

Brain Breaks

This list was originally compiled for use in the LEAD After-School Program. During daily programming, we designate 2 10-minute breaks where we exercise our body or our brain. This gives students the chance to relax, have fun, & learn with the adults & peers during program.

The activities are separated into ones that could be altered for distance learning and ones that are really only applicable to an in-person classroom.

Good for Online/Distance Learning or In-Person Classroom Setting:

Brain Busters

- **Answer This Riddle**
 - Three riddles will be written on the board. Do not reveal them until it is time for the brain break. Once they are revealed, you will go through them one by one. The first student(s) to identify what the answer is gets a piece of candy (or other incentive).
- **Around the World - version 1**
 - The goal of the game is to spell out the words “Around the World.” Therefore, the first player must know how the game is played.
 - Have all the players sit in a circle. Your players will be naming places they wish to visit. The first player names a place that starts with A, such as Australia. The second person needs to say the name of a place that begins with R. If they do not, they are out of the game. The next player then says a place that begins with R – maybe Rome. The third player must name a place that begins with O – Ohio will work. Eventually, everyone catches on to what is happening in the game, although it might take one or two rounds depending upon the size of your group. There really is no winner or loser; this is just a fun game.
- **Aunt Minerva**
 - The child who begins the activity decides on a category such as “hot” but does not tell anyone else. Instead s/he gives several examples to demonstrate the category by telling things that Aunt Minerva likes and doesn’t like. For examples, if the category is “hot,” s/he might say, “Aunt Minerva likes Florida but doesn’t like Alaska. Aunt Minerva likes heavy down quilts but doesn’t like thin sheets. Aunt Minerva likes soup but doesn’t like ice cream.” The other players try to figure out the category. When they know the category, they give an example of something Aunt Minerva likes and doesn’t like. The child who began the activity acknowledges whether the guesser is right or not about what Aunt Minerva likes and doesn’t like. The leader keeps giving examples and listening

to others' guesses until many of the children have the category.

- To keep this activity from feeling frustrating, end one round and begin another before there are only a handful of children still guessing.

- **Categories**

- Choose a category such as rivers, state capitals or cars. Working in small groups, students have a limited amount of time to brainstorm as many examples as they can for the names category. For example, if the category is rivers, students might come up with "Mississippi, Rio Grande, Nile, Ohio, etc." Someone in the group should write down the answers and some should be the spokesperson.
- When the time is up, ring a bell or use some other prearranged signal to stop the action. Children form a circle. The spokesperson for each group says how many items is on his/her group's list. The spokesperson for the group with the longest list then reads his/her group's list. Other groups check off any of the first group's items that appear on their lists. Then other groups can read the additional items that weren't on the first group's list.
- To vary the activity or add challenge, students could guess what items are left after the first group reads their list of items. They could play a version of Twenty Questions.

- **Equation Creations**

- Provide students with a list of 4 individual numbers and 1 final number that is the sum. Students are to use the four basic math operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division) to determine how those 4 numbers can equal the final number.
- I.E. $16 \text{ } _____ \text{ } 4 \text{ } _____ \text{ } 9 \text{ } _____ \text{ } 15 = -2$
 $16 / 4 + 9 - 15 = -2$

- **Famous People and Places**

- Create a slideshow of 10 different famous people and places. Students can write down their answers on a piece of paper. Once done, go through the answers!
- You can also use online tools such as [Mentimeter.com](https://www.mentimeter.com) or [PollEverywhere.com](https://www.poll.everywhere.com) where students can enter a code and enter their answer on their phone.

- **Guess the Number**

- Think of a number and write it down on a piece of paper that you hide. Let students know that you've chosen a number between one and _____ choosing a number range that appropriately challenges the group, give their age and skill level. Going around the circle, students take turns asking a yes-or-no question to try to determine the number. If a student does not have a question, s/he may "pass" A student who thinks s/he knows the number may take a guess. If the guess is incorrect, the questioning continues. If it's correct, the teacher may choose another number or pick a child to choose a number. To emphasize the cooperative nature of this activity, be sure that the child who correctly guesses the number is not the next one to choose a number. The ultimate goal of this

activity is to see how many numbers the group can figure out within a certain period of time.

