializing • Limited attention span 	<p>13-year-olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of physical energy • Moody and sensitive • Will not do as well with cooperative games as 12-year-olds and older teens • Boys move awkwardly, girls are more agile
<p>9-year-olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like to push physical limits • Often worried or anxious • Still learning physical control • Restless 	<p>14-year-olds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very energetic • Need lots of exercise • Typically loud and rambunctious • Need physical release • Perform/behave better in afternoon • Like challenges

Energizers Used Today

Switch

Students place their right hand in front of them, with the thumb up and all the fingers curled in. Then they place their left hand in front of them, with the pointer finger straight out.

Once everyone is ready, call out “Switch!”

Instantly everyone switches the positions of their thumb and pointer finger so that the right index finger is now pointing straight out and the left thumb is pointing straight up.

Teacher continues to call switch, challenging students to reverse thumb and finger positions.

Captain’s Coming

Teacher stands in front of the room and gives directions for students to follow:

Port—students take a step to the left

Starboard—students take a step to the right

Bow—students take a step forward

Stern—students take a step back

Liver for Lunch—students pretend to gag

Captain’s Coming—students salute and say, “Aye, Aye, Captain!”

Swab the Deck—students kneel down and pretend to clean the floor

Playing Card Math

All students get a playing card.

Have students mix and mingle, varying group size for each direction.

Have students:

- Create sums
- Find the difference
- Product
- Quotient
- Create a fraction (proper, improper, mixed number)
- Is it a prime number?
- Is it a composite number?

Continued ►

Walk, Stop (Name, Clap)

Round 1—Students are instructed to follow the directions:

- ▶ Walk means walk, stop means stop (call out each direction a few times)
- ▶ Teacher then reverses direction (walk means stop, stop means walk)

Round 2—Still using the reversed directions from round 1, add in next level:

- ▶ When teacher says “Name,” students call out their first name. When teacher says “Clap,” students clap once.
- ▶ Teacher calls out all four directions: Walk (stop), Stop (walk), Name, Clap.
- ▶ Next round, teacher reverses “Name” to mean clap, “Clap” to mean name.

Add in variations as students get better at these commands, for example, Hop, Dance; Sit, Stand

Double This Double That

Students stand facing a partner.

In unison, partners do a series of hand motions while they chant:

Double, Double Tap pinkie side of fists against pinkie side of partner’s fists, twice.

This, This Tap palms against partner’s palms, twice.

Double, Double Tap pinkie side of fists against pinkie side of partner’s fists, twice.

That, That Tap back of hands against back of partner’s hands, twice.

Double, This Tap pinkie side of fists against pinkie side of partner’s fists, then tap palms against partner’s palms.

Double, That Tap pinkie side of fists against pinkie side of partner’s fists, then tap back of hands against back of partner’s hands.

Double, Double Tap pinkie side of fists against pinkie side of partner’s fists, twice.

This, That Tap palms against partner’s palms, then tap back of hands against back of partner’s hands.

Continued ►

Four Corners

Teacher poses a question that has four possible responses, and designates one corner of the room for each response.

Example: Which part of the U.S. would you live in if you could move right now?

Corner #1—East coast

Corner #2—Midwest

Corner #3—Mountain states

Corner #4—West coast

Students reflect on their choice and move to a corner. Once in the corner, students can pair up and discuss their choice. (30–45 seconds)

Repeat with new questions.

Variations: Can be used for academic processing as well as helping students to get to know each other.