

## Brain Breaks

1. **The Pinky Thumb Flip** – On one hand stick out your thumb. On the other hand stick out your pinky. Then, switch back and forth.
2. **Opposite Sides** – Blink your right eye while snapping the fingers on your left hand; then switch to blinking your left eye while snapping the fingers on your right hand.
3. **Symbolic Alphabet** – Instead of just reciting your ABC's, try to go through them quickly thinking of an object that goes with each letter. (Ex: apple, baseball, cat, dog, elephant, feet, etc.)

### **4. PLAY-DOH BRAIN BREAK (time 4 minutes)**

Have students work with a partner.

1. The person on the left should come up to the front and get a small Play-Doh can.
2. Go back to your desk and you have 1 minute (the teacher will announce the time) to make an animal (or some other category like a vegetable, or fruit)
3. Your partner will only get three guesses for what the animal is. You don't have to show them what you are doing until the minute is up.
4. Switch and the person on the right gets to make a different animal.
5. Use your guesses wisely because you only get three.  
Hints are allowed.
6. The person on the left will close the lid and take the Play-Doh back up to the front of the room.

### **5. Pen Flipping Brain Break**

1. Stand Up.
2. Take a pen and flip it ONE REVOLUTION. (Imagine a piece of tape on one end of the pen, then throw the pen from the tape side. Have the pen go one full turn around to get to the tape side again)
3. Now do the same thing with your other hand.
4. Now get a pen for both hands and try to do both pens at the same time.
5. If you really are good at that, then try to throw the pens up into the air and catch them in opposite hands. This is tough.

6. **Ear and Nose** – Take your right hand and grab your left ear lobe. Take your left hand and touch your nose. Reverse it; take your left hand grab your right earlobe. Take your right hand and touch your nose. Keep repeating.

7. **Lap Clap** - Lap, Clap, Miss, Clap, Lap, Clap, Miss, etc. Repeat over and over to get faster and faster.

8. **Vowels** –

- “a” – wave arms in the air while saying “a”
- “e” – put arms in muscle format while saying “e”
- “i” – point to your eyes with both hands while saying “i”
- “o” – make a big “o” with the arms over the head while saying “o”
- “u” – point at everyone in the room while saying “u”, “u”, “u”, etc.
- “y” – put arms above head in “y” formation while saying “y”

**9. Flamingo** – arms extended in front of body with hands together. Take right hand and place on left hip. Bring hands together again. Take left hand and place on right hip. Bring hands together again. Switch without bringing arms together. Repeat, going faster and faster.

**10. Numbers** – Count out loud in unison from 1 to 30. Reverse and count backwards from 30 to 1. Count by 2’s to 30. Reverse and count backwards in 2’s from 30 to 0. Count by 3’s to 30. Reverse and count backwards in 3’s from 30 to 0. Count by 5’s to 30. Reverse and count backwards in 5’s from 30 to 0.

**11. Dancing** – (no music) Move right hand up and down multiple times. Both hands up and down multiple times. Twist the hips and move both hands from side to side multiple times. Move both hands diagonally to the right multiple times. Move both hands diagonally to the left (opposite way) multiple times. Move both hands up and down multiple times. Move both hands around in a circle to the right. Move both hands around in a circle to the left (other way). Move both arms in front of body back and forth multiple times. Move both arms up and down multiple times. Move both hands diagonally to the right multiple times. Move both hands diagonally to the left multiple times. Move both hands around in a circle to the left multiple times and then to the right multiple times.

**12. Fish and Snake** – Move right hand up and down (like a fish swimming). Move left hand up and down (like a fish swimming). Move right hand in a winding pattern like a snake. Move left hand in a winding pattern like a snake. Move both hands like a fish. Move both hands like a snake. Move both hands like a fish and do a fish mouth with it. Move both hands like a snake and do a snake mouth with it (tongue slithers in and out). Right hand you do the fish while the left hand is doing the snake. Switch; left hand you do the snake while the right hand is doing the fish.

