



Active Learning for All Grades: Infusing Physical Activity During the Day

- 1. Alliance for a Healthier Generation Task Cards**

Pass out task cards to involve students in physical activity as they enter the gym or classroom. You can color code the cards, use stickers or numbers to use the cards to organize students into groups for the main part of the lesson. Other movements can be substituted for walking lunges. Students could perform hops, squats, seat walks, knee to chest curls, dips, etc.
www.healthiergeneration.org/taskcards
- 2. Alliance for a Healthier Generation Student Fitness Cards**

Create groups with 3-5 students and give each student a card. Allow the groups 2-3 minutes to create a movement routine using the cards. Add music and have each group lead the class in the activities.
www.healthiergeneration.org/fitnesscards
- 3. GoNoodle**

A suite of web-based games designed to bring physical activity breaks into elementary classrooms. The games were built on research showing that short bursts of physical activity can positively impact academic achievement, cognitive skills and behavior as well as overall health. Through a partnership with the U.S. Track and Field Foundation, Olympic athletes coach students through one of the games. www.gonoodle.com/
- 4. Active Literature**

Read or have students read excerpts from literature or news articles aloud to the entire classroom and every time the words a, an, the, by and there are heard, the classroom must stand up, jump and then sit down quickly. *Source: American Heart Association – Educator Materials – For the Classroom*
www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Educator/FortheClassroom/For-the-Classroom_UCM_001115_SubHomePage.jsp
- 5. Rock, Paper, Scissors with Feet**

Students play a traditional game of Rock, Paper, Scissors with their feet. Jump three times with feet together and then choose position: rock = feet together; paper = feet apart; scissors = one foot forward/one foot back. Students play best out of three with a classmate and then find a new partner to challenge.
Source: American Heart Association – Educator Materials – For the Classroom
www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Educator/FortheClassroom/For-the-Classroom_UCM_001115_SubHomePage.jsp
- 6. True/False**

Prepare a list of true/false questions based on class content. Arrange chairs in a circle. Have students walk around the chairs and listen to the question and determine if the answer is 'True' or 'False'. If the answer is True, find a chair and sit down. If the answer is False, do knee to elbow touches.
Source: American Heart Association – Educator Materials – For the Classroom
www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Educator/FortheClassroom/For-the-Classroom_UCM_001115_SubHomePage.jsp
- 7. Who's the Boss (from Don't Play Leapfrog with a Unicorn)**

Equipment: Playing cards
Procedure:

 - Give each student one card from a deck of cards.
 - Have the students begin walking throughout the activity area.
 - Each time a student passes a classmate, they have to exchange cards. Continue this for about 30 seconds.
 - After 30 seconds, the teacher calls, "Who's the boss?"

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- e. The students quickly sort themselves into the four suits by going to designated gym corners. The student with the highest card leads the group in a fitness activity.
- f. Vary locomotor skills and repeat several times.

8. Frozen Vocabulary

Procedure:

- a. Begin by having students do an activity standing at their desks:
 - ✓ Jumping
 - ✓ Twisting
 - ✓ Jogging
 - ✓ Jumping jacks
 - ✓ Playing air guitar
- b. Students continue activity for 30 seconds or until teacher calls out a vocabulary word at which point the students freeze.
 - a. Teacher calls on volunteer to use the vocabulary word properly in a sentence.
 - b. Resume activity or begin a new activity when a student uses the vocabulary word properly in a sentence.

Variations:

- ✓ Students can define vocabulary word.
- ✓ Students can spell the word.
- ✓ Students can name a synonym or antonym.

For math, students can give the sum, difference or quotient of 2 numbers.

Source: Eat Smart Move More NC Secondary Ed Energizers

10. Catch & Move

Equipment: Ball with movements and equations written on it. Write 5-10 equations that total 20 or less (this will be the number of repetitions) on the ball. Write 5 or 10 action words on the ball. The game begins with students in a circle. The student holding the ball tosses it to another student circle when the teacher says "Go!" Students continue to toss and catch until the teacher says "Stop!", the student holding the ball leads the group in the movement closest to his/her left thumb. The number of repetitions is determined by the answer to the equation closest to the right thumb.

- a. When the number of repetitions is completed, the student resumes by tossing the ball.
- b. This can continue for 4-6 minutes.

Variations:

- a. The words on the ball could be a different theme for academic skill development, such as the name of an animal and making animal sounds.
- b. This activity can also be modified to run as a relay.
- c. This can be done in one large group or with several smaller groups (one ball per group).
- d. Allow students to collaborate together to determine the action words and the equations.
- e. After a few weeks, use rubbing alcohol to remove the marker writing and start over.

