



## Middle School Activity Breaks

### Background/Rationale

Recent studies in Texas have found a correlation between physically fit students and academic achievement. In particular, results from FITNESSGRAM tests and PASS & CATCH have shown that students who are physically fit are more likely to do well on standardized tests.

Based on the evidence that students learn better when they are physically fit, we have provided a list of activity breaks for use in and outside of the classroom. Activity breaks are classroom-based physical activities that can incorporate subject content and allow students to be physically active while learning. Activity breaks can be inserted at the beginning of class to energize the students, in the middle of class to break up the work load, or at the end of class as a review. Basically, activity breaks can be used at any point during the class period at the teacher's discretion.

### Creating a Physically Active Classroom

- Safety is key! Make sure all objects are out of the way for safe movement (e.g. book bags).
- Establish ground rules and expectations (examples include: setting safe boundaries, moving with control and awareness of others, listening and following directions). Make sure each student understands the teacher's expectations prior to the start of the activity.
- Plan the activity in advance.
- Set a time limit for the activity before beginning movement and share this information with students.
- Give clear and concise instructions prior to starting the activity.
- Establish a start signal (e.g., "When I say GO, you will begin walking around the classroom. Ready, GO!").
- Establish a stop signal, such as a "STOP" or "FREEZE" command, a clap, or raised hand.
- Create a positive environment that supports physical activity and that values each child based on individual physical abilities.
- Feel free to motivate with music! (Music can also be used as a start and stop signal.)
- Model enthusiasm for physical activity and participate in the activity!
- Expect Success! Assume all students can, and want, to be active – including those with special needs.



## What to Expect

These 5-10 minute activity breaks were gathered from teachers, the CATCH Activity Boxes, the East Carolina University Middle School Energizers, the Yoga Care Foundation and the ABC Fitness Teacher's Manual. Feel free to use them as directed, or tailor them to suit your subject area, activity space, and time allotment.

### Any Subject

1. Over, Under, Around, and Through
2. Meet Me in the Middle
3. 10-Second Fitness
4. Team Quiz Hustle
5. Fictional Charades
6. Poker Fitness
7. Toe-To-Toe
8. Chapter Review Charades
9. Don't Throw Your Food, Just the Ball
10. True or False
11. Crazy Questions
12. Two-X-Two Fitness
13. Ask Somebody
14. Hot Tamale
15. Alphabet Soup
16. Scatter Fitness
17. Full Breath
18. Energizing Breath
19. Refining Attention
20. Spine Flex
21. Energizing Side Stretch
22. Breath-Coordinated Toe Touches
23. Triangle
24. Neck Stretch
25. Neck Rotations
26. Shoulder Crunch
27. Shoulder Circles
28. Arm Stretches
29. Standing Spine Stretch
30. Palm Touch behind Back
31. Finger Touch behind Back
32. Seated Spine Twist
33. Ankle Circles

34. Calf Stretch
35. Quad Stretch
36. Classroom Push Up's
37. Chair Dips
38. Seated Leg Lifts
39. Calf Raises
40. Frogger
41. Arm Circles

### Language Arts

42. Guess Who
43. Everybody is a Star
44. Classroom Fables
45. Parts of Speech Go Round
46. Poetry Round-Up

### Math

47. Stop and Solve
48. Over and Under
49. Zero In

### Science

50. Simon Says Body Systems
51. To Infinity and Beyond
52. Shake, Bake, Twist, and Mist

### Social Studies

53. Human Time Line
54. Miles Apart
55. Where Is It? (N, S, E, or W) Directional Jump

Sources:

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Science Middle-School Energizers. East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthy Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch

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CATCH Physical Education Teacher's Guidebook Grades K-8

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PASS & CATCH

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Texas Education Agency, "Physically fit students more likely to do well in school, less likely to be disciplinary problems," news release, March 9, 2009.

# Over, Under, Around, and Through

Activity Break # 1

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** 2 short ropes, scarves, or pieces of cloth/paper per group

**Organization:** Students are scattered throughout the classroom in groups of 3. In each group, 2 members of the group face one another and “hold hands” with pieces of cloth. The third member or “runner” of the group stands to one side facing his or her partners.

## **Description:**

1. The game begins when the teacher calls out a sequence of movements based on the commands Over/Under/Around/Through.
2. Only those 4 commands are used in the game, but they may be used in any sequence and number.
  - a. For instance, if the commands were “Over, under, over, around,” the “runner” in each group would try to complete the sequence as quickly as possible on the “go” command. He or she would be required to go “over” the linked hands, “under” the hands, “over” the hands, then completely “around” both partners.
  - b. To go “through” the partners, the 2 group members facing one another would create a circle (1 set of hands up and the other set down) large enough (about the size of a hula hoop in vertical position) for the “runner” to walk through.
3. Each person in the group should get a chance to be the “runner” and complete the sequence before the teacher calls out a new sequence.
4. Determine how many commands the students can accurately remember.

## **Now try this:**

1. Ask each group of 3 to pick another group they want to challenge.
2. Invite 1 of the groups to pick the next movement sequence.

# Meet Me in the Middle

## Activity Break # 2

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students are paired with a partner. Partners stand on opposite sides of the classroom (or hallway) facing each other, one on one.

### **Description:**

1. Call out an activity to do. Students walk to the center and meet their partner to do the activity.
2. After completing the activity, students turn and walk back to their original places.
3. Add 1 activity each time. For example: 1st time – meet partner in the middle and do a righthanded high five. 2nd time – right-handed high five, add left-handed high five. 3rd time – right-handed high five, left-handed high five, call out favorite physical activity.
4. Add more of the activities: left-handed low five, over the top (back to back), shoot through legs (back to back), right shoe sole, left shoe sole, curl-up five.

### **Now try this:**

1. Determine which pair of students can accurately remember the most combinations.
2. Talk with the PE teacher and utilize fitness activities that students are learning in PE or already know from past PE lessons. Surprise your class with what you know!

# 10 - Second Fitness

Activity Break # 3

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students are paired with a partner and stand at a line (or imaginary line) on the floor.

## **Description:**

1. Students perform the teacher-designated fitness activity (see examples below) for 10 seconds.
2. As 1 student performs the activity, the other partner counts the number of repetitions.
3. The students switch, and partner #2 does the activity. Ask students to do the activity as quickly as they can.

## **Fitness Activity examples:**

1. Forward straddle jump (over the line)
2. Side straddle jump (over the line)
3. Side jumps (over the line)
4. Front and back jumps (over the line)
5. Right foot jump (over the line)
6. Left foot jump (over the line)
7. Scissor jump (over the line)

# Team Quiz Hustle

Activity Break # 4

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** 4 designated stations in the classroom (no equipment is needed), 4 Quiz/Physical Activity cards (pieces of paper/card stock for quiz question and activity)

## Organization:

1. Create 4 quiz/physical activity cards (1 card per station). Write a quiz question on 1 side of the card and a physical activity on the other side of the card (e.g., 20 jumping jacks, jog in place for 30 seconds, imaginary jump rope for 25 seconds).
2. Place a quiz question/physical activity card at each numbered station. The card should be placed with the quiz question face down and the physical activity face up.
3. Divide the class into teams of 3 to 4, with each team starting at a different exercise station (the number of stations may vary).
4. Write the answers to the questions on separate pieces of paper that are numbered according to the station and taped to the chalkboard face down.

## Description:

1. On signal, the team performs the physical activity and then turns the card over to read the question. As a team, they decide on the answer, and 1 person walks to the chalkboard to determine if the group has the correct answer.
2. If their answer is correct, they proceed to the next station.
3. If their answer is incorrect, they go back to the station and repeat the activity. They then move to the next station and repeat the sequence.
4. The first team to complete all stations is the winner.

## Now Try This:

1. Create math, science, health, language arts, or social studies questions.

# Fictional Charades

Activity Break # 5

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Groups of 2 to 3

## Description:

1. Students should write or have written an expressive account (fictional or autobiographical).
2. Students find a partner (teacher can pair students if necessary).
3. Students identify 2 to 3 significant events from their narrative and act them out.
4. Partners guess the gestures for a few minutes, and then the actor shows their partner the written account.
5. The guessing partner offers input (i.e., is it appropriate for the story, does it need more detail, is it worded the way the student imitated it?).

## Now try this:

1. Students can do this activity when introducing inference.
2. Ask students to come up to the front and act out a word (like charades); the other students guess the word, which can include the following:
  - a. Frightened
  - b. Lucky
  - c. Happy
  - d. Tired
  - e. Confused
  - f. Angry

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Source: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# Poker Fitness

Activity Break # 6

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** Copies of Poker Fitness Key Cards, regular deck of cards, paper

**Organization:**

1. Pair students into groups of 2.
2. The teacher creates Poker Fitness Cards (see example below) and gives them to each group or places a few cards around the room that students can refer to as needed.
3. Place the deck of regular cards in the center of the activity area.