- Encourage students to think of questions that will give them information about the number, rather than questions that just eliminate one number. Instead of asking if it's the number after fourteen, for example, students might ask if it's a two-digit number, whether it's larger than ten, or if it has a five in it.
- This activity helps children develop questioning skills and listening skills.
- **Pica, Ferme, Nada**
 - Pica (P) = the numeral is in the mystery number but is not in the correct place Pica Ferme Nada. Ferme (F) = means the numeral and place are correct Nada (N) = means the numeral is not in the mystery number at all
 - Directions: 1) A person starts the activity by thinking of a 4-digit number. The person writes the number on a piece of paper, which is put aside until the end of the activity. 2) The object of the activity is for the rest of the players to work together to guess the 4-digit number by providing their own 4-digit guesses in turns. 3) Each time a number is suggested, the leader responds with information about whether the numerals in the suggested number are in the "mystery" number and whether they are in the right place. 4) I.E. if the mystery number is 3862 and someone suggested 3651, the leader would write down "3651" – F P N N." Then the next person in the circle would suggest a number based on this information.

Wordle

- **60 Words in 60 Seconds**
 - Have a list of 60 words on the piece of paper for the students to memorize for this activity. Before students start the activity, students will be handed the piece of paper faced down. To start the activity, staff will pull out a stopwatch setting it to 60 seconds. Once the time starts, students can flip the paper over and begin memorizing as many words as possible. Once the 60 seconds are up, the students will be asked to flip the paper back over. Staff will collect the sheets of paper and pass out blank sheet of paper. The blank sheets will be used for students to write down as many words as possible in 3 minutes. Student with the most words wins.
 - For distance learning, have a list of words on your shared screen. Students can look at this and after the 60 seconds are up, stop sharing your screen or move onto the next slide. Students can write what they remember on a blank/scrap piece of paper.
- **Scattergories**
 - Use the Scattergories sheets to select different categories. Can play as many times as time allows. Let a few students reach aloud their answers for each turn.

- For distance learning, use <https://swellgarfo.com/scattergories/> and share your screen when the timer starts. The categories will auto-populate with a letter and students can write their answers on a blank sheet of paper.
- **Sentence-by-Sentence Story**
 - First student starts a story with one sentence. Each subsequent student adds to the story with one additional sentence. Story ends with the last student. You could also try this with each student adding 5 words to make one long sentence. You can try this in order of students or popcorn style where a student calls on the next person.
 - Word by Word Version
 - The first person says a word, for example 'The'. The second person says the first word and ADDS a second word of their choice, and so on. At the end you might have a complete sentence! For example, 'The aardvark spiraled into the puddle of custard clutching his skateboard while whistling his favorite Bjork melody.' The fun thing is putting twists in the sentence so that the others have a hard time coming up with a word that fits. ADD WORDS can be played a few times without being boring.
- **Story Bingo**
 - Select a short story (pick one that is educational/informative). In the story, pre-select certain words that are to fill up a bingo sheet. Students need to pay attention to the story and identify when one of the words on their bingo sheet is said in the story.
 - First played this game on Valentine's Day with The Story of Saint Valentine
 - myfreebingocards.com
 - This may not be able to be played virtually unless students are given individual bingo cards.
- **Supermarket**
 - The first player says: "I went to the supermarket to buy an Apple (or any other object you can buy in a supermarket that begins with an A). The next player repeats the sentence, including the "A" word and adds a "B" word. Each successive player recites the sentence with all the alphabet items, adding one of his own. For example; 'I went to the supermarket and bought an Apple, Banana, CD, dog food, envelopes, frozen fish'. It's not too hard to reach the end of the alphabet, usually with a little help! Watch out for 'Q' and 'X'
- **Where do words go?**
 - This is a worksheet that pairs two words together and you need to identify which word third word is associated with both of them. You can display the list of words by sharing your screen and students need to determine the answers on a scrap piece of paper.
 - See example at [#13. Brain teaser to exercise your cognitive skills: Where do words go?](#)
- **Who Am I/What Am I?**

- Everyone receives a sticky note or note card with the name of a famous person. The name is placed on either the person's forehead or upper back with a piece of masking tape. Players circulate and ask yes or no questions until everyone has identified the name on their own sticky note or card.
- Virtually this could be done by playing 20 questions. Each person in the room comes up with a person or thing and other people have to guess what they are thinking of.

Strategize This

- **2 Facts, 1 Lie**

- Students are asked to form into groups of 4. One person is selected to be it! The person who is it must come up with 2 facts about themselves and one lie. The group must decide what two facts are the truth and which one is a lie. Each player will have a chance to go at least one time.
- Virtually, this could be played with everyone taking a turn one at a time or place students into breakout rooms to play with a small group.

