

# Motor Break Activities for the Classroom

Brought to you by the Lincoln Middle School 5210 Committee



## In Between Laps

- Have students run a lap together, and stop when they reach you to receive their next challenge (do 5 twirls, pat your head and run your belly, spell your name backwards while walking backwards, 30 second squat against the wall, 10 jumping jacks).
- They should continue running once they complete each challenge and you should give them a new challenge after each trip.



## Buzzy Bees

- Tell the students to begin slowly jogging around the room in a line.
- Tell them they are going to count down the line as they move (start with one), but every time they come across a number with or a multiple of a seven (7, 14, 17, 21, 27, etc.), they must say “buzz.”
- If a person misses, they must begin at one again.



## Follow the Leader

- Have the class form a single straight line and appoint the first person in the line as the leader.
- Tell him/her to begin moving around the classroom. She/he may use any movement she/he wants, as long as she/he keeps moving around the room.
- The rest of the class should follow behind the leader imitating her/his movements.
- Every so often, appoint the next student in line as the new leader (former leader moves to the back of the line)





Every Day!

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- 2** hours or less recreational screen time
- 1** hour or more of physical activity
- 0** sugary drinks, more water & low fat milk

Please note: These activities were collected and adapted from many sources, including *Take-Time*, *Brain Gym*, *Mighty Milers*, *Yoga Cards*, and occupational therapy techniques.



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### Music Mania (need music)

- Tell the students when you turn the music on, they should jog around the classroom at a comfortable pace.
- When you turn the music off, they should walk.
- Keep turning the music on and off, increasing the frequency towards the end to make the activity more challenging for all involved.



### Strike a Pose (need music)

- Tell the students when you turn the music on, they should jog around the classroom at a comfortable pace.
- When you turn the music off, they should freeze and strike a funny and/or dramatic pose (demonstrate!).
- At the end, you can have them each strike their favorite pose. (Madonna's song "Vogue" is perfect for this activity!).



### Animal Run

- Tell the students they are going to do some laps, but they will need to change up their speed according to the animal you call out.
- Have them start by jogging, then call out "cheetah."
- Other animals you can use are: rabbit, horse, penguin, turtle, chicken, hawk, ostrich, squirrel, fox, sloth, snail, hippopotamus, elephant, jaguar, dog, spider, gazelle.
- You can also have them adopt the movements of the animal(s) instead of the speed.



### Loopy Laps

- Tell the students, today is "Loopy Laps Day!"
- Tell them they are going to run their laps in funny ways.
- They will begin by skipping one lap around the classroom (or a timed interval).
- Next, have them jog, squat, run sideways, kick (carefully!), hop, walk backwards, dance, high knees, gallop, slide, grapevine, etc.





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## Reverse Sit ups

- Students will jog a lap, then sit in their chairs and pull knees up to their chest for 30 seconds.
- Repeat for three rounds (or until students are satisfactorily challenged).



## Bicycles on Desks

- Students sit on their desks and lean back onto hands for stability. Lift legs and bicycle in the air for 1 minute. Rest and repeat.



## Partner Twists

- Stand back-to-back with a partner.
- #1 twists to one side and puts the opposite arm out for #2.
- #2 twists and touches palm-to-palm or finger-to-finger with #1.
- #1 twists to the other side and does the same thing.
- How fast and accurate are you and your partner  
This activity increases left/right brain connection!



## Cross Crawls

- In a standing position, lift your left knee and touch it with your right hand.
- Repeat using the opposite knee and hand.
- Try it for 30 seconds.
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## Back Cross Crawls

- In a standing position, touch your left hand to your right foot behind your back.
- Repeat using the opposite hand and foot.
- Try it for 30 seconds. This activity increases left/right brain connection!



## Group Slide

- Ask the students to follow your directions.
- Step forward if you... did your homework.
- Take a step back and do a jumping jack if you... had a good day.
- Slide to the right if you... are looking forward to summer.
- Slide to the left if you... want to earn an “A” in this class.
- You can also set this to music (step forward, slide back/jumping jack, slide right, slide left, step forward, etc.)



## Stand Up/Sit Down

- Tell students to move their chairs back from their desks.
- Tell the group that you are going to read a series of questions. If their answer is “yes,” they should stand up and then sit down quickly.
- Sample questions: Do you like fruit? Do you play a musical instrument? Did you put on shoes today? Do you speak a language other than English? Have you ever done the dishes? Have you ever traveled outside the country? Have you ever had an argument with a friend? Do you like to dance? Do you like swimming?
- Improvise and get to know your students!