**Description:**

1. On signal, 1 player from each group chooses a card from the regular deck that is in the center of the activity area.
2. Students look at the Poker Fitness Key Card and do the activity that corresponds with the card that is drawn (e.g., if the student draws a king, the group will then jog in place for 10 seconds).

**Now try this:**

1. Conclude every class with this activity. Between each card selection ask the students to summarize what they learned during class that day.

**Sample Poker Fitness Key Cards:**

KING: Jog in place for 10 seconds.

QUEEN: Jump rope with an imaginary jump rope for 10 seconds.

JACK: 15 wall push-ups

10: 15 jumping jacks

9: 5 knee tuck jumps (knees come to chest when jumping)

8: 10 squats

7: 10 jumping jacks

6: 10 wall push-ups

5: Dance for 10 seconds

4: 15 straddle jumps

3: 10 straddle jumps

2: Shoot 5 paper balls into the trash can.

ACE: Give the teacher 5 high-fives



# Toe-To-Toe

Activity Break # 7

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students are scattered in a 20 x 20 yard area, or in the classroom. This activity can be used as an introduction to class every day to get students mentally and physically “warmed up.”

## Description:

1. As students enter the classroom, greet them at the door and ask them to put their belongings down, and begin to walk around the classroom, in no particular pattern.
2. When all of the students are in the classroom, tell them to quickly find someone and get “toe-to-toe” with that person.
3. Instruct the students to greet their toe-to-toe partner and exchange names.
4. Ask the students to share with their partner something they learned in class the day before, and then march in place.
5. Once everyone is marching, instruct the students to march to another partner and get elbow-to-elbow with that person.
6. Instruct the students to greet their elbow-to-elbow partner and exchange names.
7. Ask the students to share with their new partner what they learned yesterday at school and then do 10 jumping jacks.
8. Students should continue exchanging partners and sharing different types of information until the class is sufficiently “warmed up.”
9. Tell the students to go to their seats, and then have a few of them share the questions they had about yesterday’s lessons.

## Now try this:

1. Conclude every class with this activity, summarizing what they learned during class that day.
2. Possible “partner” commands: knees, pinkies, thumbs, shoulders, backs, hips, heels, etc.
3. Teach anatomy by using anatomical names for “partner” commands.
4. Possible activity commands: walk, march, touch an object in the classroom, perform a set of wall push-ups, jumping jacks, etc.
5. Possible “share with your partner” commands: a physical activity you did with your family over the weekend, what you did in PE class today, what you want to be when you grow up, etc.

# Chapter Review Charades

Activity Break # 8

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** Flashcards, timer

**Organization:** Groups of 3

## Description:

1. In this activity, students will play charades and compete in small groups.
2. The teacher prepares a set of cards with various concepts and vocabulary words from the objective covered in class.
3. One member of the group picks a card, and then acts out the concept for his or her group.
4. The group has 2 minutes to guess the concept; group members must march or jog in place until they guess the correct answer or time expires.

## Examples:

1. Create a set of cards using a book the students were asked to read. Each card could be a character from the book.
2. Create a set of cards based on physical activities (e.g., tennis, volleyball, golf, washing dishes, vacuuming).

## Now try this:

1. Call out a concept, and each group talks about how to physically illustrate the concept.
2. Each group acts out a concept for the class, summarizing what they learned during class that day.
3. Play charades as a class and ask students to come to the front of the class and perform the concept.
4. Create a set of cards of rival school mascot characters.

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Source: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# Don't Throw Your Food, Just the Ball

Activity Break # 9

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** A paper ball or a soft foam ball for each group

**Organization:** Groups of 6

## Description:

1. Divide the class into groups of 6 and tell group members to stand in a circle.
2. Each group should have a ball. Students begin throwing the ball in a pattern. They will always throw to the same person (e.g., Robert always throws to Susan, Susan always to Bill, Bill always to Joe, and so on, and the pattern repeats when the ball reaches the first person again). While students are throwing the ball, ask them to march or jog in place.
3. Once a pattern has been established, the teacher will call out "GO," "SLOW," or "WHOA."
4. Students must name a food in that food category before throwing the ball to the next person. For example, when the teacher calls out "GO food," the student says "apple" and then passes the ball. (Set a time limit, i.e., student may only hold the ball for 5 seconds.)
5. Allow several students in each group to name a GO food before calling out a different category. See GO, SLOW, WHOA description below.

## Now try this:

1. Call out a food group from MyPlate ([www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)) and ask students to name GO foods from that group (e.g., Meat and Beans: turkey).
2. Call out fast food items and ask students to suggest healthier fast food alternatives for those items (e.g., Double cheeseburger with bacon: regular cheeseburger; Large french fries: small french fries).

## GO, SLOW, WHOA Description:

In the CATCH program, foods are categorized into 3 groups: GO, SLOW, and WHOA. For a complete list of GO, SLOW, and WHOA foods, go to: [http://www.sph.uth.tmc.edu/catch/whats\\_new\\_food.htm](http://www.sph.uth.tmc.edu/catch/whats_new_food.htm).

**GO** foods are lower in fat and/or sugar, and/or they are whole foods (that is, less processed). GO foods include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, skim or 1% milk, and low-fat dairy products.

**SLOW** foods are higher in fat and/or sugar, and/or they are more processed than GO foods. SLOW foods include vegetables with added butter or a cheese sauce, fruits with added sugar, pancakes, white rice, baked french fries, chicken with the skin, and 2% milk.

**WHOA** foods are highest in fat and/or sugar, and/or they are the most processed. WHOA foods include candy, cookies, fried foods, regular hamburgers, ice cream, whole milk, soft drinks and sugary cereals.

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Source: Adapted from East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# True or False

Activity Break # 10

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students stand at their desks.

## Description:

1. Call out a series of statements such as:
  - a. Your heart is a muscle. (True)
  - b. White bread is more nutritious than whole-wheat bread. (False)
  - c. Exercise makes your heart stronger. (True)
  - d. The main function of the heart is to supply oxygen to your body. (True)
  - e. Milk does not give you strong bones. (False)
  - f. You should be eating 5 cups of fruits and vegetables every day. (True)
  - g. Blood does not transport the oxygen from the heart to other parts of the body. (False)
  - h. The main sources of protein are meat, fish, and beans. (True)
  - i. You have muscles that move even when you don't think to tell them to. (True)
2. Students respond to each of these statements by marching in place if the answer is false and doing jumping jacks if the answer is true (set time limit of 10 seconds for the physical activity).
3. Instruct students to make larger movements—such as jogging in place or doing lunges—to increase the intensity for true or false statements.

## Now try this:

1. Choose different movements for true and false answers.
2. Have a brief discussion as to why each statement was true or false.
3. Base the statements on the concepts you discussed during class.
4. Use to review for a test.

# Crazy Questions

Activity Break # 11

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:**

1. This activity is a form of group jeopardy. The teacher selects a list of vocabulary words or a set of questions from the end of a chapter. Students are grouped into 4 teams. They must complete a task to receive each question. When each student in a group has completed an assigned task, the students must raise their hands to receive a question and then provide the answer as a group.

**Description:**

1. Call out the task for the groups:
  - a. To receive the first question, students must jump to the sky and slap the floor with their hand. Repeat 5 times.
  - b. To receive the second question, students must hop on 1 foot while turning in a circle 5 times.
  - c. To receive the third question, students must jog in place for 30 seconds.
  - d. To receive the fourth question, students must do imaginary jump rope as fast as possible for 10 seconds.
  - e. To receive the fifth question, students must complete all previous movements again, but one right after the other.
2. When the groups complete their task and raise their hands, identify 1 student from each group to receive a question. This student then relays the question to his or her group members.
3. The group should work together to provide an answer and then tell the teacher their answer.
4. Tell the students whether their answer is correct or incorrect and give them their next task.

**Now try this:**

1. This activity can be used for sequencing, listening skills, auditory procession, and multiple intelligences.

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Source: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# Two-x-Two Fitness

Activity Break # 12

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** Copies of the Two-x-Two Fitness cards (found on next page), and writing utensils.

**Organization:**

1. Each card should have a list of activities that each student is to complete with a partner.  
*(Note: the number of activities listed should be determined by the amount of time allotted for this activity.)*
2. Students can find a new partner for each task or perform all tasks with the same partner.  
This is determined by the teacher.
3. The teacher should be in a central location during the activity and face all students so they can hear the commands.
4. Provide a box of pencils if the students are to record their work.

**Description:**

1. Students are given a Two-x-Two Fitness card and are asked to find a partner.
2. The teacher establishes start and stop signals (e.g., clapping once, twice, or 3 times).
3. Signal the group to begin completing their fitness card.
4. Signal the group to stop. Ask the class how many activities they were able to complete.