- **Alibi**

- To start the game, one player must be the investigator and another must be the criminal. Next, the investigator must go outside of the room where they are unable to hear or see the other players. Once the investigator is out of the area, the criminal must make a change to the room (Change can be very obvious). Once the change has been made, the investigator will come back into the room and begin investigating each player. All players excluding the investigator must come up with an "alibi" at the time of the crime. The investigator will go around asking each player where they were at the time of the crime and the player will respond (Example>>>) "I was at the movies with my best friend watching Harry Potter!". Once the investigator goes around once, they will go around again asking each player where they were at the time of the crime. Everyone but the criminal will have the same alibi. The criminal will use the same "alibi" but with a small change (Example>>>) "I was at the movies with my boyfriend watching Harry Potter". It will be up to the investigator to determine who the criminal is amongst the players.
 - It is important for the "non-criminals" to keep their story the same word-for-word. Only the criminal should change their story. The smaller the detail changed the harder it is to determine the criminal.
- Virtual Play
 - This game is possible virtually if the detective mutes their computer and turns away while everyone discusses who the criminal should be. Tell the detective to wait exactly 2 minutes before they turn their audio back on. The rest of the class should have the criminal and the crime determined by the time the detective comes back.

- The “crime” isn’t necessarily the most important piece of the game so this could be a small change. Maybe the teacher has two identical slides that they are sharing their screen with and the second slide has a minor change that the detective needs to find first.
- **Counting Circle**
 - Groups of 10 students sit in a circle. The goal is for each person to say a number out of 1-10. Numbers cannot be repeated and numbers cannot be said consecutively. No one is allowed to speak to each other and two people can’t talk at the same time. If there is a mess-up, you need to start again. But no one is allowed to discuss the mess-up and try and fix it.
 - If you want to add an element to make it even more difficult, students must all have their eyes closed or faces looking down - no one is allowed to look at each other either.
 - For virtual play, everyone’s microphone should be on and the same concept applies!
- **Spot the Difference**
 - There will be one book to choose one page from Spot the Differences. The page will have two photos of similar looking photographs. Make copies of the selected page. Print a page off for each student so they are able to work independently. Inform the students how many “differences” there will be on the printout.
 - A Teacher could share their screen and have two different pictures available for students to figure out
- **The Doctor Will See You Now**
 - Assign one person to play the doctor. That person leaves the room. Have a bag with strips of paper listing an ailment or phobia for someone on their team to act out (or even better, have the whole team act it out). Examples: they think they are chickens; they are scared of spiders; they have aliens growing inside of them, etc. The doctor re-enters the room and must figure out what is wrong. He or she may ask any player yes/no questions, but not "what's wrong with you?" After each question, the doctor can make a guess (diagnosis) of what he or she thinks is wrong. After five or so guesses, if they don't get it, the other team gets a turn. The team with the most correct guesses wins!
 - Similar to Alibi, this can be altered for virtual classroom.
- **Thumper**
 - Have all students sit in a circle on chairs. Tell every student they must come up with some type of sign or symbol that will remain theirs for the duration of the game. Everyone will go in the circle and show what their symbol or sign is. After everyone has shown what their sign is, everyone will start keeping beat by tapping on their legs with both hands. One person will start by doing their sign and “passing” onto a new person by doing someone else’s sign. That person will “receive” by doing their sign and then “passing” onto a new person with their sign. The game will continue until someone forgets someone’s sign and can’t act

quick enough, if someone signs incorrectly, if the wrong person signs, or if you don't receive your sign. Once people get the hang of it, you can be tricky and try looking someone else in the eye while signing someone else.

- This game is a blast in person and could be managed in a virtual setting. Everyone has to keep beat and make sure they're paying attention to the screen. This may not work for people if others are not able to see everyone's "square" at the same time (i.e. if someone is on their phone and has limited screen ability).

Express Yourself

- **Extended Name Tag**

- Extended name tags are simply larger than usual name tags and include pieces of information about a person along with the person's name. Students are asked to draw a symbol or write a word representing something about themselves in each corner of the name tag. Here are some examples of topics for the corner:
 - Your favorite place on earth
 - Someone who taught you something
 - A time you remember spending three great days in a row
 - Something you love to do

- **Making Rain**

- The whole group will stand in one big circle. It is important everyone remains quiet while the leader gives directions and throughout the activity (once students learn how it goes, they can lead the rain). The noises made by the group will mimic a rain storm, hitting a high point and then going back down. You will make the following noises: rubbing your hands together softly, clicking your fingers, clapping your hands, clapping your hands against your legs, and finally add stomping feet. Once you reach the height of the rainstorm, go back down through the noises until you are back at rubbing hands together.
- This has not been tried virtually but worth a shot to see if the sound effect is the same. Everyone's microphones need to be on.