**13. Tap Your Head and Rub Your Tummy** – Tap your head with your right hand. Switch, Tap your head with your left hand. Repeat both sequences again. Rub your tummy with your right hand. Switch, rub your tummy with your left hand. Tap your head with your right hand while rubbing your tummy with your left hand. Switch, tap your head with your left hand while rubbing your tummy with your right hand. Rub your head with your right hand while tapping your tummy with your left hand. Switch, rub your head with your left hand while tapping your tummy with your right hand.

**14. YMCA** – Make a Y, M, C (both ways) and an A with the arms. Repeat backwards; A, C, M, Y. Repeat several times, getting faster and faster. Let kids select a pattern with the four letters.

**15. Let's Go Swimming** – Go to the edge of the lake and dip your right foot into the water. Cross arms over body and jump in. Do the breast stroke with the arms (remember to breath). Free style (the crawl) swim. We're swimming to a raft. Once we get there, put your elbows up on the raft. Get on to the raft, move elbows back and forth. Lift your left leg up. Lay out in the sun – arms and legs spread out. Close your eyes. Do you feel the sun? Time to go back into the water – let's dive in. Freestyle (the crawl) swim. Let's do the back stroke. Elbows out on the shore – scoot them – move left leg up to get out of the water. Get your towel and dry off.

**16. Let's Make a Pie** – Make a bowl. Scoop the flour and put it into the bowl. Crack an egg, add sugar, butter, salt. Stir it all up. Take it out and put it on the table. Time to knead it. Roll the dough out. Grab the dough from underneath and put it in the pie tin. Push the dough down in the pie tin and pinch off the ends around the pie tin. Peel the apples. Slice up the apples. Take the seeds out. Add some sugar & cinnamon. Put the top on the pie. Pinch the sides. Put little slits in the top of the pie. Add cinnamon to the top. Put the pie in the oven. Close your eyes and smell the apple pie. Scoop the pie out of the oven. Put a slice on a plate. Put some ice cream on it. Everyone take a bite.

**17. Hands Brain Break**

1. Stand Up.
2. Start by waving your right hand in front of you left to right. Your palm should be facing away from you while keeping your hand with your fingers pointing up.
3. Now stop that hand and have your left hand in front of you waving it up and down.
4. Now practice moving them at the SAME TIME. Do not move your hands going diagonally.
5. Now switch to have your right hand up and down and your left hand left and right. Do this faster and switch often to make it more difficult.
6. Lastly, to increase the difficulty, have your arms crossed while doing this.

**18. Snap Wink**

1. Stand Up
2. Wink your left eye and snap your right hand index finger and thumb at the same time.
3. Wink your right eye and snap your left hand index finger and thumb at the same time.
4. Switch back and forth as fast as you can.

**19. Thumb War** – lock fingers together with a partner. Tap alternatively with the thumbs to the chant: “one, two, three, four, I declare a thumb war.” Then you get started with the war. The first person to pin the others thumb down for three seconds so they can't move it is declared the winner.

**20. Thumb Peace** - Lock your fingers together. You will try to work together to outline the numbers 0-9 with your thumbs one at a time. Your thumbs will need to work together while making each number. So you will have to decide who will be writing the number forwards and who will write it backwards.

### **21. Hand Shake - Partners Face One Another**

1. Shake right hands
2. Shake left hands
3. Right hand fist bump
4. Left hand fist bump
5. Right hand hammer tap
6. Left hand hammer tap
7. Crossing high 10
8. Double Fist Bump
9. High Ten

\*Repeat the sequence to see how fast you can go.

