BRAIN BREAK IDEAS for TEACHERS

I have put the Brain Breaks that were shared last year into a Google Slideshow for everyone to use as a resource. I have added lots more and will continue to add more as often as I can and whenever I find some new ones.

There is an index at the end of the slideshow which separates the Brain Breaks by grade level. If you have any great ideas that you are using with your students, send them my way and I will add them to the slideshow. If there is anything I can help with, please let me know.

**See slide #57 for some info on why Brain Breaks are a good thing and how to incorporate them into your class!!

Hope Your Class Enjoys the Brain Breaks!

Gina Krueger

Find it Fast

- 1. Call out a color or other trait (ex. something round or something made of wood).
- 2. Students must find an object in the room that fits the trait.
- 3. Students then move to the object quickly.

Level ~ Grade K-5

Keep it Clean

- 1. Push some chairs to the side and draw an imaginary line down the middle of the room.
- 2. Give students several soft objects to throw (wadded up paper from the recycle bin works well).
- 3. Students begin throwing objects across the line—the goal is to keep objects off of your side of the room.
- 4. When you call "time" the cleanest side (the one with the fewest objects) wins. Do best 2 out of 3 for minute sessions.

Level ~ Elem & MS

Quick Draw Math

- 1. Students have hands at their sides as if holsters.
- 2. On the word draw, they pull fingers out in front to add, subtract or multiply.
- 3. See which partner can solve the problem first.
- 4. Have students continue the game working on their addition, subtraction and multiplication.

Level ~ Grade 2-6

"POP"

- 1. This is a skip counting game.
- 2. A student or teacher decides the number and says "Pop by 3's" (could do it by 4's or 5's).
- 3. Then go around the circle with each child saying a number, but saying "POP" every 3rd number (example: 1, 2, POP, 4, 5, POP, 6, 7, POP, etc.).

Level ~ Elem/MS

High cincos

Students give high fives to five different people.

(Simple quick activity to get students up and moving around for a few minutes so they can re-focus).

Level ~ Elem/MS

Switch ~ Change ~ Rotate

Check out the link below for more directions!

- 1. Divide students into groups of 4-5.
- 2. Have students make a line.
- 3. The youtube video posted by Clayton Ellis will explain the rest.
- 4. Have Fun!!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rx3bg8LU9FI

Level ~ Grades 4-8

NOSE/EAR CHANGE

- Hold your right ear with your left hand and then hold your nose with your right hand.
- 2. Try to switch so that you are holding your left ear with your right hand and your nose with your left hand.
- 3. Try to speed up (without punching yourself!)

Level ~ Grades 4-12

DOUBLE THIS DOUBLE THAT

- 1. Partner Handshake Challenge
- 2. Teamwork is very important
- 3. Check out the video link below and have fun some fun!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g4ea2GmBqFo&feature=youtu.be

Level ~ Grades 4-12

Finger Snatch

- 1. Face your partner
- 2. Each partner places their left index finger in their partner's right palm.
- 3. Count down 3-2-1 Snatch
- 4. Try to Snatch (catch) your partners finger before they pull it away.

Level ~ Grade 4-12

Jump In ~ Jump Out

- 1. Check out the You Tube Video Link Below
- 2. Challenging activity
- 3. The activity starts at about the 1:15 minute mark.

Link ~ http://www.pinterest.com/pin/208924870186908154/4.

Level ~ Grade 8-12

Memory Lane

- 1. Teacher calls out one task at a time and partners complete that task.
- 2. Tasks should be called out in the order provided.
- 3. Partners repeat the tasks beginning with the first task each time.
- 4. See how far students can get without forgetting!

High five right
legs and hit low ten)
High five left
Low five right
Low five left
High ten
Low ten
Backwards ten low

Tunnel ten (feet apart, back to back, reach between

Sole of shoes right
Sole of shoes left
Elbow right
Elbow left
Both elbows

Level ~ Grades MS & HS

Stomping Syllables - justbfit.blogspot.com

- Have students stand up beside their desks, and stomp each syllable of whatever they say.
- 2. You could ask them each a question, have something on the overhead or board they could read collectively, or pair them into partners, where they would have a conversation while stomping their syllables!
- 3. This activity requires that the kids think about two things at once...working motor and verbal skills.
- 4. To increase difficulty, you could have them do two physical things at the same time, like stomp and clap side-to-side with each syllable, or create their own movement.

Level - Elem.

Spelling Baseball - justbfit.blogspot.com

- 1. Split the class into two teams.
- 2. Designate where the "bases" are in your classroom.
- 3. Students take turns spelling words; if they are correct, they advance a base.
- 4. If they misspell the word, they go to the back of the line.
- 5. See how many home runs can be scored in two minutes, then switch teams.

Level ~ Elem/MS

Just Dance

There are a couple of variations to this particular activity.

- 1. If you have access to a projector or interactive whiteboard, go on to YouTube and search for "Just Dance" videos. The moves are generally quite simple, repetitive and entertaining.
- 2. If you don't have access to a projector, throw on the radio, iPod, etc. and have students take turns leading the class as "dance instructor."

Level: Elementary

Submitted by: Rebecca Contant (@shomgotoshi)

1 to 10

- 1. Everyone stands at his or her desk.
- 2. Taking turns, one person begins by saying the number one.
- 3. The next person must say either the next number or the next two numbers.
- 4. The count continues to ten.
- 5. The person who has to say ten has a seat and the count starts over again.
- 6. The last one standing is acknowledged with claps.
- 7. Use multiples or higher numbers to make it trickier.

Level ~ Elem & MS

Olympic Rock Paper Scissors

The link below show a fun game of Rock Paper Scissors with a little Olympic twist. Students will have fun with this Brain Break. It provides lots of movement and fun for students

http://www.pinterest.com/pin/208924870186392691/

Found on MPS Wellness site - Classroom Activity Breaks

Level ~ Elem. & MS

Vocabulary Hot Potato

Quick thinking, memory, and vocabulary will all be tested with this fastaction game.