Talk It Out

- **Diversity Bingo**

- Create a Game Board of different items that might be true for students and staff. Each person has to take their bingo board around and write down the name of a person for each category. Names can only be used once until it is identified that there are not enough people. First person to fill up their board wins.
- Virtually, maybe this is played not by bingo but students all raising their hands when a statement applies to them. When students are unfamiliar with each other or it's the beginning of the year, start with low-risk statements (I am an only child, I've lived in more than one place than Toledo). Once some rapport has been built, you can move onto deeper questions.

- **Memory Name Game**

- The “Memory Name Game” is very similar to “Grandmother’s Trunk” but is used to help children learn each other’s name. The teacher asks a circle of children a simple question, such as “What is your favorite book?” or “What is your favorite food?” The children respond by stating their names and their favorite books or foods. For example, the first child might say, “My name is Jay and my favorite book is The Table Where Rich People Sit”. The second child would then say “Jay’s favorite book is The Table Where Rich People Sit. I’m Laurie and my favorite book is The Little Prince”. On it goes around the circle with children repeating everyone’s name and everyone’s book. If a child doesn’t remember someone’s name or favorite book or food, she simply asks the child to repeat it.
- **Philosophical Debate**
 - Select some questions for quick Philosophical Debates. Give instructions that this is a safe space and we are all to respect each other’s opinions. Students are to stand on the side of the room for which statement they agree with. Ask 2 people from each side to explain per question.
 - Virtually, create a signifier for people to say which side they land on. (hold up 1 finger for the 1st answer and 2 fingers for the second answer).
 - Some example questions at can be found at <https://conversationstartersworld.com/philosophical-questions/>
- **Picture Sharing**
 - Everyone will get into groups of 3-4 (or just share with everyone if you’re virtual). If everyone has a cell phone in the group, each person will go through and find one picture (that is appropriate) that they have on their phone. Everyone will go through and explain their picture. I.E. who took the photo, when did you take it, why did you keep the photo, does it hold any significance to you, what was going on when it was taken. This is an opportunity for students to not only share something about themselves but practice their active listening skills.
- **Three Question Interview**
 - Each child in the circle should have pencil and paper. Have children pair up with a child they don’t know very well. The children in the pairs interview each other, asking three simple questions, such as “What is a movie that you like?” or “What do you like to do after school?” The person asking the questions can jot down his/her partner’s responses. When both people have had a chance to ask three questions, they find other partners and repeat the process.
 - After fifteen to twenty minutes, or when each person has had a chance to interview several others, everyone returns to the large circle. Go around the circle. Each child says his/her name, and then you say, “What do people know about _____ ?” People who interviewed that child share what they learned. Allow time for each person to have a turn.
- **Would You Rather?**
 - Have a list of “Would You Rather” (around 10) and students have to go to one side of the room for 1 option or the other side for option 2 (virtually have them hold up 1 or 2 fingers). If you want to extend it, call on a couple students for each question to ask them why they picked their answer.

Just Checking In

- **Internal Weather Report**
 - Have everyone stand or sit in a circle. Ask the group, “If your mood were the weather, what would it be?” For example, if you’re angry it could be a thunderstorm, or if you’re happy it could be sunny. Give everyone a chance to think, then go around the circle and have everyone share with the group. They can choose to explain and elaborate on their feelings, or not.
 - “If your mood were an animal, what would it be?”
- **Feelings 1-10**
 - Have everyone stand or sit in a circle. Ask the group, “Rank your mood today on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the worst mood and 10 being the best.” Give everyone a chance to think, then go around the circle and have everyone share with the group. They can choose to explain and elaborate on their ranking, or not.
- **Pop Culture**
 - Have everyone stand or sit in a circle. Ask the group, “If your current mood were a song or movie, what would it be?” For example, if you’re having a great day your song could be “Happy” by Pharrell, or if you’re tired your movie could be “Sleepless in Seattle”. Give everyone a chance to think, then go around the circle and have everyone share with the group. They can choose to explain and elaborate on their feelings, or not.
- **Highs & Lows**
 - Have everyone stand or sit in a circle. Ask the group to think of their “high and low” of the day – this is the best thing that happened to them during the day, and the worst thing that happened to them. Give everyone a chance to think, then go around the circle and have everyone share with the group. They can choose to explain and elaborate on their day and feelings, or not.
- **Rose, Bud, Thorn**
 - Have everyone stand or sit in a circle. Ask the group to think of their “rose, bud, and thorn” of the day – this is the best thing that happened to them during the day (rose), something they’re looking forward to (bud), and the worst thing that happened to them today (thorn). Give everyone a chance to think, then go around the circle and have everyone share with the group. They can choose to explain and elaborate on their day and feelings, or not.
- More check-ins at [6 Ways to Check-In with Teens](#).