## Cross Crawl II

- Raise and elevate the right arm above the head, at the same time raise the opposite leg, bending the knee.
- Re-pattern by turning the head toward the raised right arm. Then straighten the head as the arm and leg come down.
- Repeat the procedure with the left arm and opposite right leg, turning head towards the raised left arm.
- Complete a series of 12 for each side for a total of 24 movements.





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## High Knee Run/March

- Run or march in place, lifting your knees in front of you as high as you can.
- Run or march for one minute. Rest for 15 seconds.
- Run or march for 30 seconds. Rest for 10 seconds.
- Run or march for 15 seconds. Breathe and stretch.



## Tree Pose

- Balance on one foot.
- Place your other foot on the inside of your balanced leg. Your knee should be pointing to the side and your heel pointing up your leg.
- It is okay to leave your toes on the ground if you need to.
- Bring your hands together in front of you or overhead. Change legs after 30 seconds.



## Wood Chopper

- Stand with your feet hip distance apart.
- Squat down with arms extended in front of you with a ball between your hands or just bring your hands together in a fist.
- As you lower in a squat bring the ball towards the ground.
- As you rise up, bring the ball over your head.
- Keep your eyes looking straight ahead the entire time.



## Chair Pose

- Feet together. Legs together.
- Keeping your knees together, sit back like you were sitting in a chair.
- Hold that position as long as you can.
- Relax when you need too, and then try again.





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## Skate in Place

- Pretend to ice skate in place.
- As you move side-to-side, bring your heel behind you as high as you can.
- Swing your arms side to side.
- “Skate” for one minute, rest for 15 seconds, and repeat.



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## Jump Rope

- Pretend jump rope. Make sure you're using your arms!
- Jump for 1 minute, rest for 15 seconds. Repeat



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## Elbows to Knee

- Extend your arms overhead.
- Lock your thumbs together. Lift one knee up as you pull your arms/elbows down to touch that knee.
- Arms go back overhead as that foot goes back down to the ground.
- Lift the other knee as you pull your arms down to touch the knee.
- Stand nice and tall to help your abdominal muscles get strong!



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## Double Doodle

- Stand up and spread out.
- Tell students to scribble with both hands in front of their bodies in the air.
- Doodle: shapes, your name, animals, etc.
- Ask the students questions in which they doodle their answers: How do you feel? What are you doing after school? Write in complete sentences.



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## The Owl

- Stand up and spread out.
- Turn head to the right and raise right shoulder up to your chin, then relax.
- Slowly turn head to the left and raise left shoulder up to your chin, then relax.
- Repeat 10 times for each side.
- Breathe deeply.



## Twist & Twirl (music optional)

- Stand up and spread out.
- Put on the music to get the participants ready and excited.
- The leader asks: Can you twist your ankles? Wrists? Hips? Can you twist low to the ground? High? To the left? To the right? Can you twist on one foot? How about the other? Can you twirl your arms forward? Can you twirl your arms backward? Can you twirl your body? Can you twist your body



## Chair Sit Ups

- Sit near the edge of your chair with your back straight.
- Hold on to the seat.
- Lean your shoulders back slightly and lift your knees toward your chest.
- Lower your feet back to the floor for 10 repetitions.
- Do five sets or as many sets as you can.



## Hip Abductors

- This exercise works your inner thighs.
- Put your fists between your knees.
- Squeeze your knees together.
- Hold for a count of 10.
- Repeat this chair exercises 10 times.
- Tip: Students may do this exercise if they feel fidgety during class, as it is minimally disruptive.





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## Push-Ups

- Lean your hands against the wall, feet together and approximately one yard or one meter away from the wall.
- Complete one set of push-ups (try to get to 10).
- Rest for 15 seconds.
- Try 5 sets.



## Mighty-Mathletes

- Have students count off starting with “one.” (Make sure students remember their number.)
- Call out activities correlating to the students’ numbers.
- Examples: Numbers 1-10, do a lap. Numbers 10-20, run in place. (one minute) All even numbers, do jumping jacks. All odd numbers, pretend jump-rope (one minute). All multiples of \_\_\_\_, skip around the room once. Everyone else, do one sideways lap.
- Vary according to your needs.



## Body Bingo

- Tell the students that you are going to call out various statements. They should move (jog in place or around the room, jump-rope, skip, hop, etc.) whenever one of the statements applies to them and freeze whenever something does not.
- Example statements: I have two brothers. I speak more than one language. I go to school. I have been to another country. I did my homework. I love summer. I can spell cat. My name has an H in it. I am four feet tall. I have a bed. I eat vegetables. My favorite color is blue. I eat food. I have a dog. I have played basketball. I love to dance.