**Now try this:**

1. Ask the PE teacher for some suggestions for activities for the Two-x-Two Fitness card.
2. Offer extra credit towards an assignment for students who complete at least half of their Two-x-Two Fitness card.
3. Assign this as homework for students to take home and complete with their families.

# Two-x-Two Fitness (continued)

Activity Break # 12

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

You will need a partner for these activities. You do not have to do the activities in the order they are presented. Sign each other's card after you have performed the task.

You and somebody:	Partner Initials
Do 15 wall push-ups.	
Name a physical activity that you enjoy.	
Name your favorite GO snack.	
Do 15 toe touches.	
Stand on your tip toes for 10 seconds.	
Name 5 GO foods.	
Jog in place for 30 seconds.	
Name a physical activity you do with your family.	
Do a 30-second dance.	
High-five your classroom teacher.	

# Ask Somebody . . .

Activity Break # 13

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** Each student should have a copy of the Ask Somebody Activity Sheet (found on next page) and a writing utensil.

**Organization:** Students should be scattered throughout the classroom.

## **Description:**

1. Distribute the Ask Somebody Activity Sheet.
2. Give the students 3 minutes to complete their sheet.
3. Signal the group to stop and ask a few volunteers to share their findings.

## **Now try this:**

1. Give the students less time to complete the activity sheet. Provide a healthy award/reward for the person with the most completed sheet.
2. Create an Ask Somebody Study Sheet to use for a quiz or test review.

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Source: Modified Icebreaker, original source unknown.



# Ask Somebody . . .

Activity Break # 13

<b>Ask Somebody</b>	<b>What did they say?</b>	<b>Who said/did it?</b>
To do 10 jumping jacks with you.		
To name his or her favorite GO food.		
To jog in place for 10 seconds.		
To name his or her favorite physical activity.		
To do 3 push-ups with you.		
To name 1 thing he or she learned in class today.		
To do 10 wall push-ups.		
To tell the teacher, "Thank You."		
To do 10 jumping jacks in 10 seconds.		

Source: Modified Icebreaker, original source unknown.

# Hot Tamale

Activity Break # 14

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students stand at their desks.

## Description:

1. Write each direction and corresponding activity on the board or overhead to make them easier for the students to follow:
  - Move backwards - back stroke (swimming motion)
  - Move forward - march in place
  - Move to either side - side stretch in the direction of the hot tamale
  - Up higher - climbing ladder motion
  - Down lower - squats
  - Within 1 foot of the tamale - students pretend they are stepping on hot coals (in place)
2. One student exits the classroom.
3. The rest of the class watches the teacher hide the “hot tamale” (can be any object) somewhere in the classroom.
4. The student who exited the classroom re-enters.
5. The rest of the class tries to guide him or her to the hidden tamale by performing various physical activities, with each activity corresponding to a different direction (i.e. move backwards–back stroke). Students are not allowed to talk.
6. Once the student locates the hidden “hot tamale,” another student is selected to exit the classroom, and the “hot tamale” is hidden in another location so that the game can be repeated.

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Source: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# Alphabet Soup

Activity Break # 15

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** Alphabet blocks or letter tiles (2 sets) divided into 4 stations around the room; additional sets may be needed for vowels.

**Organization:** Divide the students into teams of 4; assign each student his or her own number.

## **Description:**

1. The object of this activity is for students to correctly spell vocabulary words.
2. Call out a vocabulary word related to the subject area.
3. Call out a number. The student with that number will get 1 letter from a station and return to the group. All students remain moving (e.g., marching in place) for the entire activity.
4. Continue calling out numbers. Students take turns getting letters until a team has spelled the word correctly.
5. The first team to spell the word correctly will earn a point.
6. Continue until all words have been spelled.

## **Now try this:**

1. Perform the activity as above and then ask teams to make a sentence with the vocabulary words or to define the vocabulary word.
2. Make new laminated alphabet cards.

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Source: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# Scatter Fitness

Activity Break # 16

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None needed, but music can be complementary.

**Organization:** Students should be scattered throughout the classroom.

## **Description:**

1. Explain or demonstrate 2 to 3 fitness activities (see fitness activities below).
2. Establish signals for each activity, including a stop signal (e.g., 1 clap = walking in place; raising 1 hand = marching; 3 claps = stop activity).
3. Begin the activity with a fitness activity from below (e.g., jogging in place).
4. Students perform the activity until the teacher gives the next signal (e.g., 1 clap = walking in place).
5. Continue this sequence until all activities have been done, repeating if time permits.
6. Toward the end, combine all activities taught, one right after the other, then give the stop signal.

## **Scatter Fitness Activities:**

- Walking
- Marching
- Jogging in place
- Knee ups
- Jumping jacks
- Straddle jumps
- Side jumps
- Ocean wave: a group wave from left to right with hands flying up then down, or students jumping up then down.

## **Now try this:**

1. Talk with the PE teacher and utilize fitness activities that students are learning in PE or already know from past PE lessons. Surprise your class with what you know!

# Full Breath

Activity Break # 17

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit or stand by their desks.

## Description:

This is a three-part breath. The teacher will lead each part separately, and then put all three parts together.

1. Guide students to close their eyes and shift their attention to their breathing.
2. Next, have students place their hands just in front of their stomachs, palms toward their body.
3. Have students inhale one full deep breath, just enough so that their stomachs touch their hands.
4. Then, have students exhale and pull their stomachs inward, so as to remove as much air as possible.
5. Keep students going, taking several deep breaths, for at least 1 minute with this part of the sequence.
6. Have students then shift their hands to their ribs, placing them just over their ribs so as to touch their hands once they inhale.
7. Have students inhale deeply enough to push their ribs into their hands and exhale out.
8. Maintain this portion of the sequence for another minute, taking several deep breaths.
9. Finally, have students move their hands to hover just over their collarbones.
10. Have students inhale deeply enough to lift their chest up into their hands and exhale out.
11. Maintain this portion of the sequence for another minute, taking several deep breaths.
12. Tell the students to now combine all three parts (stomach, ribs, and collar bone) in one inhalation and the reverse for exhalation: using just one deep breath inward in the same order, students fill their stomach, fill their chest, and lift the upper chest. Students exhale by reversing this: deflate the stomach, pull the belly button inward, empty the lungs, and release the upper chest.

## Now try this:

1. To demonstrate how breathing rate influences heart rate and the connection between body systems, have students check their pulse before and after the breathing exercise. If needed, see the "Exercise & Heart Rate" worksheet, found in the 6th grade lesson, "The Heart is a Muscle" for a description on how to count and calculate pulse.

# Energizing Breath

Activity Break # 18

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 2-3 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit or stand by their desks.

## Description:

Three quick inhales are each paired with a specific arm movement, while the deep exhales are paired with a forward fold, for a detoxifying effect.

1. Students start by standing with arms comfortably hanging at the side; legs are hip distance apart with knees slightly bent, allowing the lower body to slightly bounce with each of the three inhalations.
2. On the first quick inhale, have students raise their arms straight in front of their body, parallel to the ground.
3. On the second quick inhale, have students swing their arms out to the side (T-position).
4. On the third quick inhale, guide students to swing their arms straight up to the ceiling, framing the head.
5. Finally, guide students to bend at their waists and bring arms forward to sweep the ground with their fingertips, as they forcefully exhale through their mouth.
6. Repeat as needed.

## Now try this:

1. To demonstrate how breathing rate influences heart rate and the connection between body systems, have students check their pulse before and after the breathing exercise. If needed, see the "Exercise & Heart Rate" worksheet, found in the 6th grade lesson, "The Heart is a Muscle" for a description on how to count and calculate pulse.

# Refining Attention

Activity Break # 19

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 3 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit at their desks.

## Description:

1. Guide students to observe their breath without trying to modify it for 30 seconds.
2. While they are breathing, explain and demonstrate the following exercise.
3. Once explanation/demonstration is complete, guide students to close their eyes to begin the exercise.
4. With hands resting on the lap, students will touch the thumb of one hand with the fingers of the other hand.
  - a. During the entire inhalation, the thumb taps against the index finger first, then the middle finger, the ring finger, and finally the pinkie.
  - b. During the entire exhalation, work backwards with the thumb first tapping the pinkie, then the ring finger, the middle finger, and finally the index.
5. Repeat this motion again with the same hand.
6. Once 2 repetitions of this motion are completed on one hand, repeat 2 more times with the opposite hand for a total of 4 full (inhale and exhale) breaths.

## Now try this:

1. To demonstrate how breathing rate influences heart rate and the connection between body systems, have students check their pulse before and after the breathing exercise. If needed, see the "Exercise & Heart Rate" worksheet, found in the 6th grade lesson, "The Heart is a Muscle" for a description on how to count and calculate pulse.