- 1. You will need one ball, no smaller than a tennis ball and no larger than a basketball.
- 2. Students will sit in a circle facing the center.
- 3. The ball will be randomly given to one of the students.
- 4. That student will then be given one word form the spelling list.
- 5. The student with the ball will state the first letter of the word. Then that child will gently pass the ball to another child who will add the next letter to the preceding one.
- 6. This will continue until the word is spelled correctly.

Level - Elem.

3 Ball Pass

- 1. This is a mini group juggle.
- 2. Start with one ball and have student pass the ball from person to poerson.
- 3. Practice this several times, passing the ball to the same person each time.
- 4. Once students have the rotation down ~ add another ball.
- 5. Add a third ball when you think they are ready.

Level ~ 4th-HS

Chaos

Material Needed: 3-4 soft small objects (stuffed animals, koosh balls, bean bags)

Time Required: 10 minutes

Group Size: 8-20

Purpose: Physical energizer, name game

- Organize participants into a circle
- One person begins by tossing one of the objects to someone else, saying, "Hi, Name of Person!",
- The person who catches the object then says, "Thanks, Name of tosser!" and repeats by tossing to someone else in the circle.
- Names must be said each time the item is tossed or caught.
- 3-4 items may be in place at once, but make sure to space them 30-60 seconds apart from each other.

Level ~ 6-12th grade

Animal Roundup

Material Needed: None

Group Size: 5-50

Purpose: Physical energizer

- Tell group members to silently think of their favorite animal.
- Then tell group members that without talking, they need to arrange themselves from largest to smallest animals.
- Group members can only make gestures and the noise of their animal.
- After they have finished, have group members go around and say the animal they were supposed to be to see if it was accurate.

Level ~ 6-12th grade

Clothespin Samurai

Material Needed: Pool noodle, 5-10 clothespins, blindfold

Time Required: 10-15 minutes

Group Size: 10-30

Purpose: Physical energizer

- Arrange group members in a circle with one person in the middle who is blindfolded.
- The blindfolded person in the middle has several clothespins attached to their clothing (back, arms, legs shoes, etc.)
- The blindfolded person is handed a "sword" (inflatable or foam pool noodle).
- The other group members must remove the pins without getting whacked by the "sword".
- If you are whacked three times, you're out.

Note: You as the facilitator should not be participating monitoring safety for the participants and keeping track of how many times people have been hit by the "sword".

Level ~ 6-12th grade

Walking Worksheets

- Tape worksheets on wall, easel and chalkboard.
- 2. Students move from worksheet to worksheet and answer the different questions.

Level ~ K-12

Secret Password

- 1. At the start of the year, decide as a class what the secret "class" password is going to be.
- 2. Every day establish a new secret password activity such as 5 jumping jacks, stand on one foot for 5 seconds, hop three times, etc.
- 3. Then establish when the student needs to use the secret password i.e. after a drink of water, before receiving a hand out, when entering the classroom, in between subjects, etc.
- 4. This is a fun way to incorporate activity and brain breaks into every day without a lot of extra effort (quick and easy added activity)!!

OPPOSITE HUNT

- 1. Divide the class in half. Have half of the class write a word on an index card. The other half write the definition (give each chidl a different word &/or definition).
- 2. Shuffle the cards and hand one card to each student.
- 3. The students must move around the classroom and match the word with the definition. For younger students match up sight words, letter or numbers. Try math problems and solutions.

Level ~ Elem-HS

Pencil Jumps

For a quick movement break in between lessons have each student place a pencil on the floor. Jump over the pencil a designated number of times.

Level ~ All Levels

Race in Place

- 1. When reviewing material, have the students stand up and run in place by their desks.
- 2. On the teacher's signal, student stops running in place,

listens to question and writes down the answer.

3. REPEAT

Level ~ Elementary

Daily Rule

- Establish a new daily rule every day that includes physical activity.
- See if you can catch the students forgetting the daily rule.

Daily Rule Examples: Walk backwards to water fountain, tip toe to the bathroom, stretch before sitting in chair.

Level ~ Elem.

Push Up Line Up

- 1. When the students line up against the wall to leave the classroom, have each student face the wall and perform 10 wall push ups.
- 2. After all push ups are completed the class can walk in that line to where they are going!

Level ~ K-6

Q and A Stretching

- 1. Provide students with small dry erase boards and a marker at desk.
- 2. Students can stand or sit.
- 3. Ask a question and student writes down the answer (very large) on their dry erase boards.
- 4. Each student holds dry erase boards, with two hands overhead to stretch.
- 5. Teacher checks answers.
- 6. Multiple choice questions work best.

Level- 3rd-8th grade

MOBILE MATH

- 1. Divide the class in half to review math problems.
- 2. The students can stand at their desks (paper and pencil on desk).
- 3. Call out a math problem such as 4+5=.
- 4. One half of the class jumps 4 times and the other half jumps five times.
- 5. Each student writes down answer on paper.
- 6. Continue with other math problems.
- 7. Vary movements.

Level ~ Elementary

Stomping Syllables (justbfit.blogspot.com)

- 1. Have students stand up beside their desks, and stomp each syllable of whatever they say.
- 2. You could ask them each a question, have something on the overhead or board they could read collectively, or pair them into partners, where they would have a conversation while stomping their syllables!
- 3. This activity requires that the kids think about two things at once...working motor and verbal skills.
- 4. To increase difficulty, you could have them do two physical things at the same time, like stomp and clap side-to-side with each syllable, or create their own movement.

Level ~ Elem.

Submitted by Gina Krueger @ gmkruege

Spelling Baseball (justbfit.blogspot.com)

- 1. Split the class into two teams.
- 2. Designate where the "bases" are in your classroom.
- Students take turns spelling words; if they are correct, they advance a base.
- 4. If they misspell the word, they go to the back of the line.
- See how many home runs can be scored in two minutes, then switch teams.