### **22. Forward and Backward Circles**

1. Point your arms toward the ceiling.
2. Keep your elbow straight and move your right arm forward creating a large circle. Continue making forward circles with this arm. Now do the same with your other arm except go BACKWARD. Continue with both arms moving at the same time. Make sure you have this pattern working before you continue.
3. While both arms continue to move, lift your right foot off the ground and make a ninety degree angle with your knee. Hold this for a few seconds.
4. Now extend your right knee out to make your leg parallel to the ground. Hold for a few seconds.
5. Stop.
6. Repeat the same process again with your left leg.

### **23. Airplane**

1. Point your arms toward the ceiling.
2. Lift your right leg and put it behind you. Try to keep your knee straight.
3. Lean forward with your body. Try to make your body, arms and leg parallel with the ground. Hold for 10 seconds.
4. Now try the same sequence with your left leg behind you.

### **24. Don't Fall**

1. Point your arms toward the ceiling.
2. Lift your right leg and put it to the side of you. Try to keep it straight.
3. Point your body in the opposite direction. Try to make your body, arms and leg parallel with the ground. Hold for 15 seconds.
4. Now try the same sequence with your left leg to the side.

### **25. Number Spots Addition**

1. Stand Up and find a partner
2. Here are the spot values: right shoulder = 1, right ear = 2, nose = 3, left ear = 4 and left shoulder is 5.
3. Without talking, one person will touch two of their own number spots and the other person will have to say the numbers out loud and then add them together.
4. Once one person has done a few problems, the other person can give some problems.

This brain break is great because it forces you to READ your partner's number spots. You have to think of the spots in THEIR perspective. I have students who often turn their back so as to "think" of their partner's vantage point.

### **26. Elbow to Knee Stretch**

This is a stretching activity where you will touch your elbow to your knee.

1. Stand up.
2. Hold your ears with your hands.
3. Tap your right elbow to the top of your left knee. Now touch your left elbow to your right knee. That is one repetition. Do 5 repetitions.
4. Left knee up and have your right elbow tap the top of your knee and then tap the side of the same knee. Now do this same thing with the other knee and elbow. Do 5 repetitions.

### **27. Infinity Sign (Choir Director) – Lazy 8**

Make an infinity symbol with your right hand out in front of you. Stop your finger on the far right side of the infinity sign. Lift your left hand to be at the far left side of the infinity sign. Now move your hands at the same time and the same pace in the same direction to continue your infinity sign. Your hands should cross the middle at the same time. This one seems easy at first. Then you try to do it when your hands are doing the infinity signs in different directions. WOW that is hard. This crosses the mid-line and really makes you think.

### **28. Toe Tapping**

1. Stand Up.
2. Face your partner.
3. Both you and your partner put out your right leg and tap your right feet together 1 time and say "1" out loud.
4. Tap your left feet together 3 times and say "3" out loud.
5. Tap your right feet together 2 times and say "2" out loud.
6. Continue the 1, 3, 2 toe tapping pattern alternating feet.
7. See how fast you can go.

### **29. ABC/123**

1. Stand Up
2. Use your index finger and write a large "A" in the air out in front of you and at the same time say out loud the number "1".
3. Now use your index finger and write a large "B" in the air out in front of you and at the same time say out loud the number "2".
4. Continue writing the letters in the air and saying the numbers out loud as far as you can go or until the end of the alphabet.

Extra Challenge: Alternate saying the letter and then the number.

I had a few students get to Z and were at the number 24 or 25. This is a problem since there are 26 letters in the alphabet. It was probably about a quarter of my students were able to get all the way through in the 1 minute activity. For another challenge, have them write the letters in the air with their weak hand.

### **30. Crab**

1. Stand Up
2. Put your arms out in front of you and match your fingers from each hand together and then match your thumbs together.
3. Now put lower your middle fingers so that the knuckles touch. Keep them flat against each other.
4. Now un-touch and retouch your thumbs.
5. Now un-touch and retouch your index fingers.
6. Now un-touch and retouch your ring fingers.
7. Lastly, un-touch and retouch your pinkies.
8. Good luck. This one was difficult.

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