

Movements Breaks in the Classroom

These are some movement activities can be done in the classroom setting, without being disruptive to the other children in the class. The teacher can take one or two students at a time to do these mini-breaks together:

Follow the leader: Child picks a movement (jumping, silly dancing, marching, spinning in place, etc.) that his peer must copy for 30 seconds...then switch. This is a quick way to get some movement input. An alternative is to play "statues" where the child must copy a static position.

Mirror: two kids face each other and have to mimic each other's dynamic movements (arms up, to the side, touch your nose, etc.). This encourages both eye contact and sustained attention, while providing a movement break and working on body and spatial awareness.

Row the boat: Sit facing each other with feet touching (leg slightly spread), reach and grab each other hands. Then each child takes a turn leaning back and the other child holds on and pulls them back up....offers heavy work for his arms and some slow rhythmic rocking (teacher will have to ensure they do it slowly).

Get the wiggles out: Tell and show child to shake his right arm, then pass the wiggles to his left arm, then to his right leg, then his left leg. Can also pass wiggles to your hips, then head, then whole body. Encourage him to shake, shake, wiggle....then say "freeze", and that you're taking the wiggles out (pretend to put away in your pocket).

Treasure hunt: Finding treasures hidden in playdoh or theraputty.

Pencil Jumps: Put pencil on floor, jump or step backwards and forwards over pencil 20x.

Animal walks: (bear, crab, kangaroo jumps, slither like snake, etc.)....do a puzzle where you put the pieces one end of rug, puzzle on the other, and child has to deliver the pieces as the animal.

Mini Olympics: Record how many jumps, hops, knee lifts, claps, etc that you can do in a minute.

Book on the Go: Read a short story aloud. Make a rule that whenever you read the word "the", kids have to do an action (i.e. jump, hop or wave).

One minute muscle builder: Press hands together at chest for 10 seconds, raise hands overhead for 10 seconds, lay hand flat and press into floor for 10 seconds. Repeat all three.

Movements Breaks in the Classroom

These are some quick movement breaks, that don't require any special equipment or materials. They are great for the whole class, or a small group of kids who need breaks.

ROLE PLAYING: Explain to the students that you are going to pretend to be various people performing activities. The therapist can demonstrate at first and have students copy. For example pretend to be the following people: Body Builders - make muscles and pose; Boxer - jump on feet lightly and punch arms out; Ninja - karate chops and kicks; Ice skater - push feet out, twirl in circle, jump and turn, skate backwards, skate with a partner, etc.; Superman - lie on belly in prone with arms out; Basketball star - dribble basketball and pretend to shoot it; Downhill skier - sideways jumping

COACH AND ATHLETE - Student #1 is the athlete and runs in place (or performs any physical activity). Student #2 is the coach who gives commands such as stop/go, fast/slow, backwards/forwards, etc. After 30 seconds switch roles.

BUNNY HOP - Partners bunny hop around the room holding onto each other's waists.

BODY PARTS: Match the students up with partners. Explain to the students that you will call out a body part and the partners have to match those body parts together. For example: "Touch elbow to elbow" - partners touch elbows together; "Touch foot to foot" - partners touch feet together; Now add in right and left: "Touch right hand and left knee together"; "Touch left elbow and left leg together"

CATEPILLARS: Explain to the students that you are going to be a caterpillar changing into a butterfly. Start out on the floor on your stomach. Commando crawl like a caterpillar across the floor. Position yourself with arms at side legs straight and together. Slowly log roll back and forth to demonstrate creating your cocoon. Finish your cocoon by lying in sidelying with both knees to chest arms wrapped around legs. Rest in this position shortly. Now slowly unwrap your arms and legs. Stand up and fly like a butterfly.

SIMON SAYS: Play Simon Says with more difficult requests such as:

"Simon says do 2+2 jumping jacks"

"Simon says do three claps and two hops"

"Simon says jump to the right"

"Simon says high five a partner in the air"

"Simon says skip to an object that starts with the letter B"

"Simon says crawl under an object"

LOW AND HIGH: Squat down low and walk around room. Stand up tall on tip toes and walk around room. Repeat.