

Physical Activity in the Secondary Academic Classroom

Presenters:

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Tips for Successfully Incorporating Physical Activity into Your Classroom

- ❖ Safety first
- ❖ Community building
- ❖ Clear instructions
- ❖ Time limits
- ❖ Freeze signal
- ❖ Model enthusiasm for the physical activity and be ready with justification

Why use movement in the secondary academic classroom? It helps students to stay energized, to stay focused on a task, and to encode new information strongly.

Activity	Purpose	Description	Variations	Comments
Carousel Brainstorm	brainstorming, pre-assessing, establishing comprehension, or reviewing material	Several sheets of poster paper are placed around the room with a different heading on each. Students are divided into as many groups as there are sheets of paper. Each group gets a different colored marker and spends a couple minutes at each paper writing about the topic	English/LA – Character's names at top of each paper. Groups write an adjective and Supporting quotation for each character Soc Studies – historical figures, locations, Science – elements, processes Math – theorems, proofs Health – drugs, STDs	Groups need to wait for everyone to finish at one poster before moving to the next, so it is a good idea to have a sponge activity for groups that finish first.

Musical Chairs	pre-assessing, establishing comprehension, or reviewing	Class is divided into 2 groups. Chairs are arranged in 2 circles (1 less chair for number of students in each group). Teacher calls out true/false statements while students move around chairs. Students must sit on false statements. Student who doesn't get chair or who sits on true statements moves to other circle.	English/LA – questions about book/story Soc Studies/Science – unit review Math – math facts, calculations in head Health - Nutrition	Every single student in every class I have done this with loved it (freshmen) You may or may not actually use music.
Movement Memory	establishing comprehension or reviewing	Class is divided into small groups. Each group has a home base on the perimeter of the room. In the center of the room each group has a set of memory cards. Group members have to run from home base to the memory cards and flip over cards to find the match.	English/LA – vocabulary, character descriptions Soc Studies – vocabulary, historical figures and their achievements Science – vocabulary Math – coordinates and graph, angles Health – drugs and their effects **rather than matching cards in the middle, each group could have a set of questions in the middle. They run to get a question, figure out the answer, run to another part of the room and write the answer on poster paper, then run back to the center for another question	Groups of 2, 3, 4 are ideal: 2 – one person finds definition, other finds examples 3 – one finds term, one finds definition, one finds examples 4 – two find definition, two find examples Opportunity for differentiation – students less comfortable with material find term or definition, students more comfortable find example
Living _____ (sentence/ equation/	Analysis, synthesis to encode information	Students are divided into groups. Each group member is assigned a different role and must arrange themselves accordingly to fit a particular equation or sentence	English/LA/ World Languages – parts of speech, parts of sentences Science – compounds Math – equations	Opportunity for differentiation – more advanced groups have more parts to contend with and/or have to work

problem)				backward
Moving Compare & Contrast	Analysis of similarities and differences	Students are split into pairs or small groups. Each group is assigned 2 different movements. Groups perform movements at least 10 times and then fill out a graphic organizer with similarities and differences. Groups share their work and add any new ideas to their graphic organizer.	The goal of this activity is to prepare students to successfully apply the skill of comparing and contrasting to your content.	I have found that my freshmen struggle with comparing and contrasting complex subjects and/or having a vocabulary to express their observations.
Tableau	Establishing comprehension, analysis and synthesis of a group or system or object that is comprised of multiple parts with various relationships	Students are split into groups. Each group is assigned something that they need to depict in a “frozen picture” by arranging themselves thoughtfully.	English/LA – scenes from a book or play Soc Studies – feudalism, India’s caste system Science – different types of cells	This could be done as an entire class or in small groups, depending on how many parts you have. Students can take turns being the “director.” In addition to body placement, students should consider body language and levels.
Stop and Scribble	Establishing comprehension or reviewing	Prepare a Power Point that alternates questions with physical activities. Students stand behind desk. Teacher asks a question, but before students write their answer, students and teacher perform a physical activity for 1 minute. Students then write down answer, and teacher reads next question.		Power Point and teacher should demonstrate the physical activities
Dance	Establishing comprehension,	When introducing each new part of speech assign a movement to	English/LA – sentence structure Science - elements	In my experience, about ¼ of students LOVE this, ½

	analysis, and synthesis to encode information	that part (kick, hop, head bob, wavey arms, etc). Have students practice doing that movement every time they encounter that part of speech in a sentence. Eventually students can write their own sentences in groups and “dance” their sentence.		are ok with it, and ¼ HATE it. (freshmen) In theory, the more time spent doing physical activity in class and the more community building activities a class has done, the more comfortable students will be with this.
Ball Toss	reviewing	Teacher tosses ball to student when it is his/her turn to answer question. Student may toss back to teacher or to another student.	Teacher has a listed of numbered questions on a beach ball covered in numbered stickers. Students pass ball around, taking turns removing stickers and answering questions.	There are many variations of this activity out there

See Also:

- Chris Ortiz of High 5 Adventure Learning Center (presenter from Day 1 of Institute) – Activities: Who Am I?/ FFEACH/ Zoom
- Tennessee Physical Activity Handbook:
http://tennessee.gov/education/schoolhealth/physed/doc/TNPhysActivHbook_10_07.pdf
- Language Arts Middle School Energizers from East Carolina University:
<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/Energizers/Texts/MS-Energizers-Lang-Arts.pdf>