# Spine Flex

Activity Break # 20

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

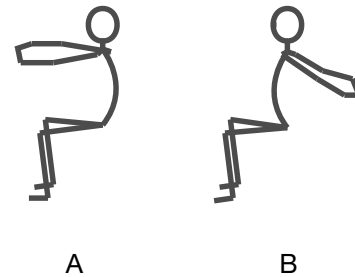
**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit or stand at their desks.

## Description:

1. Students start by sitting on the edge of their chair (or standing by their desk), feet planted firmly on the ground.
2. Have students inhale deeply, rounding their back (like a cat) while clasping their hands together palms out and placing their arms directly in front of them (see diagram A).
3. Next, guide students to exhale fully through the mouth, arching their back, while now bringing their arms behind their backs, clasping their hands together and extending their arms behind them (see diagram B).
4. Have students inhale fully one more time, maintaining the latter position.
5. Finally, have students stretch forward as they exhale through their mouths.
6. Repeat as needed.



## Now try this:

1. For a more energizing version with heart rate elevation, try this: With students seated in a comfortable cross-legged pose, have them do the spine flex with a more rapid motion without the paired arm movements. Inhales and exhales would happen more forcefully through the nostrils, at a rate of about one inhale/exhale breath cycle per second. Do for one minute. Pause for 15-30 seconds and let students observe and normalize their breathing. Then go into a second set for another minute.



# Energizing Side Stretch

Activity Break # 21

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 1-2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students stand by their desks.

## Description:

1. While standing, have students raise their arms over their head and press palms together tightly. Arms are straight if possible and press into the ears.
2. Have students hold this pose for 10 seconds, while deeply breathing.
3. Next, have students inhale deeply, and then exhale through the mouth as the body tilts to one side for another 10 seconds (the body should take a crescent moon shape and there should be no leaning forward or backward while holding this pose. Students should feel a deep stretch in their outer obliques).
4. Guide students to inhale deeply, as body returns to the standing position and exhale through the mouth as the body tilts to the other side for 10 seconds.
5. Finally, guide students to bring their position back to the original center position.
6. Guide students to close their eyes, and breathe deeply for the final 10 seconds.
7. Repeat as needed.



## Now try this:

1. Have students stand against the wall as a useful way to get them to maintain alignment.
2. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Breath-Coordinated Toe Touches

Activity Break # 22

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 3 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

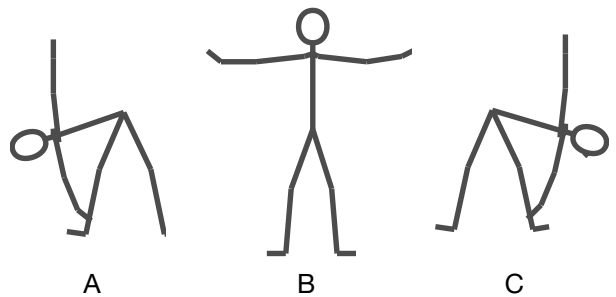
**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students stand by their desks, with plenty of room to move.

## Description:

1. Students start by standing with legs approximately three feet apart, bringing arms up to a T-position.
2. Guide students to inhale deeply through the nostrils.
3. Twisting at the hips, have students reach with one hand to the opposite foot (i.e. left hand touches the right foot), while exhaling through the mouth (students should feel their hamstrings begin to stretch, see diagram A).



4. Guide students to inhale deeply while going back to standing T-position (see diagram B).
5. Have students repeat on the opposite side (i.e. right hand touches left foot, while exhaling, see diagram C).
6. Guide students in a series of repetitions, as time allows.

**Note:** The key here is to encourage them to coordinate the movement with the breath. Thus each student will fall into a different pace and that is fine; they should move at the pace their breath naturally establishes for them.

## Now try this:

1. Turn on slow music to help set a slow breathing pace.
2. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Triangle

## Activity Break # 23

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 3 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

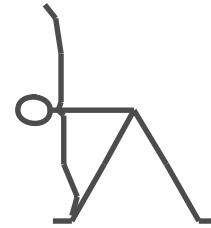
**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students stand by their desks, with plenty of room to move.

### Description:

1. Have students stand with their legs more than hip-width apart, both feet facing forward.
2. Guide students to bring both arms up to their sides in the T-position, palms down.
3. Next, have students turn their right foot 90 degrees, so it is now parallel to their arms.
4. Guide students to slowly bring their right hand (without bending the arm) down to touch their right shin or if possible, the right foot.



**Note:** This is a difficult pose that requires balance and strength. If students cannot touch their shin or foot, they can move their hand to their knees for a more comfortable position.

5. As they come down, have students extend the other arm straight up, palm open (students should feel a deep stretch in their hamstrings and adductors).
6. Students should then turn their heads to look at the fingertips of the extended left hand. \*Note: If their neck muscles start hurting, they can look down for a couple of seconds, before trying to look up again.
7. Guide students in breathing normally while holding the pose for 30 seconds.
8. Repeat on the opposite side.
9. To switch to the opposite side, have students come up to standing, maintaining their legs the same width apart, arms remaining in the T-position. Have the students bring their right foot back to the center, and now turn their left foot out 90 degrees. Repeat the pose and have students hold for another 30 seconds.

### Now try this:

1. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Neck Stretch

Activity Break # 24

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit or stand by their desks.

## Description:

1. Have students start by standing by their desk, feet shoulder-width apart and arms hanging comfortably at the side.
2. Have students close their eyes and focus on their breathing.
3. Guide students to tilt their head to one side (toward their shoulder) and extend the opposite side arm out so that it is 45 degrees with the floor.
4. With the remaining arm, guide students to gently push their head closer to their shoulder.
5. Hold this pose for 10 seconds (students should feel a gentle stretch in their trapezius muscle).



**Note:** When they feel their neck muscles start to stretch, they can stop. Their ear should not touch their shoulder.

6. Repeat this pose on the opposite side.

## Now try this:

1. Include 3 full breaths while holding the pose on each side.
2. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Neck Rotations

Activity Break # 25

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 1 minute

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit or stand by their desks.

## Description:

1. Have students sit upright on the edge of their seats, both feet planted firmly on the ground and hands hanging comfortably at their sides.
2. Guide students in closing their eyes.
3. Next, guide students to slowly (so they won't get dizzy) bring their chin to their right shoulder and back to the left shoulder, as if shaking their head "no" for 30 seconds (let students know there is no set pace, everyone will set their own comfortable pace).
4. Repeat as needed.

## Now try this:

1. Include this as part of a 3 step sequence with your choice of positions. For example, to focus on the neck flexibility try:
  - a. Neck Rotations
  - b. Neck Stretch (AB # 26)
  - c. Shoulder Crunch (AB # 28)

# Shoulder Crunch

Activity Break # 26

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 1-2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit at their desks.

## Description:

1. Have students sit upright on the edge of their seats, both feet planted firmly on the ground and hands hanging comfortably at their sides.
2. Guide students to raise their shoulders up as close to their ears as possible (guide students to really squeeze their upper shoulder), hold for 5 seconds and release for another 5 seconds (students should feel tension and release in their trapezius/upper shoulder muscles).
3. Guide students in a series of 5 second hold/release repetitions for 1-2 minutes.
4. Repeat as needed.

## Now try this:

1. Include this as part of a 3 step sequence with your choice of positions. For example, to focus on the upper body flexibility try:
  - a. Shoulder Crunch
  - b. Shoulder Circles (AB # 29)
  - c. Arm Stretches (AB # 30)
2. Guide students in inhaling deeply while holding the up shoulder pose in this exercise, and exhaling quickly and forcefully while they release.
3. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Shoulder Circles

Activity Break # 27

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 1-2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit at their desks.

## **Description:**

1. Have students start by sitting upright on the edge of their seats. Both feet planted firmly on the ground, hands hanging comfortably at their sides.
2. Counting down from 10, guide students in rotating both shoulders in a backward, circular motion (students should feel engagement in their trapezius and deltoid muscles).
3. For another 10 seconds, guide students in now rotating both shoulders in a forward, circular motion, continuing to engage/stretch their deltoid muscles.
4. Guide students for another series of shoulder circles for 1-2 minutes.

## **Now try this:**

1. Include this as part of a 3 step sequence with your choice of positions. For example, to focus on shoulder relaxation before or after an assessment, try:
  - a. Neck Stretch (AB # 26)
  - b. Shoulder Crunches (AB # 28)
  - c. Shoulder Circles
2. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Arm Stretches

Activity Break # 28

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 1-2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

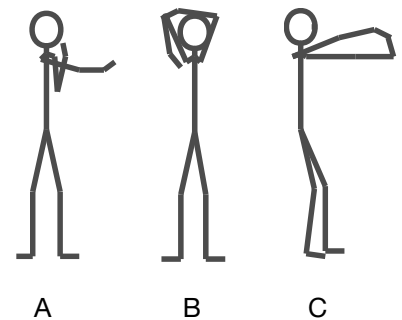
**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit or stand by their desks.