Snowball Fight

- 1. Give youth a clean sheet of white unlined paper.
- 2. Have them write 3-5 unique things about themselves.
- 3. Tell them NOT to put their name on the paper. (If they can't write--have them draw a picture)
- 4. Next, have them crunch the paper into a ball.
- 5. Have them stand in a large circle around the room.
- 6. Then allow them one full minute to have an all-out snowball fight!
- 7. When one minute is up, have them locate a "snowball" nearest to them, unfold it, and take turns trying to guess who it is.
- 1. They absolutely LOVE this activity! It loosens them up real quick and they will remember it always. Many students say it's the best minute of fun they had all year! (Adapted from Betsy Pollard)

Note: If it's 'baseball season" instead of throwing 'snowballs'...pretend to be throwing baseballs.

Always play themed music while balls are being thrown! With baseball--of course it's 'Take me out to the Ball Game!'

Level ~ K-12

DUCKS & COWS (add a Pig/Oink if you need 3 groups)

- 1. This is a great way to divide a large group into two smaller groups.
- 2. Players close their eyes while one person goes around tapping them on the shoulders designating them either a duck or a cow.
- 3. On a given signal, players keep their eyes closed and must find other members of their duck or cow team by "mooing" or "quacking."

Make sure to tell the students that they MUST walk (carefully) when they do this activity. This is an activity that should be done when you have developed a good Brain Break environment in your classrooms. Your students must understand the importance of safety and are willing to be silly!!

Level ~ Elementary

Birthday Line Up or Name Line Up

- 1. This is a great team building or ice breaker activity.
- 2. Inform that group that they can not talk from this point forward until you give them permission.
- 3. Have the group get in a line.
- 4. Tell them they must, in silence (no talking at all), get in order by height.
- 5. Once they successfully compete this challenge, you can give the following line up tasks: line up by birthday month, first name, etc.

Level ~ Elem. & MS

EARTHBALL

- 1. The group task is to keep a beach ball in the air for a specified number of hits without letting it hit the ground (must stay seated or in their space).
- 2. Additionally, no one person can touch the object twice in a row.
- 3. Set a goal with the group for the number of hits that the group can make following the rules.
- 4. After your group meets its goal, it can increase the target number or go for a "world record" and see how many hits the group can accomplish.
- 5. This fun activity is much harder than it seems! If the group is struggling, give them an opportunity to review their strategy and create a plan for the next attempt.

Holiday Brain Break Fun

Would you rather do this or that game ~ here is a fun activity for the holidays that gets kid up and moving around. Check out the link below for rules, etc. I am sure you will enjoy watching the students have fun and be active

http://youthleaderstash.com/2010/11/23/would-you-rather-christmas-scenarios/

Level ~ 3-12

Alphabet Actors

- 1. Divide players into groups of three or four.
- 2. The leader/teacher calls out a letter and the groups must then form that letter using their bodies.
- The groups can decide if they want to build the letters standing or laying on the floor.
- 4. You can have the different groups spell out words or answers to questions.
- 5. You could have them do numbers instead of letters for math problems or test reviews ~ I am sure you will come up with lots of other ways to use this activity.

Level ~ Elem & MS

Hula Hoop Pass (This one is just fun and the kids love it!!)

- 1. Have the group form a circle holding hands.
- 2. Ask two people to let go of their grip long enough for them to place their hands through a hula hoop before rejoining them.
- 3. The team task is to pass the hula hoop around the circle in a specified direction until it returns to the starting point ~ can't let go of hands!!
- 4. Another way to play is to use two hoops and have them go around the circle in opposite directions.

Level ~ K-5

CHARADE RELAY

- 1. Divide into two groups with an equal number of participants.
- 2. Give each team an envelope filled with charades clues to be acted out.
- 3. Each team should send a participant up front to take a clue.
- 4. The two participants should stand back to back in the middle of the room and act out their clues for their teams who are on opposite sides of the room.
- 5. When the clue is guessed, as quickly as possible the person up front should sit down and the next participant should race to the front, take a clue and begin acting it out.
- 6. The first team to guess a clue for each of their members wins.
- 7. This is a speed challenge and should be pretty chaotic with two actors up front and both teams yelling out guesses.
- 8. Clues could be about a book being read or a social studies topic, etc.

Great Challenges - Seven Jumping Jacks & 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8



Secret Agent/Guardian Angel

- Each person selects a Secret Agent and Guardian Angel from the group.
- When the facilitator says "go", each person must attempt to keep the Guardian Angel physically between himself/herself and his/her Secret Agent.
- 3. No running.

ESP (giants, wizards, elves)

- 1. Teach the group three distinct gestures for giants, wizards and elves.
- 2. Standing back to back with a partner, the pairs try to guess what gesture the other person is going to do when they turn around.
- 3. No talking, only using ESP!
- 4. This energizer is kind of like Rock Paper Scissors but students are trying to do the same gesture when they turn arround after chanting "E-S-P".
- 5. Have them jump and chant ESP and then turn adds a little more activity and energy to the game.

Level ~ Elem/MS

Switch it Up

- 1. Students push chairs away from their desks and sit down.
- 2. The teacher starts the wave going clockwise around the classroom.
- 3. Anyone can reverse the direction by standing up and clapping twice.

Stomping Out the Myths

- 1. During a class lesson where students are asked to determine if the answer is true or false, have the kids use movement to give their answers.
- 2. Read a question.
- 3. If they believe the statement is true, have the students stay seated and punch their arms toward the ceiling.
- 4. If they believe the answer is false, they get up and march in place.

**Maybe this could be used for a review of some sort or maybe a quick assessment.

Level ~ Elementary

Class-Pass Challenge

- 1. Begin the challenge with all students standing by their desk.
- 2. Teacher starts by throwing a "sock ball" to a student
- 3. That student tosses the ball to another who is standing.
- 4. After passing the ball, student sits down.
- 5. This is repeated until all students are seated.
- 6. The last student standing throws the ball back to the teacher.
- 7. Repeat the activity.