## Favorite Swap (need music)

- Tell the students as the music plays, they should move around the classroom (however you decide-walk, jog, side-step, etc.)
- When the music stops, they should find a partner (person closest to them).
- Then you will ask a question and they should share a one-word response with their partner.
- When the music comes back on, they should move again. (Find a new partner for each new question.)
- Questions: What is your favorite... place? Song? Singer? Movie? Book? Sport? School subject? Food? Weekend Activity? Animal? Color?





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## Chair Aerobics

- Have students pull their chairs out from their desks.
- They should sit up straight, keeping their ankles together and do leg lifts by extending their legs to a 180-degree-angle for 20 repetitions.
- Then have students stand behind the chair and while holding the back for balance, extend their right leg out to the side to a 45-degree angle for 20 repetitions.
- Repeat with the left leg.



## Boogie Days

- Have students spread out across the room and play one school-appropriate song and let kids bust-a-move.
- Have them follow your moves and make sure movements are appropriate.
- Try doing some vintage moves like the Twist, the mashed potato or just jumping around.



## Mix It Up

- Create a dance sequence one move at a time by calling out a move.
- Add one move each time through the sequence.
- Moves could include: stomp left, high five, jump twice, spin in a circle, squat, etc.



## Acting Out

- Read a paragraph or page of a book, and every time an action verb comes up, the students have to act it out.
- Great review strategy!





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## Look Ma, No Hands!

- Have students put an object on their desks or on the floor (pen, notebook, ID card) and call out different body part they have to try to pick it up with (ex: elbows, feet, knees, forearm, neck, etc).



## Quiz Me

- While reviewing for a test, ask the students a series of true-or-false questions.
- If the question is true students should jump in place for 15 seconds. If it is false they should touch their toes.



## Shake It

- Students remain seated and raise their hands in the air.
- Have them start by shaking their right hand 10 times, left hand 10 times, left foot 10 times and right foot 10 times.
- Repeat counting down the number of shakes from 9-1.
- Speed up or slow down the counting to keep it interesting.



## Mime Yourself

- Have students get into pairs and without talking mirror each other's actions.
- Specify who will be the leader to start, and tell students that without talking they should switch back and forth as to who has the lead.





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## Take the Long Way

- Before your next class change, stop class 3 minutes early and take your students the long way to their next room.



## Rainstorm

- Have students follow your lead; begin by having students very lightly rubbing their hands together, then lightly snap, slap their thighs, slap their thighs and stomp their feet (the rainstorm is at its peak!).
- Then stop stomping their feet, just slap their thighs, return to lightly snapping, rubbing their hands and stop.
- Do each action for 20 seconds.



## Train Like a Pro

- Have students emulate various sports for 10-15 seconds each: kick a field goal, shoot a jump shot, run through tires, swing a bat, serve a tennis ball, downhill skiing, spike a volleyball, swing a golf club, throw a football, shoot an arrow, shoot a hockey puck, swim.
- IMPROVISE! !



## Take a Seat!

- Have students stand up and pull their chairs away from their desks. They should stand in front of their chair (seat facing out).
- Have students quickly sit, then stand, sit then stand 8-10 times.
- Next, quickly repeat sitting halfway down and standing, repeating 8-10 times.
- Last, have students barely sit (just touching the chair) and stand quickly repeating 8-10 times.





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## Do the Conga! (Need Music)

- Have students line up, placing their hands on the shoulders of the student in front of them.
- Start some music and lead students around the classroom.



## Walk & Talk

- Break students into groups of 2 or 3, and assign a topic related to a current lesson plan that students need to discuss while taking a 5-minute walk.
- They should report their discussion back to the class.



## Feel the Beat (Need Music)

- Have every student get a partner. Partners will stand facing each other with a desk in between them.
- Place a crumpled piece of paper (from the recycle bin!) or other object between them on the desk.
- Turn on some music and have students perform the following actions to the beat of the music: tap knees, tap shoulders, clap, tap knees, shoulders, clap, clap partners hands (both, right-right, left-left).
- When the music stops, students try to be the first to grab the paper ball/object.
- Repeat 3-5 times.



## Play Cards! (Need a Deck of Cards)

- Using a standard card deck, assign an activity to each of the four suits (ex: jumping in place, running in place, sit-ups, squats).
- Pass out a card to each student and they have to do the activity for that suit for 20 seconds.
- Have students pass their cards to their neighbor and repeat for 5 passes.
- Add a twist: have students perform the activity the number of times designated on the card.





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## The Classroom Workout Circuit

- Have students do the following in place for 1 minute each (feel free to mix up the order): jog in place, high knees, jumping jacks, hop on one foot, hop on the other foot, hop on both feet.



## Name of Activity:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



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1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
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