

Below are strategies we have found work best for active learning in the classroom. Use these general directions to review math, language arts, science, or social studies. Most of these activities work in K-5 settings. A few are best played outside, but can be modified for classroom space. Use the Common Classroom Exercise list for assigning movements. Be sure to set clear expectations and always model how the activity will be done. Move and learn!

Exercise the Answer

- 1) Instruct students to stand up and push in their chair.
Assign an exercise to an answer. For example:
 - a. A = jumping jacks, B = squats, C=run in place, D= sky reaches
 - b. Powhatan Tribe = row canoe, Lakota = pretend to ride a horse, etc.
- 2) Ask or show the students a question.
- 3) When students know their answer, have them tap their temple.
- 4) When enough students are tapping their temple, ask everyone to show their answer by exercising (students may also record answers on paper/white boards).
- 5) Call on a student to explain their answer.
- 6) Continue until content is covered or time expires.

Freeze Dance

- 1) The teacher will start the music, when the music stops, the students freeze. Hold up a word, math fact, time, or any question that the students can answer or read.
- 2) When students know the answer, instruct them to tap their temple.
- 3) When enough students are tapping their temple, ask one student or a group of students the answer to your question.
- 4) If appropriate, call on a student to explain their answer.
- 5) This will continue and with shorter dance breaks until several tasks have been practiced.

Retrieval

- 1) Task cards are placed in a centralized location (typically face down).
- 2) Students retrieve a card by walking, skipping, hopping, marching, etc. and bring it back to their seat.
- 3) They will then complete the problem on a separate worksheet or on their whiteboard.
- 4) After completing the problem they will do the exercise listed on the card, or complete a set number of an exercise picked by the class prior to the start of the activity.
- 5) Then they return the card face down and grab a new one.
- 6) Play continues until they have completed all of the cards or time is up.
Retrievals can be played in partners or individually.

Around the Room

- 1) Place task cards, sight words, or math facts faced down in the middle of the room.
- 2) Hang 8-10 posters around the room with exercises and answers on each.
For example:
 - a. If doing a math activity, write an answer "5" on the poster along with an exercise.
 - b. If doing a sight word or vocabulary activity, write a word on the poster along with an exercise.
- 3) Instruct the students to go to the cards and select one. Instead of using task cards, the questions could be on a sheet at the student's desk.
- 4) Instruct students to look around the walls of the room and find their answer on the posters.
- 5) Students will walk to the poster and complete the activity that is written with their answer.
 - a. For example: if their task card said " $2 + 3 =$ ", they'd find the "5" poster and complete 5 jumping jacks.
- 6) The students will walk to return their card (or return to their desk) and work on a new question/card.
- 7) Repeat the process for the remaining time.

Scoot

- 1) Place task cards in numerical order on each desk and distribute a recording sheet to each student. Have students stand up and push in their chair to show they are ready.
- 2) On the magic word, students flip over the card on their desk and answer the question on their recording sheet. When they are done they may do an exercise to show that they are done or may stand with their hands in the air (“hands up, stand up”).
- 3) When all students are ready, complete an exercise as a class.
- 4) The teacher will wait (filling any overlap time with exercise), and say the ‘magic word’ to signal to students to move to the next numerical card. Guide them so they go in the right order.
- 5) Continue scooting with any remaining time.

Stations

- 1) Place cones around the space in a circle.
- 2) At each cone, leave a set of cards to be sorted or matched up.
- 3) Divide students into as many groups as you have cones and assign each a starting cone color.
- 4) Students will then sort or match up the cards at their cone station.
- 5) When they finish students will complete an exercise, or “hands up, stand up”, to show their work needs to be checked.
- 6) After the teacher checks their work, they mix up the cards, put them under the cone, and complete a different exercise.
- 7) Once everyone is finished, all the groups rotate to the next cone station.
- 8) This continues until groups have completed all of the stations or time is up.

4 Corners

- 1) Place a poster in each corner of the room (example: digraphs – ch, st, sh, th).
- 2) The teacher will stand in the middle or chose a student to stand in the middle of the room and count down from 10.
- 3) Have students silently walk around the perimeter of the room.
- 4) When you get to “0”, all students must carefully go to the corner they are closest to.
- 5) The person in the middle will choose a task card or call out an example (such as “beach”).
- 6) Students in the “ch” corner will do an assigned exercise, such as jog in place.
- 7) All other students will squat to show they are NOT the answer.
- 8) Choose a new person to be in the middle and continue play.

Musical Chairs

- 1) The teacher will ask students to take their chairs and create a large circle around the classroom.
- 2) Explain that students will play a version of musical chairs, but no one will be eliminated.
- 3) Each chair will have a task card.
- 4) Students will walk/skip/sky punch/hop/high knees/twist/donkey kick/swim/dance around while the music plays. When the music stops they must stop at the chair nearest to them and pick up that card.
- 5) You can use a timer to give them a minute or more to solve.
- 6) When they are finished, have them “hands up, stand up” to show they’re ready to move. You may choose to complete an exercise as a class before starting the music again.
- 7) Continue the music and have students solve problems with any remaining time.

Relay

- 1) Divide the class into teams no larger than 5.
- 2) Each group will have a specific cone color or spot as their starting point. Set a cone with items for students to retrieve a few feet away. The students should stand in a line behind the start cone.
- 3) When the teacher says the ‘magic word’, the student will skip, hop, march, jump, etc. to retrieve an item (task card, letter, sight word, math fact) and bring it back to their team. When the student returns, it’s the next student’s turn. a. The students may be searching for a specific card that the teacher identifies, sorting different categories, reading words to their team b. The students could wait for the teachers ‘magic word’ for the next student in line to retrieve a card.
- 4) Continue relay until students have collected all cards or time expires.

Tag

- 1) Explain that the “taggers” will have a card with a problem on one side and the answer on the other.
- 2) Explain that when a “tagger” tags a student, that student freezes, then looks at the problem and says the answer to the “tagger”.
- 3) For safety purposes, if students go “out of bounds” or dive/fall to the ground to avoid being tagged they are automatically tagged.
- 4) Explain that if the tagged student gets the answer correct, they are to take the card from the other student and they become a “tagger”. The original “tagger” is now a student to be tagged. If the student does not get the answer correct, the student completes an exercise and does not become the tagger. The “tagger” helps the student find the correct answer, then goes on to try to tag other students.
- 5) Explain that in order to be a “tagger”, the student must be able to get the answer correct.

Partner Find

- 1) Hand each student a card.
- 2) Once they have their card, they may walk to find their matching partner and stand back to back (this way the students know who is already partnered up).
 - a. The students may exercise to show they have found their partner.
- 3) After all students have found their match, instruct the students to tiptoe to a central location.
- 4) When they get to the location, explain to them how to ‘whisper trade’. Students may trade as much as they can in the designated time. When the teacher says the magic word (or counts down to zero), all students must freeze and that is their new card.
- 5) Students walk away from the whisper trade center and go find their new partner.
- 6) Play continues until content is reviewed thoroughly.