

# *The Renaissance*

## **Classroom Energizers**





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The energizer activities in this packet are warm-up games actors use to prepare for rehearsal and/or performance. They warm-up the actors' tools (their body and voice) and create a sense of ensemble (teamwork) with fellow cast members.

When used in the classroom, these activities have the same effect. The activities utilize the students' five senses, motor skills, communication skills, create a sense of trust, and build an ensemble. They can also be used to teach or assess curriculum topics, increase memory and focus energy.

Have fun using these activities in the classroom!



## **Clap the Circle**

Energizer Activity where students learn to listen, respond and work together.

### Part I: Clap Together

Have students stand in a circle with feet slightly apart and hand in front of them.

Tell student that you are going to clap your hands, and they are to clap exactly the same time as you.

Clap hands once. (Be sure to open your arms before clapping so students have a warning that the clap is coming.) – Students do the same.

Repeat a few times.

Name one of the students to be the leader.

Repeat to the students: The object of this game is to clap together.

Allow the student leader to clap a few times.

Appoint another student leader, repeat the object of the game, and have them lead a few claps.

### Assessment:

Ask the students, “How was that?” Allow for a few answers.

Ask students, “Were we together?” Allow for a few answers.

Discuss: “What did you have to do to be together?”

Define **Cue**: a signal that it is your turn; the last words or actions that come before another actor's speech or entrance; a light, sound, physical or curtain signal.

### Part II: Pass it

Turn to the student to your right and tell them you are going to clap your hands and that they are to clap exactly the same time as you. (Be sure to open your arms before clapping so your partner has a warning that the clap is coming – this is the cue.) Clap and allow your partner to clap with you.

Instruct your partner to now turn to their right and clap to with the next person. They must be together. Allow them to do so.

Instruct the students to continue to one at a time turn to their right and pass the clap around the circle.

When the clap gets all the way around the circle, pass it to your left and allow it to go all the way around the circle again.

### Assessment:

Again ask students, "How was that?" Allow for a few answers.

Again ask students, "Were we together?" Allow for a few answers.

Discuss: "What did you have to do to be together?"

### Part III: Choices

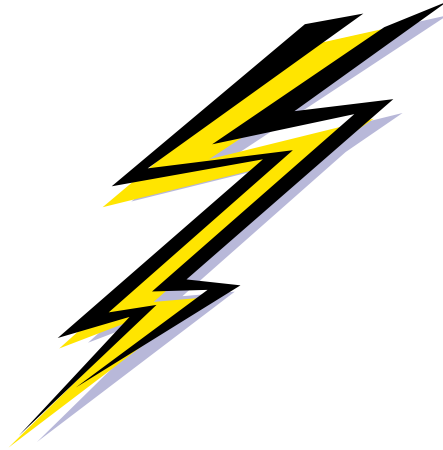
Instruct students that you are going to play the game again. This time when the clap comes to you, you have a choice, you can pass it along in the same direction, or clap again to the person who just passed it to you, thus sending it back in the opposite direction.

Tell students it is more important this time to give a clear and strong cue to whoever you are passing to.

### Assessment:

Again ask students, "How was that?" Allow for a few answers.

Tell student this is the same as an actor on stage. They have a choice as to what to do once they receive their cue. The most important thing is to **not drop the ball**. Don't stop the game no matter what. Keep giving cues and passing to your partner.



## **Zip Zap Zop**

Energizer where students learn to work together, connect with eye contact, utilize physical and verbal cues, and not “drop the ball.”

Have students stand in a circle with feet together.

Tell students the name of this next game is zip zap zop. Have them repeat the words “zip, zap, zop”.

Inform them that the way they pass in the game is to lean in with one leg and point to a person across the circle. Eye contact is most important. Ask student to try this all together.

Lean in with one leg and point to the person across the circle, connect with eye contact and say “zip.” That person does the same to another person across the circle and says “zap.” The next person passes with the same physical cue and says “zop.” The game continues by passing the word “zip”, “zap”, or “zop” across the circle.

Inform student they are not allowed to pass to the person to the right or left of them. It must be passed across the circle.

Play a few rounds.

Assessment: How was it? Were the physical cues clear? Did each person connect with eye contact? The main thing the students need to know is not to stop or add any words besides zip, zap, or zop – Don’t drop the ball!

Play a few more rounds and assess again.

Options: When a student “drops the ball” or slows the pace down, they can be called out. If this option is used, make sure to clearly explain what the reasons would be for students to be called out so there will be no confusion or arguments later.

## **Zip, Zap, Zop – Clap the Circle Combo**

Energizer where students combine game rules and have to make a choice.

Have students stand in a circle.

Instruct students that they will be combining two games: Zip, Zap, Zop and Clap the Circle.

The same rules apply from both games, however, when it is their turn each student has a choice, they can clap to the person to their right, clap to the person to the left, or zip across the circle.

Physical cues and eye contact are most important for the combo game.

