Brain break cards: Movement

Cut along the dashed lines. Page 1 of 2. Laminate them, or keep them on a ring.

MOVEMENT 2 min

Mirror Me

Beside desks | Quiet | Chair OK

Stand facing a partner. One leads with slow arm, face and body moves; the other copies like a mirror. Swap leaders after one minute. Moves must be slow enough to follow.

Adapt: Seated pairs mirror with hands and faces only.

MOVEMENT 3 min

Weather Workout

Beside desks | Some talk | Chair OK

Call a weather word and everyone acts it: drizzle (tap fingers on shoulders), wind (sway), thunder (stamp three times), sunshine (stretch up tall). Go faster, then finish on sunshine.

Adapt: Desk taps replace stamps for anyone sitting down.

MOVEMENT 2 min

Count and Stretch

Beside desks | Some talk | Chair OK

Count to 10 together while reaching high, back down from 10 while touching knees, then to 10 again leaning side to side. Older classes count in 2s, 5s or this week's times table.

Adapt: Reach only as far as is comfortable; arms alone are fine.

MOVEMENT 1 min

Shake Down

Beside desks | Lively

Shake the right hand 8 times, the left hand 8, the right foot 8, the left foot 8. Then 4 each, then 2, then 1. Finish in a still pose with one slow breath out.

Adapt: Seated version: hands and shoulders only, counting aloud together.

MOVEMENT 3 min

Animal Walks

Open space | Lively

Name an animal and move like it across the space: crab walk, bear crawl, frog hop, flamingo balance, tortoise creep. Always end with the tortoise so the room slows down.

Adapt: Children choose any animal move they can do, standing or seated, and others guess it.

MOVEMENT 2 min

Freeze Frame

Beside desks | Some talk | Chair OK

Move on the spot while you clap a beat or play music. When it stops, everyone freezes in a shape. Give a theme for the shape: a letter, a tree, a number, a famous statue.

Adapt: Raise a hand as the stop signal as well as the sound, for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

Brain break cards: Movement

Cut along the dashed lines. Page 2 of 2. Laminate them, or keep them on a ring.

MOVEMENT 2 min

Balance Challenge

Beside desks · Quiet · Chair OK

Stand on one foot for a count of 10, then the other. Next round: arms folded, eyes closed, or spelling a word aloud while you balance. Anyone can hold a desk.

Adapt: In a chair, lift one foot just off the floor and hold it for the count.

MOVEMENT 2 min

River and Bank

Open space · Lively

Lay a rope or a tape line on the floor. Call "river" (jump to the river side) or "bank" (jump back). Call fast, slow or the same word twice to catch people out. Nobody is out.

Adapt: Step instead of jump, or point to the side from a chair.

MOVEMENT 1 min

Wall Push-Ups

Beside desks · Quiet

Stand an arm's length from a wall or a heavy desk that will not move, hands flat on it. Bend your elbows to bring your chest close, then push back. Count 10 slow ones together.

Adapt: Anyone with a sore wrist does slow shoulder rolls instead.

MOVEMENT 3 min

Follow the Leader

Open space · Some talk

One child leads a slow line round the room, changing the move every few steps: march, tiptoe, giant steps, wave. Everyone copies. A new leader takes the next lap.

Adapt: A wheelchair user can lead: others follow the route and copy an arm move.

MOVEMENT 2 min

Number Jumps

Beside desks · Lively · Chair OK

Hold up a number card or fingers: the class does that many jumps, claps or star jumps. Then use sums: "jump the answer to 3 + 4" or "clap the number of sides on a hexagon".

Adapt: Claps or desk taps count the same as jumps.

MOVEMENT 2 min

Cross the Middle

Beside desks · Quiet · Chair OK

Touch your right hand to your left knee, then your left hand to your right knee, slowly, 10 times. Then elbows to opposite knees. Then hands to opposite heels behind you.

Adapt: Seated works well; reach to opposite shoulders if knees are hard to reach.