Source: Move-to-Improve K-5 Physical Activity Program

<http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/FitnessandHealth/MoveImprove/default.htm>

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11. Desk Relay

Equipment: One beanbag, rubber chicken or other safe object for every row of 5-6 students
1. Have students sit in rows of desks or chairs with the first person in each row holding one object. 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.

2. 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. Continue for 2 minutes.

3. 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!

Variation: After one rotation, ask teams to display a silent celebration as they finish.

Source: Move-to-Improve K-5 Physical Activity Program

<http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/FitnessandHealth/MoveImprove/default.htm>

12. Social Studies Fitness Relay

Equipment:

- 1 half cone per 4 students
- 1 spot marker per 4 students
- *Social Studies Fitness Relay State Lists*
- *Social Studies Fitness Relay State Cards*

Get Ready:

- Create 1 relay area per group with a half cone as the starting spot and a spot marker 10 paces (or more) away from the half cones. This will create 2 parallel lines of markers and cones.
- Spread the *Fitness Relay State Cards* in the area behind the spot markers.
- Place 1 *Fitness Relay State List* next to each half cone.
- Create groups of 2-4 students, each group behind a half cone. (Use 2 sets of lists and cards as needed.)

Instructions:

- a. Today's activity is called *Social Studies Fitness Relay*. The object is to collect all of the state cards on your group's list before the stop signal. You'll do that by sending 1 group member at a time past the spot markers to collect a state from your list.
- b. When a group member returns, the next begins to move. Those of you waiting in line for a turn will do invisible jump rope (*or another stationary activity*) until it's your turn.
- c. On the start signal, the first person in line will skip (*or another locomotor skill*) to the *State Cards*.
- d. Freeze when you hear the stop signal.
 - *Challenge*
 - Without looking at the cards, who can tell us a state from their list, along with the Capital?
 - *Discussion*
- e. There are 8 basic locomotor skills. Which do you like the best? Why?
- f. Can you think of activities that require different locomotor skills? Who can give an example?
 - *Quick Cues*
- g. Move safely between the half cone and spot marker.
- h. Place *State Cards* carefully in front of your group's half cone as you return.

Source: SPARKabc's www.sparkpe.org/abc/

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13. Shake, Bake, Twist, & Mist - Science

Formation: Beside desks Equipment: None

- a. The teacher writes the following 4 phenomena and corresponding physical activities on the board:
 - earthquake (“shake”) – shakes or wiggle.
 - volcano (“bake”) – squat down and jump toward the ceiling.
 - tornado (“twist”) – twist.
 - hurricane (“mist”) – imitate jogging through a strong wind.
- a. The teacher reads a statement from below that describes one of the 4 phenomena.
- b. The students must allow the teacher to finish reading each statement. They then determine which phenomenon the teacher is describing and perform the corresponding activity for 30 seconds.

Phenomena Descriptors:

- One of these is felt approximately every 30 seconds (earthquake).
- Ocean water must be warmer than 81 degrees F for this to occur (hurricane).
- This is called a “funnel” until it comes in contact with the ground (tornado).
- This generates vibrations called seismic waves (earthquake).
- This phenomenon occurs when rock from the earth’s mantle melts and moves up to the surface (volcano).
- Winds must be at least 74 mph (hurricane).
- The molten rock from the Earth’s mantle, or “magma” that escapes during one of these is called “lava” once it reaches the Earth’s surface (volcano).
- A “hotbed” for these in the U.S. extends from Texas up through Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas (tornado).
- These occur along faults, or fractures in the Earth’s crust (earthquake).

Source: Eat Smart Move More NC Secondary Ed Energizers
<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/Energizers/Middle.html>

14. Simon Says Geometry Style

Students learn math terms such as “parallel lines” by relating it to a movement that the body makes.

Description:

- a. Play “Simon Says” by having the entire class stand and participate.
- b. Use your imagination and be creative to put specific movements for math terms: line, line segment, ray, parallel lines, intersecting lines, right angle, obtuse angle, acute angle, line of symmetry, congruent, similar, vertex, perpendicular, slide, flip and turn.
- c. As the children get better and faster at the game, remember to try and trick them...if “Simon doesn’t say” to do something, and they do it, they are out and have to sit down while play continues.