After the clap has gone around the circle and a student want to go to Zip, Zap, Zop, they can always start with the “zip”. They do not have to keep track of where the zip, zap, zop left off previously.

Inform students that this choice they have to make when it is their turn is the same for an actor on stage, who is always making choices. The important thing for an actor to do once they make the choice is clearly cue their fellow actors on stage so they can easily “pick up the ball”.

## **Go Left, Go Right**

Energizer where student learn to pick up physical and vocal cues, make a choice, and “pass the ball.”

Have students stand in a circle.

Demonstrate: Turn your chin to the right and get eye contact with their person next to you and say, “Go right.” Instruct that person to do the same.

Have student continue all around the circle.

When it get back to you, turn your chin to the left and get eye contact with the person next to you and say, “Go left.” Instruct the person to do the same.

Have students continue all around the circle.

Assessment: Ask students, “What did you have to do to make the pass go all around the circle?” The important cues: eye contact, move the head, speak clearly.

Play again: Instruct student that when it comes to them, they have a choice, they can turn right and say, “Go right,” or they can turn left and say, “Go left.”

Play a few rounds and assess.

### **Zip, Zap, Zop – Clap the Circle – Go Right, Go Left Combo**

Energizer where students combine game rules and have to make a choice.

Have students stand in a circle.

Instruct students that they will be combining three games: Zip, Zap, Zop and Clap the Circle and Go Right, Go Left.

The same rules apply from all three games. When it is their turn each student has a choice, they can clap to the person to their right, clap to the person to the left, or zip across the circle, or turn to the right and say “Go right,” or turn to the left and say “Go left.”

Physical cues and eye contact are even more important now.

Remember: Don’t drop the ball!





### **Who Changed the Movement?**

An energizer where students learn to observe and communicate without words.

Have students stand in a circle.

Start a movement: for example: slap one leg, clap your hands, stomp one foot.

Instruct students to do the same movement they see.

Once all the students in the circle are doing the movement, ask for one student to change the movement. They are not allowed to say anything, just do a different movement. Everyone else in the circle must observe the change in movement and perform it.

Once everyone in the circle has changed to the new movement, instruct students that another student can change the movement as soon as they see that everyone in the circle is performing the change together. You can assist in students catching on by saying “I see a change,” as you perform the new movement when you see someone in the circle has changed it.

Play a few rounds, then call stop.

Assessment: Ask students, “What did you have to do to play this game successfully?”  
Answers: use their eyes, communicate without sounds, work together.  
Instruct students that the best movements are those that do not turn around. Ask them why.

Play again: Allow student to add sound to the movement.



## Pass the Prop

Energizer where students use their imagination and communicate through movement.

Supplies: a prop (a paper cup, a scarf, a piece of rope, a book)

Have students stand in a circle.

Define “prop” as any moveable item used on the set of a play or handled by an actor.

Instruct students that the object of this game is to change the prop you are holding into something it is not. They must use it as if it is that object. There is no sound in this game.

Hold the prop in your hands and demonstrate. For example: pretend it is a telephone, hold it to your ear and mouth words as if you are talking into it; pretend it is a shoe and you are slipping it on your foot; pretend it is a fork and use it to eat.

Students are to call out what they think you have turned the object into. When they call out the correct answer, pass the prop to the student to the right. That student is to do the same. Tell students there are no “repeaters” allowed. If someone chooses the same object as you, you must come up with a different object to change the prop into.

Continue the game until everyone has had one turn.

Assessment: Ask students, “How was the game?” “What did they need to do in order to play successfully?” Discuss.

Repeat the game again and have students add sound to the game. For example: if you change the object into a phone, you can make a ringing sound and actually talk into it.



Variation: The game can also be played without an actual object, so the students have to mime it.



### **When I Go to California**

Energizer that strengthens memory and teaches tricks to memorizing.

Have students stand in a circle.

Start the game by saying, “When I go to California I’m going to bring my \_\_\_\_\_,” and fill in the blank. For ex.: my suitcase, my dog, my swimsuit.

Ask the student to your right to repeat what you said, then add what they will bring. For example: “When I go to California, I’m going to bring my suitcase and my \_\_\_\_\_.” Student will fill in the blank for what they will bring.

The next student starts from the beginning by saying, “When I go to California, I’m going to bring my...” They must repeat what you said, what the student to your right said, and then add what they will bring.

Repeat the game around the circle.

Assessment: Ask students if this was easy or hard. Ask them to explain. What did they do to remember what each person was going to bring to California? Discuss.

#### Challenge:

The next time you play go around the circle more than one time to make it harder. The first time students must fill in the blank with only one word (a noun).

The second time they must fill in the blank with two words (an adjective and a noun). The third time around students must fill in the blank with more than two words (and adjective, a noun and why they will be bringing the object). For example:

1. When I go to California, I'm going to bring my sunglasses.
2. When I go to California, I'm going to bring my designer sunglasses.
3. When I go to California, I'm going to bring my designer sunglasses to keep the sun out of my eyes.

