

Keeping Kids Focused

Brain Breaks for the Music Classroom

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The Midwest Clinic, Chicago, Illinois, Friday, December 20, 2013

Brain Breaks – Quick Reference Guide – Pairs or Groups

Partner or Group Games	
Backwards Tic-Tac-Toe (Paper Required)	Try to make your opponent win instead of you.
Backwards Rock, Paper, Scissors	Try to lose instead of win.
Box Me In (Paper Required)	Students pair up with one piece of paper and at least one pencil. Groups draw 16 dots and take turns connecting two dots. The object is to NOT make boxes.
Circles and Squares (Paper Required)	Students pair up with one sheet of paper and one pencil. One chooses to be squares and the other circles. Students take turns drawing a picture together in silence using only their shape. Extra: Have a few groups show and explain their picture to the class.
Godzilla, Wizard, Ninja	Two partners stand back to back. On the count of 3, both people turn around and act out one of the 3 characters. Godzilla beats Wizard, Wizard beats Ninja, Ninja beats Godzilla.
Gotcha	Put right hand's first finger up & left hand out; put first finger in partner's left hand. When teacher says "go," try to pull your first finger up while grabbing partner's finger with left hand.
Gotcha Advanced	Before putting right first finger in left hand, cross arms.
Knock the Paper Off (Paper Required)	Have students find a partner; put stand flat and lay one sheet of music on top of the flat stand. Two students stand on opposite sides of stand. On the count of three, students compete to blow off the piece of paper. Extra: Pick out two students to come to the front of the room and class cheers them on.
Letter Scramble	Have students pair up and each have a ½ sheet of paper. Each student writes down 5 letters (at least one vowel) without looking at the other student. At the same time, the pair shares their letters with each other. Students use all 10 letters to create as many words as possible.
Number Shakes (Rock, Paper, Scissors with #'s)	Start with hands behind your back; on count of three, throw your hands out in front with a number of 1-10. First person between the partners to add up five hands wins a point.
Simile Sense (Paper Required)	Teacher says one word and students are given 30 seconds to come up with as many synonyms as possible. Can use musical and non-musical terms.
Snow Globe (Paper Required)	Make dots in a circle. Two people take turns connecting the dots to make a picture. [Each student has 45 seconds for his/her first turn and 30 seconds for his/her second turn.] Extra: Have a few groups show and describe their drawing to the class.
Word Clap	Two people face each other. Students will clap alternating right hand to right hand and left hand to left hand. Say out loud one letter at a time when clapping. First round, students spell same word, but alternate saying the letter out loud. After spelling two words, each partner spells his/her word at the same time.

Brain Breaks – Quick Reference Guide – Individual

Single Person Games	
Balance the Bow	Balance the bow using first finger -or- rest bow on index fingers and bring fingers slowly towards each other until they come to the balance point.
Balancing on One Leg	Have student balance on one leg, then the other, up on toes.
Breathing	Any kind of deep breathing to calm students down or breathing that relates to piece of music that is being rehearsed.
Calf Pump	Students stand and move up & down on toes. Alternate toes straight, pointed in, and pointed out.
Choir Teacher	Hold hands in conducting position. Trace a figure 8 or infinity sign with both hands. Start with both hands going up, then switch to one starting up and the other starting down.
Cross Body Clap	When clapping the tempo or rhythms of a piece, make sure students are crossing a midline of their body.
Figure 8's (Paper Required)	Travel a piece of paper in a figure 8 through his or her legs.
Finger Aerobics	Cross arms in front of you with palms facing you. Using only the 4 fingers; move fingers from right to left. (Rt-1 st finger & Lt-Pinky / Rt-2 nd finger & Lt-4 th finger / Rt-3 rd finger & Lt-3 rd Finger / Rt-pinky & Lt First finger). Extra: Go the opposite direction, left to right.
Finger Crawl up the Bow	Use fingers to crawl up the bow.
Half Moon	Put hands in conducting position. First, right hand draws Half Moon. Add left hand, drawing a full circle. Restart, switching hands.
Let it Rain	Conduct dynamics while students snap.
Nose/Ear Switch	Start with right hand touching left ear & left hand grabbing nose. When teacher says "go," switch right hand to nose and left hand to right ear.
Opposite Roll	Roll your head clockwise while your tongue swirls counter clockwise, then switch directions.
Optical Illusion Tube (Paper Required)	1) Roll piece of paper up. 2) Using right hand, hold up tube so right eye can look through it; keep left eye open. 3) Focus on wall in front of you. 4) Put left hand, palm towards face, next to tube.
Paper Balance (Paper Required)	Balance a piece of paper on palm of hand around body.
Stand-Up / Sit-Down Articulations	While singing or humming a piece of music, have students stand up when they see an accent.
Straw Tongue	Have student curl their tongue and try to blow music off their stand.
Stretching	Any kind of stretch that will fit in the room. Try crossing different midlines.
Thumb & Finger Switch	1) First hand puts thumb up. 2) Other hand puts first finger up. 3) When teacher says go, switch hands.
Thumb & Pinky Switch	Use pinky instead of first finger.
Vocab Cross Out (Paper Required)	Teacher writes out 6-8 vocab words. Students draw a "T" and fill in a vocab word for each quadrant. Students cross out words as teacher randomly calls them out. Students should raise their hand shout out (like Bingo) when all words are crossed out. Extra: Use a tic-tac-toe board and have students call out when they get three in a row or all crossed out. Requires more vocab words.
Vocab Tracing	Have students trace words with hands, elbows, legs, hips, etc.
Wrap Up	Each person puts hands straight in front, cross hands, flip palms towards each other, lace fingers, then pull hands toward you. Have students pair up. 1st person wraps up arms while the 2 nd person points (not touches) to a finger. 1 st person tries to move that finger. Switch roles.
Wrap Up & Release	Wrap up with right hand on bottom & fingernails on nose.
X, Bob & Wiggle	1) Make an X with your arms. 2) Bob right hand. 3) Wiggle left hand. Advanced: Have left foot match right hand.

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