Good for In-Person Classroom Setting:

Brain Busters

- **Around the World - version 2**

- Most classrooms have their seats arranged in rows, the perfect configuration for an Around the World game. The goal is for a student to go all the way around the room and get back to their own seat first. The player who does so, wins the game.
- Step #1 Explain the game, demonstrating how it is played if necessary.
- Step #2 Begin at the front of the classroom at the first seat in a row. The student from that seat stands next to the next seated student.
- Step #3 Show both students a card with a review question.
- Step #4 The first student to say the correct answer gets to move to the next seated student.
- Step #5 The student who loses sits down.
- Step #6 If a student answers five consecutive questions, they sit down and play begins with two new challenges.
- Play continues, with the winner moving on and the losers sitting down. This continues until one student makes it back to his or her original seat. That student is the winner of the game.

- **Non-Verbal Birthday Lines**

- This is a group challenge: Can all the children in the room line up from youngest to oldest without speaking? It definitely can be done, but is not easy. The children could warm up for this challenge by first lining up by height or by first name in alphabetical order without speaking.

- **Sudoku**

- The objective is to fill a 9x9 grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes (also called blocks or regions) contains the digits from 1 to 9. A cell is the smallest block in the game. A row, column and region consists of 9 cells and the whole game consists of 81 cells. A region has thicker lines surrounding it. This simply makes it easier to play the game.

Wordle

- **Back Writes**

- Students pair up and one student is given a vocabulary word in secret and they are to write that word on the back of their partner. The partner tries to guess the word.

Strategize This

- **Dress the Mannequin**

- The whole group will be split into 2-4 teams (depending on size). Each team will then pick a person to be their mannequin. Using only toilet paper and a time of 4 minutes, the group will dress their mannequin. They can create a suit, a

dress, any outfit out of the toilet paper. LEAD staff will judge on who the best dressed mannequin is.

- **Follow the Leader**

- Everyone must form in a circle! One student will be selected to leave the room so they are unable to see who was selected to be the “leader”. After the student has left the room, the “leader” will be selected. Next, the “leader” must choose a few stationary moves that can start the game. After the moves have been identified, the student outside of the room may come back. Once the student is back in the circle, the game can begin. The “leader” will start the moves, trying their best to blend in with the other students. The student who left the room is in charge of identifying the “leader”.

- **Human Knot**

- The more students we have the better! (8-20 students). Students will circle up and join hands together to form a human knot out of their arms. The goal of the game is to untangle themselves *without* letting go of the hands they are holding. After untangling, the students will be standing once again in a regular circle, without any joined hands in the middle.

- **Partner Blindfold Maze**

- To set up, staff members will create a maze obstacle course for students to complete blindfolded. Have the students select a partner then determine who will go first. Students will then direct their partner through the maze blindfolded! One staff member will time from start to finish with a stopwatch and record times on a sheet of paper or a whiteboard. Once all groups have completed this activity, the winner with the best time will be determined!
- Materials needed:
 - Blindfolds

Just for Fun

- **4 Corners**

- Number 4 corners in the room 1-4. One player is designated to be "It," and This stands in the middle of the room with their eyes closed. They will count to ten. As they are counting, the remaining players choose any one of the corners and quietly go and stand in that area. When the "It" player has finished counting, he or she calls out one of the numbers. All players who had chosen that corner or area are out of the game, and they sit down. Then, "It" counts again and the remaining players move to a different corner. Unless the corner is out.
- The last person to still be in the game wins, and usually becomes the new "It."
- If "It" calls out a corner containing no players, the players rotate to a new corner.
- When there are 4 or less players, no more than 1 person can be in a corner.

