

BRAIN INTERVALS

“Just like adults, students can reduce stress by enjoying hobbies, time with friends, exercise, or music. Even though schools are shortening recess, physical education, art, drama, and even lunch time to add more time for core subjects, teachers can give students a three-minute break to reduce stress. Any pleasurable activity used as a brief break can give the amygdala a chance to cool down and the neurotransmitters time to rebuild.”

Dr. Judy Willis

What is a brain interval?

Brain intervals are a quick (1-3 minute) opportunity to change up predictable routines of receiving incoming information.

What are the benefits of brain intervals?

Brain intervals give students the chance to develop and apply social competence. A brain interval allows students to rest and recharge, while simultaneously learning to cooperate, communicate, and compromise. **Frequent breaks boost attentiveness in class and maximize learning.**

Reminder:

There are many other brain intervals out there. When coming up with your own ideas, or encouraging students to brainstorm ideas for brain intervals, remember the purpose and the benefits of the healthy brain interval and you can't go wrong!

Please share other brain intervals you have success using in your classroom!



Brain Interval Resource List

Interval Activities	Websites for Intervals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Riddles ● Hidden Pictures ● Brain Teasers or Puzzles ● Sudoku ● Jokes ● Thumb War ● Crossing the midline games and exercises ● Rub tummy, pat head (switch) ● Turn a familiar object upside down and discuss. ● Choose a familiar, everyday object and give it a new purpose. ● 10 Things: Choose a familiar object and give it ten new purposes. ● Allow a student to share his/her expertise. ● Ummm Game: Have students come up with a topic and time students talking about that topic. The timer stops when the student says "Um." See who can stay on topic the longest. ● Memory Workout: Show a list of items quickly and see how many items students can remember. ● Write words in the air with different parts of the body. ● Complete an activity with your non-dominant hand. ● Squiggly Story- Draw a squiggly line on the board and have students copy it in their notebooks. Give students 2 minutes to create a picture and then share. Fun conversation about perspective. ● With left hand put up pinky and with right hand put up thumb. Keep all other fingers on both hands down. Then begin switching, left hand thumb up, right hand pinky up, with all other fingers down. Continue to go back and forth to see how fast you can get. ● With left hand put up pinky and with right hand make an L. Keep all other fingers on both hands down. Then begin switching, left hand make an L, right hand pinky up, with all other fingers down. Continue to go back and forth to see how fast you can get. ● Describe your favorite food to a partner for 30 seconds using only adjectives. After your partner guesses, she describes her favorite place with adjectives, and you will do the guessing. ● Write your name on a piece of paper first with your eyes closed, and then 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● http://www.greatexpectations.org/brain-breaks ● https://www.pinterest.com/parko/brain-break-activities/ ● http://minds-in-bloom.com/20-three-minute-brain-breaks/ ● https://www.gonoodle.com/ ● http://fsnep.ucdavis.edu/trainings/town-halls/town-halls/copy2_of_14activitybreaks_000.pdf ● http://www.squiglyplayhouse.com/BrainTeasers/ ● https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoypZyibQro&feature=youtu.be ● https://youtu.be/Qw8E9WnZTQk ● https://youtu.be/DGCgW2sQ9Vg ● http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcu_7s4zXarOedcBEjgMTX44F6FDrsece ● https://www.playworks.org/game-library/ ● https://originsonline.org/games#all ●

using the opposite hand. Compare the differences. Share and discuss.

- With a partner, create your own secret language. You can add sounds to words, remove first letters, add "-ing" to the end of words, etc. The teacher can model this to begin the break.
- A magic carpet ride awaits. This carpet will take you to the two most important people or places in your life. Who are they? What makes this ride so significant?
- For 30 seconds, count as fast you can, replacing every third number with the word "pop!" Then your partner begins counting, and on every sixth number, he says "gotcha!"
- Place a pair of shoes on a table at the front of the class. Students will have one minute to describe what it might be like to walk in those shoes. The owner could be someone who angers or scares the student, or someone whom she simply has a hard time understanding.
- *Squiggle Story*- On a blank sheet of paper, whiteboard, or Promethean Board, draw one squiggly line. Give students one minute to stand and draw with their opposite hand, turning the line into a picture or design of their choice.
- *Opposite Sides*- Movement is critical to learning. Have students stand and blink with the right eye while snapping the fingers of their left hand. Repeat this with the left eye and right hand. Students could also face one another and tap the right foot once, left foot twice, and right foot three times, building speed they alternate toe tapping with their partner.
- *Symbolic Alphabet*- Sing the alphabet with names of objects rather than the letters.
- *Other Languages*- Teach sign language or make up a spoken language. In pairs, students take turns speaking or interpreting this new language for 30 seconds each.
- *Mental Math*-Give a set of three instructions, counting the sequence to a partner for 30 seconds. Example: Count by two until 20, then count by three until 50, finishing with seven until 80. Switch and give the other partner another set of numbers to count.
- *Invisible Pictures*- Have a student draw a picture in the air while their

partner guesses what it is. You could give them categories such as foods, places, or other ways to narrow the guessing.

- *Story Starters*- A student or teacher begins a story for one minute, either individually or with a partner. The students then complete or continue it with a silly ending.
- *Rock Scissors Paper Math*- With the traditional game, the last call-out is "math." With that call, students lay out one, two, three, or four fingers in the palm of their hand. The best of three wins.
- *The Junk Bag*- I always carry a bag of household objects containing markers, scrap paper, and anything that one would find in a junk drawer -- for example, a can opener or a pair of shoelaces. Pick any object out of the junk bag and ask students to come up with two ways this object could be reinvented for other uses. They can write or draw their responses. Once students have drawn or written about an invention, they can walk the room for one minute sharing and comparing.
- Clasp hands behind back and give the direction, "Keeping your hands clasped, pick up your pen anyway you are able." People pick up pen. Once they have the pen, "With the pen the way you picked it up, write your name."
- Standing, push palms of hands against one another with all of your might. Feel trembling sensation and continue to do deep breathing throughout. Stop every 10-15 seconds to rest and repeat.
- Gotcha! Create a circle around the room with participants standing right next to one another. Put left hand out flat and right hand, pointing, on top of the left hand of the person standing next to you. Share buzz word. When you say the buzz word, participants try to grab the pointer finger of the person next to them while moving their pointer finger up and away from being grabbed. Presenter can begin by just saying the buzz word and then place the buzz word in a sentence or short story.