Challenges: Time how quickly the class can do it one time or count how many times the whole class sits down in three minutes.

**To make a sock ball, roll up a pair of clean socks or use a bean bag or hacky sack.

Level ~ Elem/MS

Getting Warmer

- 1. Have one student leave the room.
- 2. Hide an object around the room.
- 3. When that student re-enters, they will be guided by their classmates' **movements** (no verball help) to locate the hidden object.
- 4. Students will indicate whether to go left, right, forward, backwards, up higher or down lower.
- 5. To indicate backwards, students could use the backstroke motion, indicate go left or right using a side bend, go forward using a march, up higher using a climbing motion and down lower by having kids kneel.
- 6. When the student gets within one foot, classmates should pretend they are stepping on something hot.
- Rotate over the days until every student has had a chance to be "it."

Level ~ Elem/MS

Take the Long Way (simple way to get a little extra PA)

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

Level ~ Any

Fuel Up To Play 60 Brain Break Activity Link:

http://school.fueluptoplay60.com/tools/view.php?id=15749467

Lineman Drill

- 1. Students choose a partner.
- 2. Partners stand face to face and place hands at chest level.
- Partners touch one another's hands (palms against each other) and push (not pull) against each other, trying to make partner take a step off balance.
- 4. Note, partners can only make contact with one another's hands.
- 5. Next, try having students repeat the activity but with their feet apart, feet together and standing on one foot.
- 6. Make sure set some rules for safety with this one.

Level ~ Elem/MS

Four Corners

- 1. Ask questions with 4 possible answers.
- 2. Depending on answer, students move to one of the four corners of the room.

EX: favorite color?, favorite food?, favorite sport?, favorite hobby?, favorite actor?, etc.

This activity is easy and just gets them up and moving for a few minutes!

Balance

- 1. Students walk around the room balancing paper plates on their heads.
- 2. Add things to the plates to make it more challenging.
- 3. When the plates/objects fall, student is out.

Heads Up ~ 7 Up

- 1. Class sits at their desks with their eyes closed, heads down, and thumbs up.
- Seven students go around the room and touch a thumb.
- Seven students go around the room and touch a thumb.When the thumb is touched, the student puts their thumb down.
- 4. When each student has touched a thumb, the 7 students stand in the front of the room.
- 5. The students whose thumbs were touched try to guess who touched them
- 6. If they're correct, they replace them. If not, the person survives for another round.

evel ~ Elem/MS

Eraser Chaser

- 1. Everyone is seated and IT is selected.
- 2. IT is given 2 chalkboard erasers and places one on his/her head and carries the other walking around the room.
- 3. Without warning, IT places the second eraser on the desk of another student (The CHASER).
- 4. The CHASER quickly puts the eraser on their head and tries to tag IT. IT attempts to make a lap of the room and sit in the seat the CHASER vacated.
- 5. If IT makes it around and sits before being tagged, the CHASER becomes IT. If not, select a new IT.

Level ~ All Levels

First Step!

- 1. Students partner up and face each other placing their palms together and getting a firm stance with their feet shoulder width apart.
- 2. The goal is to make your partner take the first step. Partners can only touch the palms of each other's hands.
- 3. You can only win by risking losing! The more pressure you put on you partner's palms, the greater the risk that your partner may pull back at the right moment causing you to take a step!

MIX ~ FREEZE

- 1. Teacher calls "MIX" and students walk around the room. Make sure friends are not sticking together. Teacher can play music if desired.
- 2. Teacher calls "FREEZE" or stops playing music.
- 3. At this point, teacher will direct students to form groups of a certain number. If teacher only wants students to pair up, this can be explained before the activity begins.
- 4. Students find the closest group members and stand back to back.
- 5. Teacher poses a question or gives a prompt and gives students think time.
- 6. Students discuss question or prompt in groups.
- 6. Teacher asks one or two students to share what their group discussed.
- 7. Students mix again and process is repeated.
- 8. Instruct students to find a partner that they haven't worked with before.

WHY BRAIN BREAKS??

Incorporating Brain Breaks Keeping Students Engaged

Brain Breaks are a quick and effective way of changing or focusing the physical and mental state of the learners in your group. They are also a useful tool for students to use to help activate, energize and stimulate their brains. Research indicates that brain breaks also improve students' concentration and relieve stress.

Some brain breaks focus on discussion or some specific verbal task. Others help students to clear their minds or meditate. The most effective brain breaks incorporate some level of physical movement in order to stimulate neurological pathways and help both hemispheres of the brain work together.

Students should have a kinesthetic brain break every 25-30 minutes. Brain break activities do take about 1-3 minutes of class time to complete; however, the efficiency of our students goes up when brain breaks are incorporated. Brain breaks are refreshing for both students and teachers. You should participate too!

Before implementing brain breaks in your classroom, be certain that you explain their purpose to students. Make certain that students understand that brain breaks are research-based and their efficacy has been scientifically proven. It will also be vitally important that you set behavior expectations before you begin. For example, remind students that everyone must participate and must give their best effort. Set a timer for the activity so that it doesn't exceed set time limits. If possible, project the written directions, explain them, and demonstrate the task. Finally, develop a technique for getting students to

resume work immediately. You might have a 10-second count-down cue or play a short 10-scond musical clip cue (like the Jeopardy song).

by Marjorie Nolan, Reading Coach, First Coast High School

Finger Tips

- 1. Stand up.
- 2. Make an X with your arms out in front of you with your palms facing you. Keep your fingers up in the air. Lock your thumbs together.
- 3. With your index finger on your right hand, try to touch each of the finger tips of your other hand, one by one.
- 4. Now take your middle finger on your right hand and do the same thing and touch the finger tips of your other hand one by one.
- 5. Do this same process for your ring finger and pinkie on your right hand.
- 6. Now do the process for your left hand index, middle, ring and pinkie fingers.