Examples:

- “Line”: extend arms on each side with palms opened, indicating that a line goes on in both directions
- “Line Segment”: extend arms on each side with fists closed, indicating that a line segment has 2 definite end points
- “Parallel lines”: show arms looking like train tracks
- “Right Angle”: extend left arm over your head (close to your left ear) and extend your right arm out to the right side of you

Source: Active Academics www.activeacademics.org/

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Secondary Classroom Physical Activities

Engaging secondary students in physical activity throughout the school day can be a challenge. Do not be afraid to try new activities to get the students moving. Here are some tips and lesson integration ideas that may be helpful for classroom teachers.

1. Start slowly and have patience. Be persistent about encouraging movement in class.
2. Ask for student input on what they would like to do for physical activity (PA) breaks.
3. Ask students to lead classroom PA breaks.
4. Use appropriate music that appeals to teens to encourage movement.
5. Create a voluntary PA programs during lunch periods that could include Dance, Dance Revolution, Wii Fit, Fit for a Healthier Generation video series or other fitness videos.
6. Integrate movement into your class content and subject areas.

Stand Up, Hand Up, Pair Up

Strategy Description:

Use to organize students into groups, giving them an opportunity to stretch and move. Also use to review lesson content or to prompt collaboration.

1. Walk 10-15 steps (to get blood out of feet and seat-- this is the number of steps needed to get blood and oxygen to the brain).
2. Head up with a smile (the brain does not know a real smile/laugh from a fake one, this boosts serotonin and mood).
3. Partner shoulder to shoulder (this is less threatening than face-to-face).
4. Pick a characteristic to determine who goes first. Some examples: which person lives closer to ____, which person ate Mexican food most recently, etc.
5. Have them introduce themselves, share lesson content and reflect on what they learned. It is helpful to have a timer. Have each person share for a limited time and then switch to ensure no one is able to dominate the conversation and that all are learning.

NOTE: When you need groups of four have partners pair up. Partners put hands up and find another group of two.

ALTERNATIVE: Have students raise their hand up with a number of fingers and then they have to find a partner who has the same number of fingers up.

Deal or No Deal

Strategy Description:

1. **Equipment:** A minimum of five envelopes with one exercise listed on the outside of each envelope.
2. *Suggested exercises for the outside of each envelope:* Seat crunches, pushups, elbow to opposite knee touches, jumping jacks, arm circles, jog in place, forearm jabs, heel raises, toe raises, weight training with textbooks: arm curls, overhead press.
3. Inside each envelope, place repetition variations on separate pieces of paper or cardstock (e.g. One More, 5 more, 10 more, none, times 2, one less, -5, divided by, square root of 36).
4. Teacher chooses an envelope and states a feasible number of repetitions.
5. Teacher makes a deal with one student at a time. All students participate in each deal.
6. Teacher: "My deal is 20 crunches. Deal or No Deal?" Student: "Deal – the entire class perform the physical activity or exercise." OR "No Deal - the student chooses a card from that exercise envelope and the students perform the new number."
7. Students are challenged to design a movement activity to integrate the concepts or vocabulary of the subject area.

Source: Tennessee Physical Activity Handbook - Healthy Students, Healthy Schools, Healthy Tennessee

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Find Your Partner

Strategy Description:

1. Use this activity to review for a test.
2. Come up with 3-5 review questions and answers.
3. On an index card, write the questions.
4. Students are scattered throughout the classroom. The teacher will say start with question number 1 and walk to a partner across the room.
5. Each student will walk briskly to find a partner and identify the answer to that question.
6. The teacher will then say start question number 2. Tippy toe to a different partner.
7. This continues for three to five minutes.
8. As a review, the teacher can say find your question number 1 partner and students will find their original partner relative to that question.

Variations: Use different movements to find a partner. Have students create the questions. Use music as students are finding a partner. Time students (e.g., give students ten seconds to find a partner).

Gallery Walk

On the walls around the room, post chart paper. Have students use Post-it notes to answer critical thinking questions about the lesson. Allow students to use some time during the lesson to take a gallery walk. Music can be used to begin and end the activity. Students can also use markers to write directly on the chart paper.

Poker Reflection Activity

Strategy Description:

A closure activity used to identify concrete learning concepts. Also use to reflect on feelings.

1. Different colored cards are put on tables for students.
2. Students write down one thing they learned during the lesson on one side of index card.
3. Students draw a face showing how they feel about the class, the concepts introduced or their learning.
4. Students place card, with face showing, on forehead and glance around the room at others. Think humor!
5. Leader initiates movement with music (ex. "I Feel Good") after giving directions to find a partner, and share what is on your card.
6. Students are asked to move around room for duration of song, sharing their key learning with several different partners.

