

rock by rock 

10 Brain Breaks

To increase focus in pods.

Did you know that...



The attention span of an elementary school aged child starts to drop after **10 minutes!**



Breaking learning into **short chunks** of time is better than one long learning block.



Kids remembered information better when they've had space to process. This is called the "**spacing effect.**"

Brain Breaks Increase Motivation

Kids need to take breaks. Research shows that brain breaks are not just great downtime for kids, but that they can **increase productivity, reduce stress and provides an opportunity for kids to learn social skills.** For our youngest kids, physical brain breaks have also been shown to help reduce disruptive behavior and motivate them to stay on task and put more energy back into their learning.

Here are a few tried and true brain breaks that build attention focusing skills and energize your kids to re-engage. Help reset and motivate your kids to sustain their attention and continuously learn throughout the day.



5 Attention Focusing Brain Breaks

Try one of these tried and true brain breaks to increase motivation and focus



Stop and Freeze: Play some music and ask kids to get up and dance. After a few minutes stop the music. Ask kids to freeze. Hold up a picture of several items that are the same and have kids show with their fingers how many objects that they see (i.e. 10 birds, 5 cans, 14 cats etc...). You will need to create the picture cards in advance.

Bilateral scribbles: Have students hold a different color marker in each hand and draw or scribble to the beat of some music for 30 seconds. When they're finished, see if you can find any pictures in the scribbles like shapes or clouds in the sky.. Have them share what they see and then give their art a name.

Make it rain: Ask your kid(s) to either sit or stand at a desk or table. Have kids start by tapping 1 finger on the desk, then 2, then 3, then 4 and then their whole hand until you feel like you are in the middle of rainstorm. You can work up to 10 fingers on both hands if you'd like. Then work you way backwards until you get to 1 and the rain subsides.



Name scribbles: Have students write their favorite word four times with their dominant hand and then again with their other hand. Discuss how it felt, which they found more difficult and why, and what happened in their brains when they used their non-dominant hand.

Focused breathing: Have students sit up straight and cross-legged on the floor. Ask if they are comfortable to close their eyes so that they can focus. Then take five deep breaths through their nose and out of their mouths. Have them do another five breaths breathing into the nose and making a loud sound as they breathe out, including sticking out their tongue if they wish. Have them then take another five silent breaths. Ask them how did that feel?

5 Energizing Brain Breaks

Try one of these tried and true brain breaks to re-energize your kids.



Practice being a windmill: Have students stand up and find enough space to swing their arms without touching anyone. Follow this sequence below:

1 min: Rotate your arms forward. Then do the reverse after 30 seconds.

1 min: See how many jumping jacks you can do in a minute.

1 min: Swing your arms back and forth from side to side, rotating at your hips.

1 min: Stretch to the sky and put your hands together like a rocket. Balance on one leg, then balance on the other leg.

1 min: Reach down with your hands on the right side. Then repeat on the other side. Keep going until the minute is over.

5-4-3-2-1!: Do five physical activities from easiest to hardest, doing one less each time. For example: Do 5 jumping jacks, 4 star jumps, 3 sit ups, 2 push-ups and 1 clap. Change it up so that kids have a different physical challenge each week.

X marks the spot: Use painters tape to make an X on the floor or the wall for each kid. Call out a different body part and have them touch that body part to the X (so right arm, left arm, left leg, bottom etc...)



Minute to win it: Take one minute breaks throughout the day. During each break give your child a challenge to find something around the house. For example; Go find 10 books that start with the letter B or four things that start with the letter R etc...

State Change: Sometimes it can be as easy as getting up and finding a different place or posture to learn. Make it fun and have kids dance or tip toe to their next place. It can be on a cushion or floor space to do their work or maybe they stand for their next lesson. Check in and ask them how many state changes they've had done each day and set goals to have at least 3 per day.