Level ~ 7-12

Blinky Thinky

- 1. Stand up.
- 2. Blink your left eye while simultaneously snapping your fingers with your right hand.
- 3. Now blink your right eye and while snapping with your left hand.
- 4. Try to blink one eye while snapping on the opposite side's hand 15 times in a row alternating eyes. In other words, blink your left eye while simultaneously snapping with your right hand and then blinking your right eye while snapping with your left hand.

Rub-a-Dub

- 1. Stand up.
- 2. Pat your head with your right hand.
- 3. Rub your stomach with your left hand.
- 4. Switch hands.

Finger-Thumb

- 1. Stand up.
- 2. Put your fists together.
- 3. Point your index finger on one hand and stick your thumb out on the other hand
- 4. Now switch... and switch again... How fast can you go?

Mirror Drill

- 1. Stand up.
- 2. Partners face one another.
- 3. Hold palms up in front of chest, facing partner.
- 4. The leader will move one hand at a time and the follower will mirror the movement.
- 5. Switch hands every minute.

Name Speed

- 1. Everyone stands in a circle.
- 2. One at a time, each person says their first name.
- 3. Everyone around the circle participates.
- 4. The timekeeper times how long it takes the group to say their first name one at a time.
- 5. The group gets a few tries to bring their time down.

Level ~ All Levels

All My Neighbors

- 1. You need an odd number of people for this game that is a distant cousin to musical chairs.
- 2. Everyone begins by sitting on chairs in a circle with the facilitator standing in the middle.
- 3. Explain that the person in the middle needs to find some "neighbors." To do so, they'll make a true statement about themselves and hope that it will be true for others.
- 4. Everyone that "identifies" with the statement has to then stand up and find an empty chair.
- 5. The person in the center is also looking for a chair, so once again someone will be without a chair, and they get to go to the middle and find some "neighbors."
- 6. The facilitator then begins with something like: "All my neighbors wearing blue jeans." At this, everyone who is wearing jeans should jump out of their seats and look for an empty seat.
- 7. The oddperson out goes to the middle.
- 8. The facilitator then goes on through 10 to 15 other such statements.

 Examples can include my neighbors who: are wearing socks, have an older sibling, are born in a month without an R in it, likes Frosted Flakes, plays the piano (even a little bit)
- 1. This game can easily last ten to fifteen minutes.

Scream

- 1. Everyone stands in a circle, looking down at their toes.
- 2. The leader calls (in a voice of terror and pending doom) "Look out!"
- 3. Everyone looks up at someone.
- If no one is looking back, that person puts their head back down and covers their ears.
- 5. If two people are looking at each other, they both let out a blood curdling scream and then quickly put their heads down until the leader calls "Look out!" again.
- 6. For a quieter version, try these:
 - a) Teeter-totter: When two people are looking at each other, one sits and one stands.
 - b) Faces: Instead of screaming, make faces at each other and then look down.

Ball Through Legs

- 1. Participants stand in a circle with their legs spread apart so that their feet are touching their neighbors feet.
- 2. A ball is thrown into the middle of the circle.
- 3. The aim is to get people out by hitting the ball through their legs.
- 4. You defend yourself by hitting the ball away with your hands.
- 5. The first time a ball goes through your legs, you have to put one hand behind your back so you can defend with only one hand.
- 6. The next time you are out, the circle closes up.

Level ~ Elem/MS

Zip Zap Zop

1. Sit in a circle and each participant says either:

Zip—and throws a ball to the person to the right

Zap—and throws the ball to the person to the left

Zop—and throws the ball to anyone in the circle except the people on either side of them

2. If someone says the wrong word, or fails to catch the ball unless the throw was unreasonable), then they are out.

Level ~ All Levels

Fizz-Buzz Game

Instructions for two players, 3-5 game. (Easiest).

- 1. Players take it in turns counting from one to ninety-nine. (Don't take too much or too little time between numbers try for a steady pace)
- 2. Otherwise, player must say **Fizz** instead of their number if the number is a multiple of **three**.
- 3. Otherwise, player must say **Buzz** instead of their number if the number is a multiple of **Five**.
- 4. Player must **say Fizz-Buzz** instead of their number if the number is a multiple of **three and of five**.

Digit version

Use basic instructions 1-4 as above, then add the following rules:

- Otherwise, player must say Fizz for each digit in the number that is a three.
- And player must also say Buzz for each digit in the number that is a five. (for example, say Fizz-one instead of 31, Fizz-two instead of thirty two).
- 6. Remember, the rules must be applied in order so thirty three isactually Fizz and not Fizz-Fizz as it is first a multiple of three.

Zoom Screech

- 1. Have players stand in a circle.
- 2. Explain that we are going to work together to create the sound of a car zooming past.
- 3. Start by saying "Zoom" as you turn your head from the right to the left.
- 4. Once you are facing the person to your left, they should repeat "Zoom" as they turn their head from facing you to the person to their left.
- 5. The zoom should travel around the circle.
- 6. Have it go around a few times to get the speed up and constant.
- 7. Once you think the group has it down. Stop and introduce the idea of "Screech".
- 8. A "screech" is the sound a car makes when it jams on the brakes.
- 9. If instead of passing the "zoom" on you say "screech" to the person who said "zoom"

 to you reverse the direction of the zoom
 - to you, you reverse the direction of the zoom.
- 9. Each player may screech only once during a game.
- ** The game is over when all players have used up their screeches.

Silent Ball

- 1. Players stand spread throughout the room.
- 2. One person acts as the "Judge".
- 3. A ball is tossed across the room from person to person.
- 4. Players are out if they miss a reasonable toss, make an unreasonable toss, or talk (hence the name silent ball).
- 5. When you get to just a few people left, you can add in the throw and spin rule.
- 6. You need to spin around after you throw the ball.
- 7. Last one standing is the winner.