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Reflection Walk

Strategy Description:

Use with students to incorporate movement, socialization and reflection during instruction.

1. Have students form small groups.
2. Explain that groups will be taking a walk together. On their walk, they should share something with the group about the current class content or review yesterday's content. You may determine the topic depending on the type of session you are leading. Some examples might be:
 - a. Share at least one thing you remember from class.
 - b. Share something new or interesting you learned this morning/afternoon.
 - c. You can also create a specific list of questions you want students to discuss.
3. Send them on a walking course outside (weather permitting) or throughout the building. Be specific about the return time and possibly have a song or signal to guide students back to their seats.
4. Upon returning to the session, allow 2-3 minutes for students to write down items they want to remember from their walk. Depending on your schedule, or the desired outcome, you can extend this by having students share with their table group's items they discussed outside of the group during the walk.

Different Colored Cards

Strategy Description:

Use to encourage movement and allow students to discuss or talk with others outside of their table group.

1. Prior to class, place a stack of index cards in the center of each table. Each table group is given a different color of cards.
2. At the point in the class when you want movement and discussion, pose a question or issue to the group. Ask students to write their thoughts on the index card. Allow 1-2 minutes for writing.
3. When given a signal, students are to stand, pair off with a person with a different colored card and share what they wrote.

Lazy Eights

Strategy Description:

Use these strategies to get students up and out of their seats. Ideal for breaks after intense or mentally challenging activities.

1. Extend one arm in front of you with your thumb pointing upwards.
2. Trace the shape of a figure eight in the air. The eight should be on its side and as you trace it out in large, slow movements focus your eyes on your thumb. Without moving your head trace three eights in successively larger movements.
3. Now do it with your other hand and then clasp them together and do it with both hands

Card Organizing

Strategy Description:

Use to mix students into groups, help stretch and move or prepare for a collaborative effort. Distribute playing cards 2-9 (by suit if possible) to each table. Place them face down.

1. Students each take a card and (without looking at the card) place it on their foreheads.
2. Now students are instructed to organize themselves without talking by number. This is easily accomplished, and the group is ready to hear the next instruction.

Once the group has become a line, it is easy to subdivide the group by number or assign individual numbers with a role: "recorder," "timekeeper," etc.

Title of Document Continuum

Strategy Description:

Use to integrate activity while having students process thoughts and level of agreement with various statements.

1. Place a graphic representation of a continuum along the wall of the classroom. Example:
 - a. Place pictorial or graphical representations such as a penguin, emu or roadrunner along the wall such that they correspond to participants' comfort levels with the statements.
 - b. You may also use signs that say, "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree."
2. Explain what the continuum represents.
3. Ask participants to move to the spot on the continuum that best matches their level of agreement.
 - a. Example of lesson content:
 - i. Local waterways need to be protected.
 - ii. A variety of wildlife should be encouraged.
 - iii. People should be involved in local environment care.
 - iv. Only ratepayers should contribute to the cost of caring for the waterways.
 - v. United States citizens care for the environment.
 - vi. It is better to use an unspoiled river for recreation, rather than keep it as a natural habitat.
 - vii. People should be made to spend some of their free time working towards helping the environment
4. Have students discuss why they selected their spots along the continuum.
5. Use this to differentiate a group for pacing on a topic.

Crazy Question

Strategy Description:

1. Students group together into 4 teams (easiest way may be to have them group together by rows).
2. The teacher selects a list of vocabulary words or a set of questions from the end of a chapter.
3. The students must complete a series of movements to receive each question.
4. When each student in a group has completed the assigned movement they must sit down and raise their hands to receive each question.
5. The teacher will then approach the group to give them the next question.
 - a. To receive the first question, each student in the group must jump to the sky and slap the floor with their hand. Repeat 5 times.
 - b. To receive the second question, the students must hop on one foot while turning in a circle 10 times.
 - c. To receive the third question, students must run in place for 30 seconds.
 - d. To receive the fourth question, students must do imaginary jump rope as fast as possible for 10 seconds.
 - e. To receive the fifth question, students must complete all previous movements.

Variation:

*This activity can be used for sequencing, listening skills, auditory procession, and multiple intelligences.

-These ideas have been adapted from brain-based learning strategies and are meant to encourage mild physical activity during core content classes.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services new [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans](#) recommends one hour or more of moderate or vigorous aerobic physical activity a day for teens, including vigorous intensity physical activity at least 3 days a week. Both groups should do muscle-strengthening activities (which might include sit-ups or rope-climbing) 3 days a week, and bone-building exercise (running, jumping) also 3 days a week.