- **A Strong Wind Blows**

- Have everyone sit on chairs in a circle. There should be one extra person without a chair. That person will stand in the middle and say, “A Strong Wind Blows

for..." and make a statement. This can be a silly, serious, fun, anything statement. (i.e. A Strong Wind Blows for anyone wearing Socks.) Anyone that the statement is true for must stand up and find a different empty chair. It cannot be directly next to their original. The person who is left standing must make a new statement.

- **A What?**

- This activity requires two small objects such as balls or beanbags. The first person hands one of the objects to the next person in the circle and says, "This is a _____," filling in the blank—for example, "This is a potato." The receiver says, "A what?" The first person replies, "A potato." The receiver says, "Oh, a potato," then passes the object to person number three, repeating "This is a potato," and so on.
- After the "potato" gets started around the circle, begin passing the second ball in the opposite direction, giving it a different name. "This is an eggplant." "A what?" "An eggplant and so on.
- When the items meet in the middle, things can get pretty chaotic. The goal is to pass both items completely around the circle. You can also make up nonsense names for the items.

- **Balloon Race**

- Lay 5 red solo cups in a line and blow up a balloon. Hold the balloon close until you are ready but do not tie it. You then will slowly start to release the air from the balloon and use it to knock over each cup. The goal is to see how fast it can be done. People could do it in their own groups and time themselves or do it more as a performance in front of others.

- **Blow Ball**

- A dinner plate for each player.
- Ping pong balls of one color. Enough to almost fill one plate, for each player.
- Some ping pong balls of a second color. You only need three per player. These are the balls you want to stay on the plate at the end of the game.
- Play
 - The aim is to blow all ping pong balls off the plate, except the three different-colored balls. If one of the different colored balls comes off the plate, it must be placed back on the plate before the player can continue blowing the other balls. The first player to be left with only the three different-colored balls on their plate wins!

- **Caught Red-Handed**

- For this activity, you'll need two or three (or more) small objects that can be easily passed around the circle, behind children's backs. One person stands in the middle of the circle and closes his/her eyes for a moment. Children who are in the circle begin to pass the objects behind their backs, as sneakily as possible. They also pretend to pass objects so that at all times students are either passing an object or faking a pass. The person in the middle opens his/her eyes

and tries to figure out where the objects are in the circle. The person has three guesses, which should be made quickly.

- **Chase the Train**
 - To set up, you will need to form a circle with chairs. The Students will sit in the chairs! Once the students are in a seat, ask one student to stand in the center of the circle. After that student has been selected, the train can begin. To begin the train, the students will move to the seat next to them quickly, trying to prevent the student in the middle from sitting in the open seat! To make it more complex, the student next to move sitting within the chairs can hit the empty seat to reverse the direction of the train.
- **Cup Pencil Toss**
 - Every table will have 3 red solo cups arranged in a line. Using the eraser of the pencil, each person will try to bounce the pencil into the cup.
- **Cup Ping Pong**
 - Tape a red solo cup over the edge of one end of the table. You will try and blow a ping pong ball across the table and into the cup. You could make it into a competition. Divide the group in half and see which group can have everyone do it the fastest.
- **Duck Duck Goose**
 - You know how to play!
- **Draw Logos from Memory**
 - Use this [site](#) for students to have to try and redraw famous logos from memory. Have them screenshot their favorite one and share!
- **Everyone's It**
 - The game starts with everyone being it! The objective of the game is to tap other players of the game (nicely), kicking them out of the game! The whole time, players can only walk to chase or flee from another player. The last player in the game is the winner.
- **Flinch, Don't Flinch: (Gator ball):**
 - Have the campers stand in a circle hands behind their back. One counselor stands in the middle and tosses the ball back to the counselors. If the camper catches the ball they toss it back to the counselor. If the camper drops the ball the camper steps out of the game for a short period of time. The counselor can fake throwing the ball and if the camper moves their arms like trying to catch it the ball they step out of the game
- **Group Thumb Wrestling**
 - This is similar to the original thumb wrestling game, but on a larger scale. Every student in the room will have both thumbs being utilized in a cluster. Each cluster can be anywhere from 4 to 8 thumbs together (sometimes more). Both thumbs should be included in a cluster as well, so creating more than one cluster is a good idea. Once everyone has both thumbs in a cluster, the game will begin. The goal is to be the first in the cluster to pin another students thumb.