Level ~ All Grades

Cooperative Musical Chairs

- 1. This activity is a takeoff on the familiar musical chairs game.
- 2. Set up a circle of chairs with one less chair than the number of students in the class.
- 3. Play music as the students circle around the chairs. When the music stops, the students must sit in a seat.
- 4. Unlike the traditional game, the person without a seat is not out.
- 5. Instead, someone must make room for that person.
- 6. Then remove another seat and start the music again.
- 7. The kids end up on one another's laps and sharing chairs!
- 8. You can play this game outside, and you can end it whenever you wish.
- ** Afterward, stress the teamwork and cooperation the game took, and how students needed to accept one another to be successful.
- ** Reinforce that idea by repeating this game throughout the year.

Level ~ Elem/MS

Ha

- 1. With the participants seated in a circle, explain that the object of this game is for the, without laughing, to pass the word "ha" around the circle.
- 2. The trainer then designates one participant to be the head of the circle.
- That participant begins the game by saying "ha".
- 4. The person sitting to his or her right must repeat the "ha" and then say another "ha."
- 5. The third person must say ha, ha and then given an additional "ha."
- 6. In this manner the "ha" continues around the circle.
- 7. The game ends when all of the participants, trying not to laugh (a virtual impossibility), have repeated the "ha's" that preceded them and then added their own "ha."

Guns & Roses Brain Break - Video by David Sladkey

THE FOLLOWING VIDEOS
CHALLENGE STUDENTS
TO DO THINGS WITH
THEIR RIGHT AND LEFT
HANDS AND FEET.

MANY OF THE VIDEOS ALSO CHALLENGE THEM TO CROSS THE MIDLINE. THESE ARE AWESOME BRAIN STIMULATING ACTIVITIES.



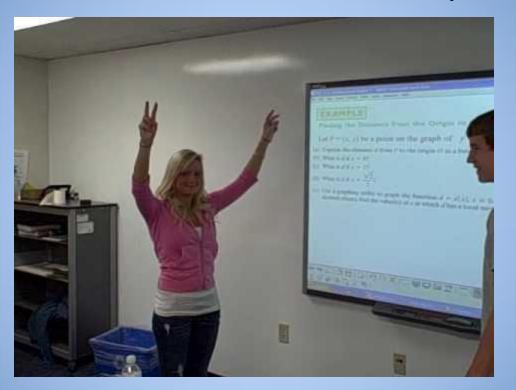
Level ~ 7-12th grade

Figure 8 Brain Break - Video by David Sladkey



Level ~ 7-12th grade

Five Brain Break - David Sladkey Video



Level ~ HS

Toe Tapper Brain Break ~ David Sladkey



Level ~ 7-12th Grade

ABC 123 Brain Break ~ David Sladkey Video



Level ~ 7-12th Grade

Thumb & Pinkie Brain Break ~ David Sladkey

Video



Level ~ 7-12th Grade

Slapcount Brain Break ~ David Sladkey Video



Level ~ HS

SAY 21 & WIN Brain Break ~ David Sladkey



Level ~ 6-12th Grade

Rock Paper Scissors Math Brain Break ~ David Sladkey Video



Level ~ 6-12th Grade

Brain Breaks by Mike Smith (elementary teacher)

Mike has great examples of how to use Brain Breaks with your classes. How he manages and integrates them might help teachers that are not quite sure how to do it!

Brain Break 1

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U7jWtL7XLAk

Brain Break 2

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFkVjzKoqLA

Partner Brain Breaks

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2AUjpqwbNj8

Level ~ Elementary

Paper Walk

- Using recycled paper, each person puts the paper on their stomach and then tries to walk down the hall fast enough so it does not fall off.
- 2. If it falls, do 5 jumping jacks before trying again (or whatever exercise you want).

All Levels

Desk Relay

- 1. You will need one beanbag, rubber chicken or other safe object for every row of 5-6 students.
- 2. Have students sit in rows of desks or chairs with the first person in each row holding one object.
- 3. On the signal to begin, the object is passed over his/her head to the next person and so on until the end of the row.
- 4. The last student runs to the front of the room, touches the wall and sits in the first desk while everyone else moves to sit in the desk behind them.
- 5. Continue for 2 minutes. Have each group count how many times they were able to pass the object down the row then challenge each group to beat their score by two!
- 6. Change the way the object is passed, instead of over the head, try under the desk, or alternate to the right, then left, etc.
- 7. Have the students choose how to modify this activity!
- 8. Place letters on a wall or board. Assign each row of students a word (possibly from the word wall or another appropriate topic).
- 9. One at a time, students will move to the letters, touch the first letter of the word, hop on one foot around the room and back to their desk.
- 10. Rows of students work together to spell the assigned word.
- 11. Consider having each row choose the word for the next row to spell.
- 12. Challenge students to stand beside the first desk in the row and hit each letter with a bean bag as opposed to touching it with their hand.
- 13. Provide enough room for students in wheelchairs to wheel beside a desk and up to the front of the room.
- 14. Allow students to choose how they move to the front.
- 15. Pass a large, soft object so it is easier to grasp.

Level ~ Elementary (5th-6th too)

EARTHQUAKE & EVICTION

- 1) One group member stands alone to start, the rest of the group members need to make groups of three.
- 2) The groups of three have two people making a house with their hands and one person standing underneath.
- 3) The lone person calls either "Eviction!", in which everyone in a house must leave and find a new one.
- 4) Or the person may call "Earthquake!", in which all houses collapse and everyone must form a new threesome of house and resident.
- 5) Either way, the lone person tries to get into one of the threesome, so the person left becomes the new "caller."

This physical energizer can be done in the gym, outside or in the classroom. No equipment is needed.