Assessment: Ask students which was harder to remember, round one, round two or round three.

#### Curriculum Variations:

1. Have students use vocabulary from the word wall.
2. Have student use vocabulary from their present curriculum unit.
3. Change California to a curriculum related location, such as Mars, Hawaii, the rain forest, the Arctic. Instruct student they must bring an object that is needed in any of the specified location.

### **Shake Down**

Physical Energizer to shake out stress, distraction and help focus energy.

Have students stand in a circle or just by their desks.

Instruct student to follow your lead:

1. Hold out your right hand and shake it and count from one to eight.
2. Hold out your left hand and shake it and count from one to eight.
3. Hold out your right leg and shake it and count from one to eight.
4. Hold out your left leg and shake it and count from one to eight.

Continue:

1. Hold out your right hand and shake it and count from one to seven.
2. Hold out your left hand and shake it and count from one to seven.
3. Hold out your right leg and shake it and count from one to seven.
4. Hold out your left leg and shake it and count from one to seven.

Continue to shake and count decreasing by one count until you get down to one.

## **One, Two**

Energizer that utilizes rhythm, timing and memory.

Have students sit in a circle.

Assign everyone a number: Start with yourself as number one, and have students gone around the circle counting up.

Start the rhythm:

1. slap both hands on your legs
2. clap your hands
3. snap your right hand
4. snap your left hand
5. repeat

Once students have the rhythm, add the numbers:

When you snap your right hand you say your number.

When you snap you left hand you say someone else's number in the circle.

The student with that number does the same thing: they say their number when they snap their right hand, and another student's number when they snap their left hand.

The important thing is to stay keep the rhythm consistent and keep the game going.

Variations: Once students are comfortable with the rhythm and how the game passes around the circle, try any of the following variations:

1. Use student names instead of numbers.
2. Assign students with curriculum vocabulary words instead of numbers.
3. Assign students states and capitols instead of numbers.
4. Name a curriculum topic and have students come up with how to use it in the game. Have students vary the rhythm to accommodate their variations.



### **Vocal Warm-ups & Tongue Twister**

Energizers where students warm-up their mouths (lips, tongue and teeth) and learn to pronounce all the letters in the words so they can speak clearly and be understood. It is also good as a memory game.

Have students stand in a circle.

Inform students when an actor is speaking on stage the audience want to be able to hear them and understand what they are saying. Actors will do vocal warm-ups to get their mouth and tongue warmed up and their breath moving so they can be heard and understood from the stage.

Instruct student that when you point to yourself, it is your turn, and when you point to them they repeat what you say.

Point to self and say, "Whether the weather is cold."

Point to student and have them repeat.

Point to self and say, "Whether the weather is hot."

Point to student and have them repeat.

Point to self and say, "We'll be together whatever the weather."

Point to student and have them repeat.

Point to self and say, "Whether we like it or not."

Point to student and have them repeat.

Repeat again slowly saying two lines at a time.

Repeat as many times as needed until students remember the four line rhyme. Instruct students to pronounce every letter in all the words so the audience can understand them.

### Add Rhythm:

Instruct students to clap one time after the first line, one time after the second line, no clap after the third line, then two quick claps after the fourth line.

Demonstrate.

Have student repeat.

### One at a Time with Cues:

Have students go one at a time around the circle, saying one line at a time. Instruct them that they must listen for their cue. The cue is the line before yours so that you know it is your turn and you know what line to say. For example: If the person before you says the line "Whether the weather is cold," your line will be, "Whether the weather is hot." It is important while you wait for your turn that you listen for your cue.

Also instruct the students that they will be saying one line at a time, but they will all do the clapping together. They must also listen for their cue to clap.

Go around the circle a few times.

### Additional Tongue Twisters & Variations:

#### **Red Leather**

Red leather, yellow leather.  
Good blood, bad blood.

#### **Plumb Picker's Son**

I am the plumb picker's son,  
I pick peaches, not plumbs,  
But I will pick plumbs,  
'Till the plumb picker comes.

#### **Weather**

Whether the weather is cold, (1 clap)  
Or whether the weather is hot, (1 clap)  
We'll be together whatever the weather, (so clap)  
Whether we like it or not. (2 quick claps)

#### **Betty Botter's Batter**

Betty Botter bought a bat of bitter butter.  
If she puts it in her batter, it will make her batter bitter.  
So, Betty Botter bought a bat of better butter.  
And when she put it in her batter,  
It did make her batter better.

### One Red Hen

One red hen

Two ducks

Three brown bears

Four hopping hares

Five no good robbers

Six silly sisters sipping soda

Seven sailors sailing the seven seas

Eight enormous elephants eating apples

Nine nasty nightingales nesting

Ten tiny turtles tanning their tummies

*Extension: Have students follow the above pattern to write a rhyme for #11, #12, etc.*