## Description:

1. This is a three part stretch. Teachers can choose to only use one part, or implement all 3 as a full arm stretch.
1. Have students start by crossing their right arm across their chest.
2. Have students use their left arm to slowly stretch their right arm further by placing it over their right arm's elbow and pulling their right arm closer to their chest (students should feel a deep stretch in their deltoid). Hold this pose for 10 seconds (see diagram A).
3. Guide students to repeat this pose on the opposite side and hold for 10 seconds (i.e. left arm over chest, right arm pulling it closer to the chest).
4. Guide students to then place their right arm behind their head, over their shoulder, palm towards their back.
5. Again, using their left arm, have students place their left hand on their right elbow and slowly push their right elbow down to help further extend their right tricep (students should feel a deep stretch in their tricep). Hold this pose for 10 seconds (see diagram B).
6. Guide students to repeat on the opposite side and hold for 10 seconds (i.e. left arm over shoulder, right hand on elbow and slowly pushing their left elbow down).
7. Finally, have students extend their right arm out in front of them, hand up so that their fingers are pointing up.
8. Using their left hand, have students slowly pull their right hands' fingers towards them. Hold this pose for 10 seconds (see diagram C).
9. On the same arm, have students then turn their right hand down, so that their fingers are pointing down.
10. Again, using their left hand, have students slowly pull their right hands' fingers towards them. (They should feel a slight stretch in their forearm). Hold this pose for 10 seconds.
11. Have students repeat on the opposite arm and hold for 10 seconds each (i.e. left hand down, right hand pulls toward body, left hand up, right hand pulls towards body).



## Now try this:

1. Include this as part of a 3 step sequence with your choice of positions. For example, to focus on arms try:
  - a. Arm Circles (AB # 43)
  - b. Desk Triceps (AB # 39)
  - c. Arm Stretches



# Standing Spine Stretch

Activity Break # 29

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 1 minute

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

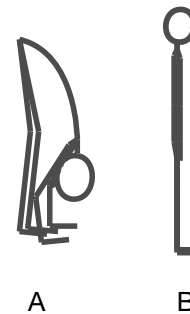
**Organization:** Students stand by their desks, with plenty of room to move.

## Description:

1. Have students start bent over at the waist, arms dangling down, with their fingers touching their toes and knees slightly bent (see diagram A).

**Note:** Not all students will be able to touch their toes. Allow students to bend their knees as much as needed to touch their toes.

2. Guide students in closing their eyes and taking a deep breath. Hold this pose for 30 seconds (students should feel a deep stretch in their erector spinae, hamstring, and calf muscles).
3. Next, have students slowly come up to a standing pose, keeping their chin to their chest, slowly exhaling through the mouth as they come up.
4. Once they are almost in standing position, guide students to slowly lift their chin so that in the last portion of their exhale, they are lifting their chin and approaching full standing position at the same time (see diagram B).
5. Repeat as needed.



## Now try this:

1. Include this as part of a 3 step sequence with your choice of positions. For example, to focus on relaxation before a test/quiz try:
  - a. Spine Flex (AB # 22)
  - b. Seated Spine Twist (AB # 34)
  - c. Standing Spine Stretch
2. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Palm Touch Behind Back

Activity Break # 30

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit or stand by their desks.

## Description:

1. Have students sit upright on the edge of their seats with both feet planted firmly on the ground. Hands are resting on their lap or hanging comfortably at their sides.
2. Guide students to close their eyes and keep their heads still.
3. Guide students to bring both arms around to their back and try to touch their hands together (like prayer hands) in the small of their back, fingertips facing upwards.



**Note:** Not all students will be able to do this just yet. Let students know this is a gradual process and it's ok to start by simply touching fingertips.

4. Guide students to focus on their breathing (inhaling, exhaling, and paying attention to only their breath).
5. While their hands are behind their back, guide students to slowly push their elbows back, so they really open up their chest muscles (students should feel a deep stretch in their pectoral and deltoid muscles).
6. Have students hold the position for 10 seconds.
7. Repeat as needed.

## Now try this:

1. Include this as part of a 3 step sequence with your choice of positions. For example, to focus on relaxation before a test/quiz try:
  - a. Palm Touch Behind Back
  - b. Finger Touch Behind Back (AB # 33)
  - c. Spine Flex (AB # 22)
2. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Finger Touch Behind Back

Activity Break # 31

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit or stand by their desks.

## Description:

1. Have students sit upright on the edge of their seats, both feet planted firmly on the ground. Hands resting on their lap or hanging comfortably at their sides.
2. Guide students to close their eyes and keep their heads still.
3. Guide students to bring one arm behind their back and the other arm over their shoulder, so that their fingertips are touching behind their back (students should feel a deep stretch in their deltoid and tricep muscles).
4. Guide students to try and touch their fingertips (or come as close to touching as they can).



**Note:** Not all students will be able to do this just yet. Let students know this is a gradual process and it's ok to not be able to touch their fingertips together.

5. Once they find their fingers, guide students to focus on their breathing.
6. Have students hold the position for 10 seconds.
7. Repeat on the opposite side.

## Now try this:

1. Include this as part of a 3 step sequence with your choice of positions. For example, to focus on relaxing students before a test/quiz try:
  - a. Energizing Side Stretch (AB # 23)
  - b. Finger Touch Behind Back
  - c. Full Breath (AB # 19)
2. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Seated Spine Twist

Activity Break # 32

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit at their desks.

## Description:

1. Have students sit upright on the edge of their seats. Both feet firmly planted on the ground, hands resting on their lap or comfortably hanging at their side.
2. Guide students to close their eyes.
3. Guide students to lightly place their right arm behind their back, resting it in the small of their back.
4. Guide students to twist to their right side, stretching their left arm over their right leg, lightly pressing their left hand against the knee. Outstretched hand should be open, palm out.
5. Guide students in twisting their neck so that they are looking over their right shoulder.
6. Hold this pose for 10 seconds (students should feel a gentle stretch in their trapezius and latissimus dorsi muscles).
7. Once in position, guide students to focus on their breathing.
8. Have students repeat on opposite side (i.e. twist to the left side, place right arm over their left leg, press right hand against knee, gaze over the left shoulder, and hold the position for another 10 seconds).
9. Repeat the entire sequence as needed.

## Now try this:

1. Include this as part of a 3 step sequence with your choice of positions. For example, to focus on relaxing the back after a full day of sitting, try:
  - a. Seated Spine Twist
  - b. Spine Flex (AB # 22)
  - c. Standing Spine Stretch (AB # 31)
2. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Ankle Circles

Activity Break # 33

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit at their desks.

## Description:

1. Have students start by sitting at their desks, all the way back. Hands should be resting on their lap or comfortably hanging at their side.
2. Guide students to lift both legs, so that they are comfortably parallel to the floor.
3. Counting down from 10, guide students in rotating both feet in an opposite, outward, circular motion so as to stretch the ankles (i.e. the right foot should circle to the right and the left foot should circle to the left).
4. For another 10 seconds, now guide students in rotating both feet in an opposite, inward, circular motion, continuing to stretch the ankles (i.e. the right foot now moves to the left in a circular motion, while the left foot now moves to the right in a circular motion).
5. Repeat both rotations (outward and inward) as needed.

## Now try this:

1. Include this as part of a 3 step sequence with your choice of positions. For example, to focus on the lower body, try:
  - a. Toe Up's (AB # 41)
  - b. Triangle (AB # 25)
  - c. Ankle Circles
2. Try the same movement with your wrists.

# Calf Stretch

Activity Break # 34

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 1 minute

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students stand by the wall.

## Description:

1. Have students start by facing the wall, hands resting on the wall so as not to lose balance.
2. Using the baseboard of the wall, guide students to place the ball of one foot against the edge so that their foot is tilting up.
3. Guide students to lean forward for 10 seconds (students should really feel a deep stretch in their calf muscles).
4. Have students repeat using the opposite foot and hold for another 10 seconds.
5. Repeat sequence as needed.



## Now try this:

1. Include this as part of a 3 step sequence with your choice of positions. For example, to focus on the lower body flexibility try:
  - a. Calf Stretch
  - b. Quad Stretch (AB # 37)
  - c. Triangle (AB # 25)
2. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Quad Stretch

Activity Break # 35

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 1-2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students stand by their desks or wall.

## Description:

1. Have students start by standing by their desk (or wall if enough space), hands resting on the edge of the desk or wall, so as not to lose balance.
2. Guide students in placing all their weight on the left leg, while bending the right leg back.
3. Using their right hand, guide students in holding their right foot and pulling back their right leg so as to really stretch out their right quadriceps muscle. Hold this pose for 10 seconds.
4. Have students repeat using the opposite foot and hand (i.e. place all weight on the right leg, bend the left leg back, hold with the left hand and pull back) and hold for another 10 seconds.
5. Repeat sequence as needed.