Level ~ Elem. & MS

SILLY SCRUMPLE - ENERGIZER (Materials Needed: Paper and Pencils)

- 1. Pass out paper and pencils to groups
- 2. Each student writes a silly, safe and appropriate action to do on the paper. Next, they crumple up the paper. The action could be an exercise like jumping jacks or something silly like barking like a dog. If there is something academic, like vocabulary or definitions, that could be written on the paper too. Teachers can write academic ideas on papers in advance and give them to students who can't think of a silly action.
- 3. The teacher then tells students to start tossing the balled up paper around the room. They should be trying to throw it to other students so they can catch it. Keep throwing until the teacher says stop. **(This activity also provides tossing and catching skill work for younger students).
- 4. Pick a student to open up their paper and do the action described on it. Variation: The teacher can pick several students to do the action at the same time. This is usually done in the beginning when students are a little shy and nervous about the game.

Level ~ Elementary

LOOK UP LOOK DOWN ENERGIZER/BRAIN BREAK

- 1. Arrange participants into groups of 12-20 members.
- 2. Have participants stand in a tight circle, shoulder to shoulder.
- 3. Explain that when you (the facilitator) says, "look down" everyone must look at the ground. And when you say, "Look up" everyone must look up and stare directly at the face of another person. If two people look up and stare at each other, they must scream and then step out of the circle. The rest of the participants who didn't make eye contact with another person will continue staring until the facilitator says, "Look down" again. Play continues until there are only 2-3 people left in the circle.

Variations:

If you have more than one circle of Look Up Look Down going on, you will want a facilitator who knows the rules in each group.

With a very large group, you may have several circles of Look Up Look Down going on at the same time. If that is the case, once group members stare at another person, and scream, they must then run clockwise to the next circle and join their game. Your circles keep fluctuating in size. The game continues until you run out of time.

Level ~ MS & HS

Here are 3 Brain Breaks that are pretty high energy. You will need a bigger space to do these activities. You could do them outside.

Missing Chair Game https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djI5qloa5uA

Pass the Banana https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eoZidc1b3kE
You could use a foam ball or knotted dish towel for the Banana pass game.
It would be easier for the students especially if they are younger.

Ladder Game https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k4VzqGUvQ-Q Make sure you include some safety guidelines for the game. This game could be used to review concept and then after you could call a number. It might help them stay focused if you mix in some academics and then some movement. It could be fun!

Level ~ MS & HS

Chair Roller Coaster Ride

- Works best seated on the desk top (if seats are attached) or on a chair
- Direct students to sit down and balance on their seats without the use of their hands or feet (engaging core muscles). Teacher or student leader acts out the actions to simulate being on a roller coaster while students follow along in balanced position:
- Harness on Pull imaginary harness over shoulders
- Climbing Hold on to imaginary harness and lean back
- Turns Mix in a variety of "turns" by leaning arms to one side, then the other, start slow and get faster
- Drop Both hands up and scream, shake arms
- Repeat Turns, Climbs, Drops
- Finish Lift harness off of shoulders.
- Exit Everyone stands up, grabs their belly, and acts like they are sick

Task Master

- Have students stand up and push in their chairs. Explain that you are going to give them a series of tasks and the goal is to complete them as quickly as possible.
- Direct students that once they have completed the task, they should stop where they are and raise their hand.
- For the first task have students touch 10 chairs not in a row.
- For the next task have students touch elbows with 8 classmates.
- For the last task, touch toes with 6 classmates wearing 6 different colored shirts.
- For other tasks, have the students create more or integrate content relevant to the course.

Level ~ Elem. & MS

Meet Me in the Middle

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 right handed 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. Use any physical activity ideas you can think of for this challenge.

Level ~ 6th-12th

Squeeze (Level ~ MS & HS)

Material Needed: Coin, empty plastic water bottle

- Divide group members into even teams
- Have teams sit at opposite sides of a rectangular table, or stand in two straight lines, shoulder to shoulder facing the other team.
- Instruct team members to hold the hands of the people next to them.
- Place the water bottle at one end of the table.
- Explain to participants that, at one end of the table a facilitator will be flipping a coin. When the coin lands
 on tails, nothing happens. When the coin lands on heads, the team member at the end of the line closest to
 the coin will squeeze their team member's hand setting off a chain reaction all the way down to the end.
- Once the person on the other end, next to the water bottle feels their hand squeezed, they need to grab the water bottle as fast as they can before the other team.
- You cannot grab the water bottle unless you feel your hand squeezed.
- If you're team is successful in grabbing the water bottle before the other team, your team members rotate,
 so the person nearest the water bottle will move down to be nearest the coin.
- If for whatever reason you start squeezing when you shouldn't be (accidentally squeezing the person's hand next to yours, the coin lands on heads) and you grab the water bottle out of turn, your team rotates backwards a person.

Note: There should be no talking during the game, and it is a good idea to have everyone's eyes closed except for the person who needs to see the coin. You can make a rule that they can only look in the direction of the coin and not toward the other end of the table.

Brain Break/Energizer Stations

- 1. Create 3-4 stations in different areas of the room designated by a sign showing a different physical activity (running in place, jumping jacks, situps, jumping on both feet, etc.).
- 2. Divide students into 3 or 4 groups and assign them a station.
- 3. Have students perform the activity for one minute and then rotate to the next station.
- 4. To mix it up, add new activities or more stations.

Station Ideas: Here is a link to some station ideas that could be used.

http://goo.gl/enRb8J I will continue to add more. If you have ideas for station activities/exercises, please email me @ gmkruege@gmail.com.