- **Heads Up 7 Up**
 - 7 people will be identified as the people who can pick someone. With the lights off, everyone else will remain seated with their heads down. The 7 volunteers will go around quietly and tap someone on the shoulder, who will then raise their hand. After 7 people are tapped, they will one by one try to identify the person who tapped them. If they guess correctly, they get to become the new tapper.
- **Hot Potato**
 - Allow some freedom with students picking the music.
 - All students will form a circle with one student holding an object! One person, preferably a staff member, will be in charge of turning the music on and off. When the music begins, the object will be passed around. Once the music stops, the student holding the object will be out! This game will be single elimination. The game will continue until one winner has been determined.
- **How Do You Do**
 - This game is in Duck Duck Goose Style - everyone sits in a circle and Tap someone on head
 - Shake hands
 - How do you do - fine thank you (3 times)
 - Go in opposite directions, when pass each other again
- **I love you Honey**
 - Everyone stands in a circle. 1 Person picks one person and makes eye contact with another and says, "I Love you honey, but I just can't make you smile." If the person smiles, they are out. If you make someone smile, you get to pick another person. If the person doesn't smile, it moves on the person next to you.
- **Light as a Feather, Stiff as a Board (chair style)**
 - One person will sit in a chair and two people will stand at their shoulders and two people at their knees. Each standing person will put their hands together by clasping all of their fingers except for their index - these will be pointing out together. These fingers will be put under the knee and armpits and attempt to lift only using their index fingers. The person won't get high. After this is done, each standing person will put a hand above the person's head (not touching the person or each other's hands) until every hand is out. You will then remove your hand in reverse order. Attempt to pick the person up in the same way with fingers and the person will get much higher.
- **Musical Chairs**
 - Students will have some input in music! No inappropriate language.
 - You know how to play this!
- **Pass the Hoop**
 - The students must create two groups! Each group will stand in a line holding hands. One hula hoop will start on one end of each group. The object of the game is to get the hula hoop from one end to the other without using your hands. The group who accomplishes this wins.

- **Rock, Paper, Scissors War**
 - Everyone in the program will find a partner to play Rock Paper Scissors with. The game will be best 2 out of 3! Once a winner is determined, the winner will look for another student who was a winner in the previous round. The “loser” will follow behind their winner, cheering them on! The game will continue until there is one winner!
- **Scavenger Hunt**
 - There are many ways to set up a scavenger hunt, so this Brain Break can be unique every time. The general idea with a scavenger hunt is to follow the steps within the directions that will help find the needed items. See Scavenger Hunt Outline in Google Docs for ideas and materials.
- **Snowball Fight**
 - All students are given a specific topic and asked to write something down on a piece of paper. After writing it down, all students crumple the paper (or make paper airplanes – takes longer) and stand up. On the “GO” from the teacher, students must throw at least 5 snowballs around the room. Direct students to find ONE snowball – open it up and answer the question, etc. (i.e. students write down one goal, the snowball you pick up you try and make the goal SMART)
- **Straw and Cotton Balls**
 - Everybody will sit at a table facing one partner (if it's a group of 4, you can also pair 2 against 2). Everyone is given a straw and a handful of cotton balls. Once the timer starts, your goal is to try and blow all the cotton balls away from your side and to fall off the table on the side opposite you. Can play multiple times.
- **Toss and Reverse**
 - Students and staff stand in a circle with one ball. The ball starts in one person's hands and they pick a person to throw the ball to - they say their name and throw it to them. That person will then pick someone and throw the ball to a new person (and say their name). No person can be repeated. Once this is complete, you will then throw the ball in reverse order while saying the name of the person you are throwing it to.
- **Wa!**
 - Make sure participants understand the three motions: becoming a tree, chopping down a tree, and having a tree fall. Review when in the game you would perform each motion. Review proper chopping (no touching), as well as proper heckling (no touching or yelling). Play a slow motion practice round.
 - Play begins when a designated player raises both arms over their head with palms together to form a “tree” and says “Wah!”. The two players on either side of the tree become lumberjacks and must chop the tree down by placing their own palms together and simultaneously make one chopping motion toward the midsection of the tree while also saying “Wah!” (Remember not to actually touch the tree with the chopping motion.) When the tree is chopped, it falls by bending at the waist, saying “Wah!” and pointing to another member of the circle. The fallen tree may point to anyone in the circle except the players

directly next to them. The player whom the fallen tree points at must immediately become the next tree by raising both arms together and saying “Wah!”. The game continues with the players on either side of the new tree chopping it down, the tree falling and pointing at another player, and the player pointed at creating the next tree. If at any time a member of the circle hesitates, performs the wrong motion or does not say “Wah!”, that player must step outside the circle. The game stops to let the player step out and starts again when a new tree goes up (anyone may do this). Players outside the circle remain active by walking around the circle and distracting the remaining players by heckling them (without touching or yelling). As players are eliminated, the circle continues to shrink until the final four players are congratulated as the winners.