## Now try this:

1. Include this as part of a 3 step sequence with your choice of positions. For example, to focus on the lower body flexibility try:
  - a. Calf Stretch (AB # 36)
  - b. Quad Stretch
  - c. Triangle (AB # 25)
2. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Classroom Push Up's

Activity Break # 36

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit by their desks or wall.

## Description:

1. Students sit upright all the way back in their seat (or stand up facing the wall if enough wall space).
2. Guide students to place both hands on the edge of the desk.

**Note:** If doing wall push up's, have students stand arm's length from the wall and place both hands on the wall directly in front of them.

3. Using only their arm muscles, guide students in a series of push up's where they slowly lower their body so that their arms make a 90 degree angle.
4. Once they reach the 90 degree mark, guide students to slowly lift their body back to starting position (students should feel their bicep's really engaged).
5. Guide students in a series of repetitions for 2 minutes.

## Now try this:

1. To make it a little more challenging, ask students to hold the down position for 5-10 seconds (like a seated plank), before lifting back up.
2. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.



# Chair Dips

Activity Break # 37

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

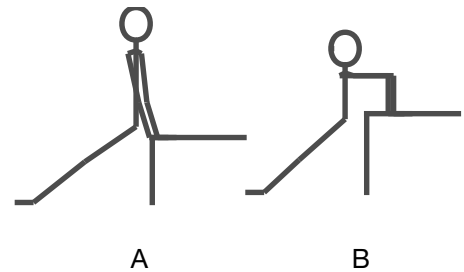
**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit at their desks.

## Description:

1. Have students start by sitting upright, on the edge of their seats (make sure they are on the edge). Both feet should be firmly planted on the ground.
2. Guide students to lower their bodies so that they can comfortably reach behind them and place both their hands onto the edge of their seat. Palms should be facing down and fingers facing their back.
3. Guide students to extend their feet out in front of their body so there is a 45 degree angle between their legs and the floor, and keep them shoulder width apart (see diagram A).



**Note:** Not all students will be able to do chair dips with their legs fully extended out. Give students the option of bending their knees so they create a 90 degree angle with the floor.

4. Guide students to then slowly lower their body, using only their arms, so that their arms come to a 90 degree position (see diagram B).
5. Once in the 90 degree position, guide students to then come back up to the starting position (students should feel their triceps muscle really engaged).
6. Guide students in a series of repetitions for 1-2 minutes.

## Now try this:

1. To make it a little more challenging, ask students to hold the down position for 5-10 seconds (arms in the 90 degree position), before lifting back up.
2. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Seated Leg Lifts

Activity Break # 38

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students sit at their desks.

## **Description:**

1. Have students start by sitting upright, on the edge of their seats (make sure they are on the edge). Both feet should be firmly planted on the ground.
2. Guide students in lifting one leg by extending it out, parallel to the ground. Both arms should also be lifted, parallel over their desk (this is to encourage them not to hold on to anything).
3. Guide students in holding the leg up position for 5, 10, and 15 seconds (students should feel their quadriceps really engaged).
4. Repeat using the opposite leg.

## **Now try this:**

1. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

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Source: Modified Physical Education Exercise, original source unknown.

# Calf Raises

Activity Break # 39

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 1 minute

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students stand by their desks.

## **Description:**

1. Have students start by standing up behind their seats.
2. Guide students in lightly placing their hands on the top of the seat, simply for balance.
3. Guide students to stand shoulder-width apart, with their feet firmly planted on the floor.
4. Counting to 10, guide students to stand on their toes for every second that is counted and come back down in between counts (this will lead to 1 calf raise per second or 10 total, students should feel their calf muscles engaged).
5. Repeat the 10 second interval 3 times, allowing students to rest for 15 seconds between intervals.

## **Now try this:**

1. Instead of having students do 1 calf raise per second, have students hold the up position for 5 seconds before coming back down.
2. If you have moveable chairs and enough space in the classroom, have students start in the sitting position and stand up to a full toe up, then sit back down. You can do this for a series of intervals.
3. This is a great teachable moment where the names of muscles being stretched can be taught/reinforced in relation to the function of the muscular system (TEKS Science 7.12B). See Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference.

# Frogger

## Activity Break # 40

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

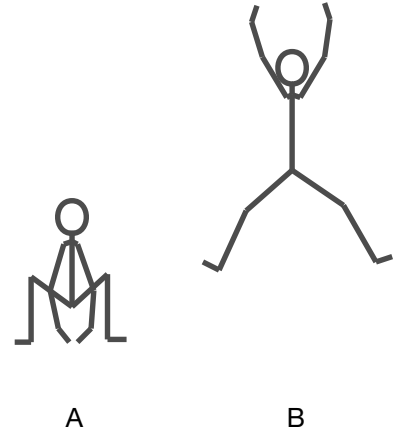
**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students stand by their desks, with plenty of room to move.

### Description:

1. Have students start by standing up, away from their desk. Feet are shoulder-width apart and knees are slightly bent.
2. Guide students to quickly squat down, allowing both their hands/fingertips to touch the ground. (Make sure students are keeping their backs straight, and keeping their knees over their feet, see diagram A).
3. Then, guide students to quickly jump up out of the squat, raising their arms over their heads (see diagram B).
4. Guide students to transition from the up position back into the squatting position in one fluid motion.
5. Guide students in a series of repetitions for 2 minutes.



**Note:** This can be a very challenging exercise for some students. Give students the option of Frogger for 1 minute and jumping jacks for 1 minute to complete the 2 minute cycle.

### Now try this:

1. To demonstrate how breathing rate influences heart rate and the connection between body systems, have students check their pulse before and after the breathing exercise. If needed, see the “Exercise & Heart Rate” worksheet, found in the 6th grade lesson, “The Heart is a Muscle” for a description on how to count and calculate pulse.

# Arm Circles

Activity Break # 41

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 2 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Any subject

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students stand by their desks.

## Description:

1. Have students start standing by their desk, arms raised in the T-position. Hands should be in a fist.
2. Guide students in using both arms at the same time to create small circles for 10 seconds, arms moving forward (students will fall into different paces, this is fine!).
3. Have students repeat for another 10 seconds, arms now moving backward.
4. For another 10 seconds, guide students in creating medium sized circles, arms moving forward.
5. Have students repeat for another 10 seconds, arms now moving backward.
6. For another 10 seconds, guide students in creating large sized circles, arms moving forward (arms should be fully extended, all the way around the circles).
7. Have students repeat for the last 10 seconds, arms now moving backward.

## Now try this:

1. Include this as part of a 3 step sequence with your choice of positions. For example, to focus on arm muscles and energizing students:
  - a. Classroom Push Up's (AB # 36)
  - b. Chair Dips (AB # 37)
  - c. Arm Circles

# Guess Who

Activity Break # 42

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Language Arts

**Equipment:** Colored index cards (2 colors) - On 1 set of cards, the teacher writes the names of characters from a story or a novel, or historical figures, etc. On the other set of the cards the teacher writes character traits, or facts that correspond to the characters/figures.

**Organization:** Assigns ALL students a number from 1 to 4

## **Description:**

1. Shuffle the cards and place them in 4 numbered (1-4) corners of the room.
2. On signal, students pick up 1 card from their designated corner.
3. Students should then be instructed to move around the room and find their partner to link the character to the appropriate trait. Instruct students not to give verbal cues.
4. After each student finds his or her partner, students take turns acting out their character while the class guesses the character.

## **Now try this:**

1. Use sticky notes instead of index cards. Place the sticky notes on the students' backs and have them find their partner without speaking.
2. Use multiple traits per character.
3. If using white index cards, use 2 differently colored markers for traits and characters.

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Source: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# Everybody is a Star

Activity Break # 43

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Language Arts

**Equipment:** Pen and paper for the Journalist group

**Organization:** Students should be walking around the classroom throughout this activity.

## **Description:**

1. Divide the class into 2 groups: Journalists and Super Stars.
2. Ask the Journalist group to write 3 to 5 questions a journalist would ask a Super Star.
3. Ask the Super Star group to pick a super star they would like to be. They are not to vocalize who they are, but should be able to answer journalist questions based on the character they have chosen for themselves.
4. The Journalists have 5 minutes to interview as many Super Stars as they can, asking only the 3 or 5 questions they wrote down.
5. The Super Stars can never directly say their name or exactly what it is that they do. The Super Star group must constantly be walking because celebrities are very busy.
6. The journalists try to guess who the Super Stars are based on the answers to their questions.
7. After 5 minutes, the Super Stars reveal who they are and the Journalists check to see if their guesses were correct.
8. Ask the groups to switch roles.

## **Now try this:**

1. Journalists write an article about Super Stars. Super Stars write a reflective entry about their interviews. Incorporate writing techniques like persuasive writing and inferences. Share students' work with the entire class.

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Source: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# Classroom Fables

Activity Break # 44

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Language Arts

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students stand at their desks.