Level ~ All Levels

Ten Fingers

- 1. This activity is great for whenever your group has free time. It works best with more people, and everyone should be honest when playing.
- 2. Have everyone sit in a circle or close enough to be able to hear everyone. Tell them to hold up all 10 fingers.
- 3. The teacher can start off by stating one fact about themselves. For ex: "I have never been to Florida." or "I have blue eyes."
- 4. Then the participants who have been to Florida, or don't have blue eyes, will put one finger down.
- 5. This will continue around the circle, having each person share one fact about themselves until someone is all out of fingers.
- 6. It's better to try and use less obvious, unique facts about yourself because there is a chance that more people will have to put a finger down if they can't relate to your fact.
- 7. Who ever has the most fingers left at the end of everyones' turn wins!
- 8. This is a great little brain break that helps students re-focus and learn about each other while having some fun.

Level ~ Elem. & MS

Stand up, Sit Down

- 1. The kids can start out in a standing or sitting position.
- 2. Ask them questions, such as "do you have a sister?" or "are you wearing pink?"
- 3. If their answer is "Yes," they change to the other position (stand or sit).
- 4. If "No," then they stay the same.

Level ~ Elem. & MS

Jedi Numbers ~ This is more challenging than it sounds...

- 1. Ask the group to stand in a circle.
- 2. Set a numeric goal for the group to reach (start with 15 or so).
- 3. Explain to the group that once the activity begins, participants can only say a number no side conversations or strategies!
- 4. Once the leader says, "Go," someone (whoever decides to start) in the group starts by saying, "One," followed by someone different (whoever decides to speak next) calling out, "two," and so one until the group reaches its goal.
- 5. The challenge is that if more than one person calls out a number at the same time, the group needs to start over at the beginning.
- 6. Since there is not a set person order, this happens quite a lot!
- 7. As a variation, you can give the group a time limit (say 10 minutes) to reach the highest possible number.

Level ~ MS & HS

Incorporation

Explain that this game is about forming and reforming groups as quickly as possible. Don't worry if you are not even into the first group by the time the next group is called, just head to the next group. The idea is to meet many different groups of people as fast as possible. Get into a group of three...go!

Other group suggestions:

- A group of five with everyone having the same color eyes as you.
- With the same last digit in their phone number as yours.
- Wearing the same size shoe as you.
- Get into a group of three people and make the letter "H" with your bodies.
- Find everyone else born in the same month as you
- Think of the first vowel in your first name, find four with the same vowel.

LEVEL ~ MS & HS

Who Am I? Who Am I?

- The leader tapes the name of a famous person on the back of each participant.
 (i.e. Fred Flintstone, Gabi Douglas, Bill Clinton, etc.) T
- The group member is not to see who is taped to their back. Their task is to find out who they are.
- The participants go around the room asking others only yes or no questions.
- If the member receives a "yes" answer, they can continue to ask that person questions until they receive a "no" answer.
- Then they must continue on to ask questions to someone else.
- When a group member figures out who they are, they take off the tag, put it on the front of their shirt, and write their own name on it.
- That person can then help others find out who they are.
- The exercise concludes when everyone has discovered who they are.

Variation: Use names of famous pairs (like Syskell and Ebert, Bert and Ernie) and do a partner activity after the game. Use science concepts or characters from books read in class. There are lots of options with this activity.

Level ~ MS & HS

What's Different, Partner?

- Partners are needed and this is a 5 minute activity.
- Ask everyone to team up with a partner (someone who is their height or who has the same color eyes).
- Ask them to turn back-to-back and change 5 things about their appearance, one which is very silly.
- Partners turn around when ready and try to guess the 5 things that have been changed.

Level ~ MS & HS

Animal Sounds

- Participants are blindfolded and assigned an animal.
- The challenge is to use animal noises in order to meet up with other animals of same species.
- Releases energy.
- Loud, fun, chaotic, then gradually have pairs come together and take off blindfolds to see who were their animal pairs.

Level ~ 4th-8th Grade

Crazy Chairs

- Set up a circle of chairs with someone seated in each chair and one person standing in the middle.
- The person in the middle says something about themselves.
- For example, "I have been to Mexico."
- Everyone who has been to Mexico gets up and quickly trades chairs.
- One person will be left standing and that person is then in the middle and says something about herself.
- It's a fun game as you never know what the statement will be or who will be getting up.

LEVEL ~ Elem/MS/HS

STOPLIGHT

- Assign a simple movement to each color of the stoplight (ex. red is right hand on head, yellow is left hand on stomach and green is both pointers to chin).
- Rehearse a few times with kids and then start calling out colors ~ Red Light or Yellow Light, etc.
- Students perform the correct action assigned to the color.

Variations: Games can be elimination style or a fitness penalty like jumping jacks for an incorrect action and then they are back in the game.

Tick Tock Hop

- Teacher explains to students that they are standing inside an imaginary clock.
- One hop forward is 12 noon, one hop back is 6 pm, one hop to the right is 3 pm and to the left is 9 pm.
- Teacher calls out the numbers/times one at a time.
- Start slow calling numbers and then go fast and continue to mix it up.
- Students hop with both feet together at the appropriate time always coming back to the middle.

Variations: Students could be eliminated for jumping the wrong direction or could have a fitness penalty or could just keep playing and trying their best.

Level ~ Elementary (2nd-5th)

Heads or Tails

- 1. The only suppy you need is a coin (and possibly a prize for the winner).
- 2. Prior to flipping the coin, the students pick either heads or tails.
- If the pick heads, they put their hands on their head.
- If they pick tails, they but their hand on their rear end.
- Then, you flip the coin.
- 3. If it is heads, the students with their hands on their heads move to the next round.
- 4. If it is tails, the students with their hands on their rear-ends move to the next round.

Continue this process until you have a winner!

Level ~ All Levels

PUSH UP HOCKEY

- Students partner up and face each other in push up position about 2 feet apart w/arms shoulder width apart.
- Students can use a crumpled up piece of paper as a ball, or a ping pong ball or bean bag to push back and forth using their hands and trying to score through their opponents goal (arms).
- You may need a little more space for this activity. It could be done in a hallway or outside.

Level ~ All Levels

Exercise with Math



Why Incorporate Brain Breaks?

* See Slide #57

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