

Up and At 'Em

These activities are visible to all and, therefore, are more entertaining than those in the previous chapter. The magic of these refocusers lies in the beautiful hyperactivity-reduction fostered by the restricted, seated actions.

Get Moving

The 3-Minute Motivators in this section are designed to provide students with a controlled escape for energy while at the same time energizing those who may be bored or sleepy. In most cases children remain seated at their own desks, but are involved in innovative, teacher-led, movement-based activities—on their own. They will be involved in a variety of low-risk activities that will challenge them to be creative and focused. Cognition, imagination, short-term memory, and fine motor skills all come into play, as well as accurate looking, listening to directions, and deciphering nonverbal communication cues.

- Most of these 3-Minute Motivators are individual pursuits; students perform them on their own. In some instances, however, the individuals become a part of the whole-class activity (e.g., Thunderstorm, page 41).
- Most Get Moving motivators are silent activities, and teachers will need to reinforce this aspect. Communication may still be ongoing, but it is nonverbal communication. Before beginning the movement, reinforce that this is a silent activity.
- Teachers will probably choose Get Moving refocusers if they want to engage students actively, yet minimize student interactions. However, whole-class discussions can easily follow any of the activities.

Get Moving

Subject: Any, especially where fine motor control is required

Individual; Partners

Note: This is a good hand exercise; using it prior to a lengthy writing exercise may be useful.

32. Open–Shut–Shake

Objective: To mimic increasingly difficult hand movements.

- *Sit straight in your desk, feet on the floor, eyes on me.*
- *I am going to model a hand movement that will be either opening/closing hands(O/C), or a shake of the hands. Demonstrate by opening/closing hands once and shaking loose hands twice.*
- *Your job is to repeat exactly what I have done.*
- Begin simply: e.g., three shakes, three O/C. Then increase difficulty: e.g., one O/C, two shakes, four O/C, one shake, etc. The increasing difficulty keeps students on their toes.
- Invite students to take turns being the leader.
- Or invite students to turn to a partner and create an innovative combination or O/C plus shakes—one they can share with the whole class.

Showcase: Invite students to prepare a demonstration piece.

Get Moving

Subjects: Language Arts; Social Studies

Individual

33. Puppet Master

Objective: To experience being controlled by marionette strings.

- *Sit quietly at your desk, feet on floor, arms draped across desk, head on desk.*
- *Close your eyes.*
- *You are going to become a marionette, a puppet on strings.*
- *I am the puppeteer. When I tell you I am pulling a certain string, you move only that part of your body.*
- *Relax completely. You are a puppet with no bones. Breathe deeply.*
- *Now I am gently pulling your right arm up...*
 - *...and down*
- *Your left arm up.* Continue in this manner until all body parts have been gently raised or moved. Be sure to raise unusual parts, such as elbows, wrists, left ear, and so on.
- *Now I am going to pull several strings at once and you will sit up—carefully. I haven't lifted your head yet.*
 - *Now your head.* Continue as long as desired or until students tire.
- *Feel your strange body.*
 - *It is being held up only by strings.*
 - *Now I am very gently wiggling the strings.*
 - *You stay seated, but your body moves in tiny wiggles—all over.*
- *Now I'm going to cut the strings and you will all gently drop back to your desk—when I tell you. NOW!*

Debrief: *Tell a neighbor what it felt like to be moved by a puppeteer.*

Get Moving

Subject: Any

Individual

34. The Big Yawn

Objective: To “fake” yawning and stretching with as much reality as possible.

- *Sit comfortably, feet on floor.*
- *Listen to my voice. You are feeling very tired*
- *You need to yawn. Go ahead—yawn.*
- *Bigger, bigger...keep yawning and watch your neighbors as you yawn.*
- Since yawning is contagious, if the teacher can also yawn (or fake a yawn) this helps. By inviting students to watch others yawn, eventually some will actually be yawning.
- Then encourage further: *Now add stretches to your yawns. Big, huge, long stretches. Stretch every part of you body. Make no noise—just stretch and yawn.*

Debrief: This is a good one to debrief as students will be interested in the contagious effect of stretching and yawning. Examine how they felt having to follow instructions and perform artificially something that is usually automatic.

Showcase: Some students *love* sharing their amazing yawn/stretch combinations.