

A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO MOVEMENT BREAKS

Students work best when given chances to change body position. Prolonged sitting leads to decreased attention to task and lower written productivity.

1. Movement Songs/ Rhymes

- Young students respond well to songs and rhymes with whole body movement.
- Songs/rhymes with simple actions can be done with the student standing behind his/her desk while more complicated songs/rhymes can be done during circle time.
- These breaks can be short (lasting only 1-2 minutes) and still be effective.

2. Stretches

- Whole body stretches are a quick and easy way of getting a change of body position (e.g. stand up, stretch up on your toes, and reach your hands to the ceiling).

3. Change of position

- Arrange activities so students will work at their desks then move to a different position (e.g. standing to work at a higher table or sitting on the floor).

4. Exercises done at desk

- Some exercises can be done right at the desk
 - e.g. chair push-ups- push your body off your chair using your hands and arms to lift you upwards.

5. Organize schedule

- Split work times between active times such as gym, swimming, activity time, or MSI.

6. Recess

- Students who have lots of energy and trouble sitting still to complete work are often those who end up in the office or staying in for recess to make-up work. These are the students who need movement time the most. Try to find alternative consequences rather than missing recess.

7. Special Considerations

- Students who need lots of movement may need to do special jobs for the teacher to help get the wiggles out (e.g. deliver a pile of books to the library, move chairs, help the teacher clean up the classroom, deliver the attendance to the office or place art supplies on the tables).

This information is general in nature and is not a substitute for an assessment by an occupational therapist.