



Classroom Physical Activity for K-5 Students: Keep Your Brain in the Game

Research shows that students who do brief **bursts of exercise** before taking tests **score higher**. In addition, regular physical activity breaks during the school day can help sharpen students' abilities to focus and stay on task.

Objective: Have your students exercise for 2 minutes before a test or quiz to improve scores.

Article for teachers: "Classroom Exercise Breaks for Elementary Students" at <http://kidshealth.org/parent/educator/elementary-exercises.html>

Materials:

- Comfortable shoes, such as sneakers
- NBA Fast Break card (attached)
- Crayons or markers
- Timer (optional)

Classroom activity: Have students try some of the exercises described in the "Classroom Exercise Breaks for Elementary Students" article for teachers. Students should vote to choose their five favorite exercises to do as a class at their desks. Before tests and quizzes (or to help students stay on task and focus during the day), students should do the five exercises for 24 seconds each while the teacher uses a timer to watch the "24-second shot clock" for the "final 2 minutes" before testing. Or, students can do fewer, or even one, exercise for 2 minutes.

Extensions:

- Read the "Why Exercise Is Cool" article for kids at http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/fit/work_it_out.html as a class (or read it aloud for younger students). Then have students illustrate their NBA Fast Break cards showing their favorite exercise, physical activity, or sport.
- Teachers also can improve grades by helping students dispel negative thoughts. As a class, read the "When Tests Make You Nervous" article for kids at http://kidshealth.org/kid/homework/classwork/test_anxiety.html (or read it aloud for younger students). Students should write down any negative thoughts they might have related to tests or quizzes on a piece of paper, then crumple the paper into a ball. Have students line up in front of a recycling bin, then dunk their ball of negative thoughts into the bin one at a time.





Fast Break!



KidsHealth

KidsHealth.org



SchoolFood
Feed your mind

Separate these activity cards and use them to get active in and out of the classroom!

Wake Yourself Up!

Overhead Stretch



Clasp hands overhead. Extend and hold for 5-10 seconds. Lean to the right and hold. Repeat on left.

Pump Yourself Up!

Air Jump Rope



Stand with arms by sides. Jump at a steady pace like you're skipping rope, pretending to turn rope.

Get Focused!

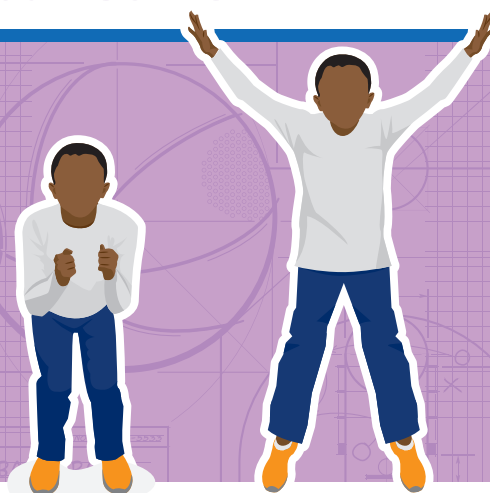
Warrior Pose



Lunge with arms outstretched and hold for 5-10 seconds. Repeat on the other side.

Up Your Game!

Star Jump



Squat. Jump up with arms and legs out like a star. Land softly, returning to squat. Repeat 3 to 5 times.



Attention, Teachers! Help boost students' grades with Fast Break physical activities at KidsHealth.org/Classroom

Pump Yourself Up!

Fast Feet



With knees bent and head up, move feet quickly like you're running in place. Do for 30 seconds.

Wake Yourself Up!

Empty Coat Sleeves



Stand with legs apart. Twist from side to side, letting your arms swing until you feel loose.

Up Your Game...

With Good Nutrition



1. Drink water and low-fat or fat-free milk.
2. Eat fruit and vegetables at every meal.
3. Enjoy a healthy meal with your family.
Turn off the TV and talk about your day.

Get Focused!

Tree Pose



Place foot on inside opposite calf. Raise arms and hold for 10 seconds. Repeat on the other side.