Get Some Air

- **Batman/Avengers (No materials need):**
 - This tag game has the children lined up against the wall. One player is selected to be Batman. That player stands in the middle. The remaining children will be assigned a villain name. When the villain name is called those villains must try to get to the other area without being tagged by Batman. If they are tagged they can choose which superhero they want to be to help Batman. This game continues until you are down to the last two players
- **Duct Tape Wars (outside)**
 - The whole group will be split into 2-3 teams. Each team will identify one person in their group who will stand on one or two chairs in front of a wall on the grass outside. Using duct tape, they will try and duct tape the person to the wall so they will be able to be supported only using duct tape once the chairs are removed.
- **Hook On/ Elbow Tag: (No materials needed):**
 - Have the campers find a partner and hook on elbow to elbow. The game starts when one camper the tagger chases after another camper around the area. The second camper must hook on to another camper before being tag by the first. If successful the first camper must then try and tag the new camper. If they do they run and try to hook on to another camper before being tagged
- **Kangaroo Relay: (3Gator Balls):**
 - Place the children into three teams. The 1st person in line gets a gator ball. They start the game by putting the gator ball over their heads; the 2nd person gets the gator ball and places the ball under their legs. The process is repeated until the last player gets the ball and must place the ball between their legs and hop to the front of the line. They keep going until everyone has had a turn as the kangaroo.
- **Loose Caboose: (Gator Ball):**

- Place the children in a circle. Select three children to be in the middle of the circle. The 1st person is the front of the train. The 2nd player is in the middle and must place the hands on the shoulder of the 1st person. The 3rd person is the caboose and places their hands on the shoulder of the 2nd player. The players in the circle must pass the gator ball around until they can throw the ball at the caboose player. The train must follow the ball around to avoid the 3rd player from getting hit. Only the 1st person in the train can use their hands to deflect the ball. If the caboose is hit the thrower becomes the 1st player in the train and everyone moves down.
- **Pin Dodge: (Pins and gator balls):**
 - Place out six to seven pins on the floor. Have seven children stand near their pins. The rest of the children will be against the wall waiting to enter the game. The seven children playing must protect their cone while at the same time trying to knock down another player's cone by throwing the gator's ball at the cones. If the player guarding their cone knocks it down accidentally then they will be out. If the player's cone is knocked down by another player they must go to the end of the line. The first person in line enters the game and places their cone in the assigned area.
- **Pop It**
 - To play this game, you will need two large cloths. Two full sized sheets will work perfect. A small to medium size ball will be needed as well. Student will form two circles, holding on to one cloth per group, with one sheet containing the ball. The group with the ball will work together to slingshot the ball into the air tossing it to the other group. The other group will attempt to catch the ball. The receiving group will then prepare to slingshot the ball back to the first group once the ball is positioned on the sheet.
- **Rob the Nest (Several types of small recreation balls and hula hoops):**
 - Place several recreation balls in the middle of the area inside a hula hoop. Give 7 players hula hoops to lace in the area. The object is to grab one ball from the middle area and return it inside your hula hoop. If the player chooses to go get another ball they have to be aware someone may sneak in and rob their nest. The player may also try to take a ball from another player but the player must be away from their nest.
- **Rock, Paper, Scissors go: (Hula Hoops):**
 - 2 or more teams. Place each team behind a hula hoop. Line up the remaining hula hoops in front of each other in a row until they reach the other team the game starts with one person from each team hopping into the hula hoop in front of them. Once the two players meet at the same hula hoop they play rock, paper, and scissors. The winner keeps hopping to the other end. The other camper goes back to the end of the line. The second camper starts hopping into the hula hoop to meet the 1st camper to try and stop them from reaching the end. If a camper reaches the end for their team the team gets a point.
- **Scat (Small rubber mats):**

- the mats are placed around the area. Start with 7 mats. Assign seven children to stand on the mats the rest of the children are waiting in line for their turn. When the 1st person waiting to go in is at the start position, the teachers say “Scat’ all the children must find a different mat to run to. The last player without a mat goes to the end of the line. If there is tie between two people let them stay and the next time 2 people will have to go to the end of the line to wait to get back in.