## Description:

1. The teacher reviews various sentence parts.
2. The teacher lists sentence parts on the chalk board, along with corresponding physical activities for each sentence part:
  - Article - hop on 1 foot 5 times
  - Noun - walk in place 5 paces
  - Verb - jog in place 5 steps
  - Adverb - touch elbow to knee 5 times
  - Adjective - 5 jumping jacks
  - Pronoun - 5 squats
  - Preposition - 5 knee lifts
  - Conjunction - 5 toe touches
3. The student who sits in the first seat on the first row of desks says 1 word to begin a sentence (i.e., "The").
4. All students complete the corresponding activity for that sentence part.
5. The 2nd student in that row then adds another word (i.e., "green") and students complete the corresponding activity for that sentence part.
6. This continues, going down each row, until the class creates their own silly story, each student adding 1 word at a time to form a sentence.

## Now try this:

1. This activity can also be used in foreign language classes.

*Example from a 7th grade class:*

Bob ate a rat with a pig foot that made a great stench. When Kelly was a little girl she did exercises regularly. So, they started doing things like dancing and singing and cooking chicken casseroles with macaroni and peas that were awesome to eat at dinner. Then we went home.



# Parts of Speech Go Round

Activity Break # 45

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Language Arts

**Equipment:** Index cards (1 per student)

**Organization:** Students stand at their desks.

## Description:

1. Divide index cards into 3 groups and label each group as follows:

**Group 1:** Different parts of speech (e.g., noun)

**Group 2:** Corresponding definitions for those parts of speech (e.g., a word that is the name of a person, place, or thing)

**Group 3:** Examples of those parts of speech (e.g., boy)

2. Pass index cards out randomly. (Note: Depending on the class size, more than 1 index card in the example category may be needed.)

3. On the "Go" signal, the students move around the room to find the matching cards (e.g., the student with the noun card finds the student with the definition of a noun and the student with the example of a noun).

4. Students should move around the room to find their matches.

5. Once students find the correct matching card, they jog in place until all the other students in the class find their matching cards.

## Now try this:

1. Vocabulary: place word on 1 index card and its definition on another.

2. Characterization: place character on 1 card and personality traits of that character on another.

3. Designate a movement for each part of speech (e.g., noun = hop on 1 foot; pronoun = jump).

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Source: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# Poetry Round-Up

Activity Break # 46

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Language Arts

**Equipment:** Index cards; poem

*( Note: If the poem is long, this activity may involve the entire class, or the class can be divided into small groups using shorter poems.)*

**Organization:** Students stand at their desks.

## **Description:**

1. The teacher writes 1 line from the selected poem on each index card and gives each student one of these index cards.
2. Students move around the room to determine the order of the poem (this is easier with a short, rhyming poem).
3. Once students have the order, they stand in line and recite the poem, each participant saying his or her line while completing a physical activity (e.g., hopping on 1 foot, etc.).

## **Now try this:**

1. Place each line of the poem on separate strips of paper. Place the paper strips in an envelope or hat and let the students randomly select 1 strip of paper.
2. Use a transparency to show the final organization.
3. For small groups, put the lines from the same poem on matching colored index cards.
4. If using a long poem, use stanzas instead of 1 line on the index cards.

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Source: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# Stop and Solve

Activity Break # 47

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Mathematics

**Equipment:** Piece of paper and pencil for every 2 students

**Organization:** Students stand at desks with partners.

## Description:

1. Call out a physical activity:
  - Twisting
  - Jogging
  - Jumping Jacks
  - Knee lifts
  - Playing air guitar
  - Tennis
2. Students begin the physical activity and continue until the teacher writes an equation on the board and calls it out.
3. Students should freeze, and partners should begin to work together to try to solve the equation correctly on a piece of paper.
4. After 10 to 15 seconds, say, "Pencils down!" (for safety), and then call out a new activity.
5. Continue until all equations are used.
6. As students cool down, write the correct answers on the board, and students check their work.

## Now try this:

1. Do the same physical activities, but ask students to translate verbal expressions into algebraic expressions.
2. Use this activity to reinforce solving 1-and-2 step linear equations.

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Source: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# Over and Under

Activity Break # 48

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Mathematics

**Equipment:** 10 paper balls per team; math problems or word problems from textbook

**Organization:** Students should be grouped into lines of 5.

## Description:

1. Teams stand in a single-file line. Each team has 10 paper balls at the back of its line.
2. Call out a word problem or math problem (or write it on the overhead) that requires addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division. (Note: The answer to the problem can be no higher than 10).  
Example:  $(50 \div 10) + (2 \times 2) = 9$
3. Students figure out the answer to the problem.
4. Students pass the balls up the row alternating an over-the-head and between-the-legs style, until the correct number of balls—that is, the number equal to the solution to the math problem—is at the front of the line. They should pass only 1 ball at a time.
5. As balls are passed forward, the student in the front of the line should place the balls on a table or on the floor.
6. The first team with the correct number gets 1 point. Students then pass the balls (in the same manner) to the back of the line in 30 seconds or less to get ready for the next problem.
7. Students perform 15 jumping jacks, march in place, or jog in place before the next word problem is called out.

## Now try this:

1. Students may pass balls side to side, that is alternating the left side of one person and then right side of the next, instead of over or under.

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Source: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# Zero In

Activity Break # 49

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Mathematics

**Equipment:** Card stock/piece of paper with a number or equation

**Organization:**

1. Students stand at their desks.
2. The teacher should prepare several cards/pieces of paper with a number or equation (e.g., 283;  $50 \times 7$ ).

**Description:**

1. The object of this activity is for 1 student to correctly guess a number with the aid of his or her classmates.
2. The student does this by receiving movement clues from the class until she or he has “zeroed in” on the correct number.
3. Select 1 student to come to the front and stand facing the class.
4. The teacher stands behind the student and holds up the equation/number card for the rest of the class to see (without the student in the front of the class seeing the card).
5. Direct the student to call out a number between 1 and 500 (or an alternative range based on the identified number or equation answer).
6. The class helps the student “zero in” to guess the number on the card by squatting if the student needs to guess lower or jumping up and down if the student needs to guess higher.
7. Based on these responses from the class, the student continues to call out numbers until he or she correctly guesses the number.

**Now try this:**

1. Perform the activity as above using division, fractions, algebraic equations, etc.

# Simon Says Body Systems

Activity Break # 50

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Science

**Equipment:** Student-created flash cards with names of organs, pictures of organs, names of body systems, pictures of body systems

**Organization:** Students stand at desks with partners.

## **Description:**

1. The teacher shows students a note card that says, for example, "Simon says use this" or "point to this" or "Simon says point to an organ not in this system."
2. Students perform the action requested.

## **Now try this:**

1. Repeat the activity, but ask students to close their eyes. They cannot rely on their neighbor with their eyes closed, and it is fun to watch them try to point to different organs with their eyes closed.

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Source: Rochelle Bell, Science Department, Kealing Middle School (Austin ISD).

# To Infinity and Beyond

Activity Break # 51

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 5 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Science

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:** Students stand at their desks.

## Description:

1. The teacher writes the following 4 solar system vocabulary words and corresponding physical activities on the board:
  - Constellation – shake or wiggle
  - Telescope – squat down and jump toward the ceiling
  - Sun – twist
  - Galaxy – jog in place or walk on the moon
  - Universe – touch head, shoulders, knees, and toes
2. The teacher reads a statement from below that describes 1 of the 4 vocabulary words.
3. Examples:
  - Its diameter is 100 times greater than the diameter of the earth. (sun)
  - The Milky Way (galaxy)
  - Group of stars that form a pattern in the sky (constellation)
  - Placed on mountain tops and in rural areas. (telescopes)
  - One of countless stars in space (sun)
  - Contains billions of galaxies. (universe)
  - Uses a curved mirror that gathers light. (telescope)
  - Groups of millions or billions of stars (galaxy)
  - All of the planets orbit this. (sun)
  - This contains everything. (universe)
  - Many of these were named after ancient gods. (constellation)
  - A device that gathers electromagnetic radiation (telescope)
4. The students must allow the teacher to finish reading each statement, then determine which vocabulary word the teacher is describing and perform the corresponding activity for 30 seconds.

# Shake, Bake, Twist, and Mist

Activity Break # 52

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Science/Mathematics

**Equipment:** None

**Organization:**

1. Students stand at their desks.
2. Write the following 4 phenomena and corresponding physical activities on the board and demonstrate for students: Earthquake – “shake”; Volcano – “bake”; Tornado – “twist”; Hurricane – “mist.”

**Description:**

1. Read each statement below, one at a time, in its entirety. Each statement is a clue describing 1 of the 4 phenomena.
2. Phenomena Descriptors (answers):
  - One of these is felt approximately every 30 seconds. (earthquake)
  - Ocean water must be warmer than 81 degrees Fahrenheit for this to occur. (hurricane)
  - This is called a “funnel” until it comes in contact with the ground. (tornado)
  - This generates vibrations called seismic waves. (earthquake)
  - This phenomenon occurs when rock from the earth’s mantle melts and moves up to the surface. (volcano)
  - These weaken when traveling over land or cool ocean waters. (hurricane)
  - These send fiery bits of rock and ash into the air. The fragments that cool and return to the Earth are called “tephra.” (volcano)
  - Winds must be at least 74 miles per hour for a storm to be considered one of these. (hurricane)
  - The molten rock from the Earth’s mantle, or “magma,” that escapes during one of these is called “lava” once it reaches the Earth’s surface. (volcano)
  - In the United States, a “hotbed” for these extends from Texas up through Oklahoma, Nebraska, and the Dakotas. (tornado)
  - Over 1 million of these occur annually, with some too small to be felt by humans. (earthquake)
3. For each statement, students should determine the phenomenon being described and perform the corresponding activity until most of the class is moving that way. Continue this sequence as time permits.

**Now try this:**

1. Create new descriptors that match these phenomena or a similar activity with another science chapter, like the solar system. (For example: Earth – “swim”; Sun – “bake”; Pluto – “shiver”; Mercury – “sweat”)



# Human Time Line

Activity Break # 53

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Social Studies

**Equipment:** White or colored paper, markers, and a timer/clock with a second hand

**Organization:**

1. Several students will be asked to stand in front of the room in a line.
2. The remaining students stand at their desks.
3. Designate a time keeper and recorder from among the students standing at their desks.

**Description:**

1. Give students a piece of paper with a date written on it to represent a year in history. Be sure to include an equal number of AD and BC years.
2. Give 1 student the year 1 AD and another student the year 1 BC. These students will represent the middle of the time line. This will help students understand there is no “zero” year in history.
3. Ask the students who were given a paper with a date to come to the front of the room by walking, marching, and/or hopping (movements to be decided at the teacher’s discretion).
4. Say “Go,” to signal the students to line up in chronological order quickly but safely. Neither the teacher nor the class can assist them. The student time keeper will start timing the line up. The student recorder will record the time it takes for them to complete this activity. The remaining students in the class will assess the time line for mistakes.
5. This can be repeated with the same group or other students in the classroom.

**Now try this:**

1. Make sure ALL the students participate. Create various sets of dates in advance, or ask the class to create their own sets of dates. This activity can also be used to introduce a new unit in history. As the students learn how to correctly read and create a time line, they can create a new set of dates for each time period discussed in class and can connect them with previous learning units.
2. As the students become more skilled with time lines, begin to add written events to the dates.

# Miles Apart

Activity Break # 54

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Social Studies

**Equipment:** Rulers, calculators (optional), and a map for each pair of students

**Organization:** Students stand paired throughout the room.

## Description:

1. The objective of this activity is for students to learn how to use a map scale correctly.
2. Create a scale relating movement to distances on the map (e.g., 1 small step = 1 mile, 1 giant step = 10 miles, and 1 jump = 100 miles).
3. Assign students a partner and provide each pair with a map, ruler, and a calculator (if desired).
4. Instruct students to use a map scale to measure the distance between 2 cities or countries. (Choose distances that allow the students to accumulate the most physical activity.)
5. Using the movements on the map scale that they created, students identify which movements should be combined to travel between the 2 points (e.g., If the distance between 2 cities is 121 miles, students take 1 jump, 2 giant steps, and 1 small step).

## Now try this:

1. Talk with the PE teacher about coordinating a Walk Across the United States activity.

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Source: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# Where is it? (N, S, E, or W)

## Directional Jumps

Activity Break # 55

**Minimum Time Needed for Activity:** 10 minutes

**Grade Level:** 6th - 8th

**Subject Area:** Social Studies

**Equipment:** Map of area of study; pointing stick

**Organization:** Students stand at their desks.

### Description:

1. Put a map of the world (or of a specific country) on the board and designate a starting place/country.
2. One student is selected (per round) to be the pointer.
  - a. This student will stand at the front of the class and serve as the interpreter for the class's directions, moving the pointer appropriately.
3. Beginning at the starting country, the teacher calls out another country, province, or state on the map, and the class directs the pointer to move north, south, east, or west with the following actions.
  - a. Walking in place = north
  - b. Jumping = south
  - c. Clapping = east
  - d. Waving arms = west
4. When the class reaches the target country, a new pointer is selected, and the game begins again.

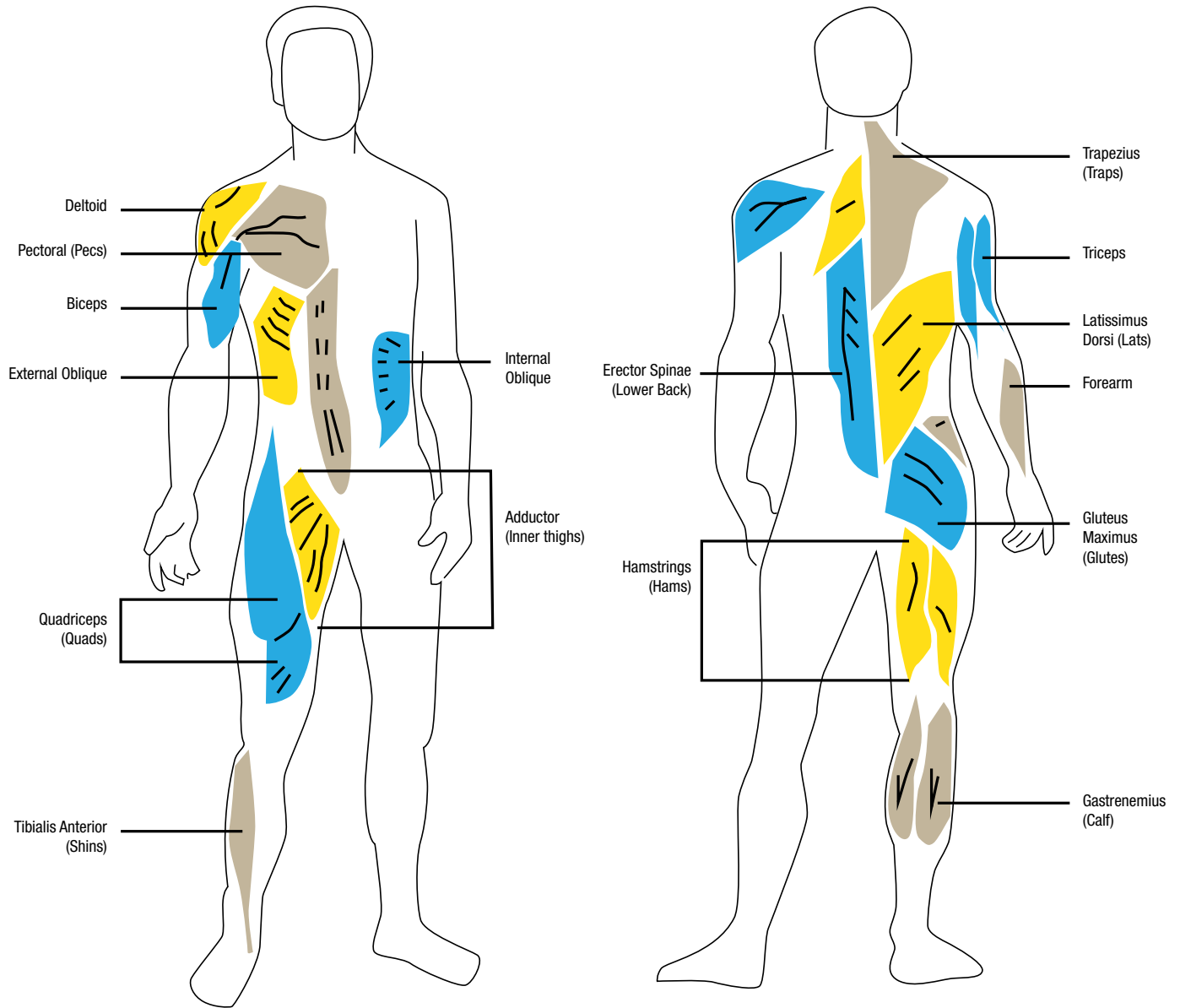
### Now try this:

1. This activity can be modified to incorporate northeast, southeast, northwest, and southwest to provide variety.
2. Students can identify directions to specific landmarks, locations of historic events, etc., within the country.

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Source: Adapted from: East Carolina University, Activity Promotion Laboratory in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction (Healthful Living and Healthy Schools Sections), the Health and Wellness Trust Fund, Be Active North Carolina, the NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Physical Activity & Nutrition Branch.

# Appendix 1: Muscle Diagram Reference



## Appendix 2: Skeletal Diagram Reference

