

# brain breaks for the classroom



c. 2012 Stephanie Van Horn @  
3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Thoughts

<http://3rd-grade-thoughts.blogspot.com/>

# directions:

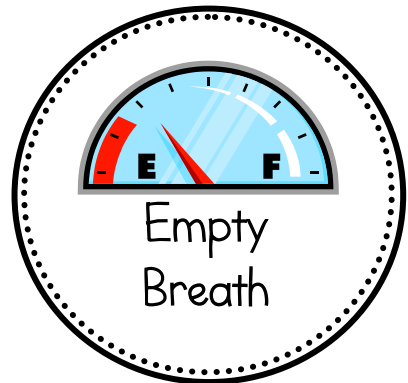
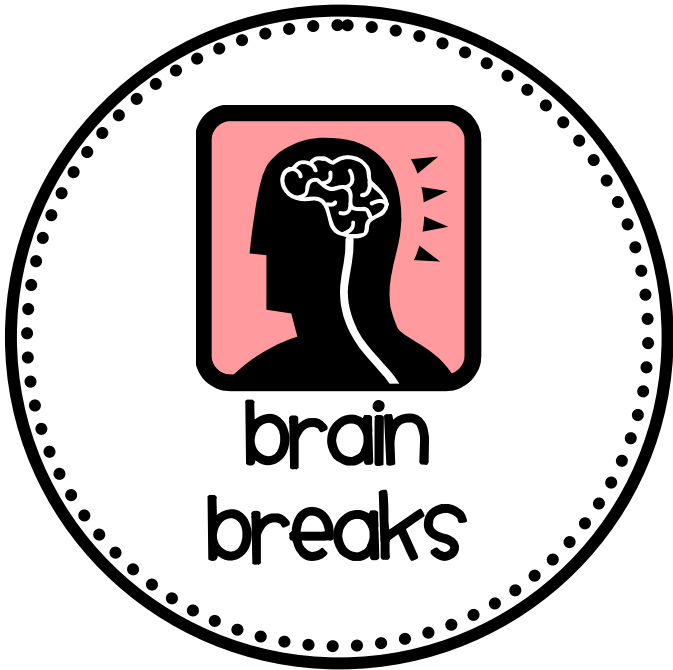
- Cut out each circle and mount onto construction paper (or print onto cardstock)
  - Laminate
  - Hot glue to a popsicle stick
  - Attach the large label to the outside of a container (I used a tin from Target's dollar section) with clear packing tape
- 
- Use these Brain Breaks whenever your kids need a break in the action. This can include:
    - ✓ Transitions
    - ✓ After a long work time
    - ✓ Before a long work time
    - ✓ Before a test
    - ✓ After a test
    - ✓ After recess to calm down
    - ✓ When the class needs a pick-me-up
    - ✓ As a class reward
    - ✓ To mix things up during a content lesson
    - ✓ Wait time before a presentation, speaker, etc.
    - ✓ And more!!

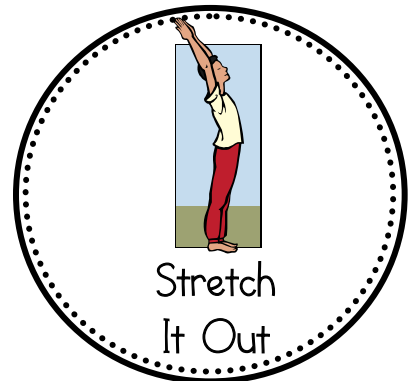
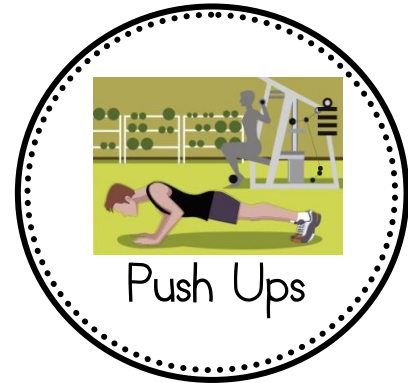


See my blog for more information:

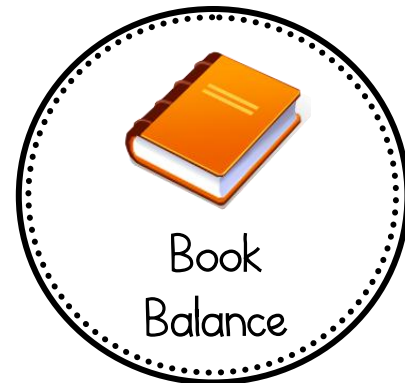
3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Thoughts  
<http://3rd-grade-thoughts.blogspot.com/>

Fonts by Kevin & Amanda  
<http://www.kevinandamanda.com/fonts/>  
Wizard of Oz Clip Art by JW Illustrations  
<http://www.jessicaweible.com/>







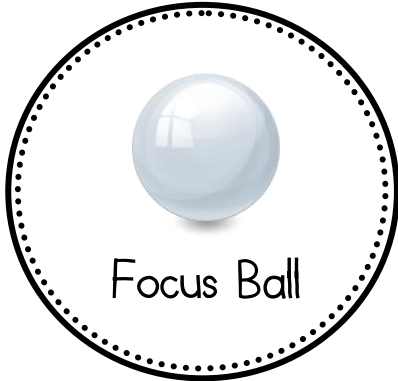




Swimming



Eye Roll



Focus Ball



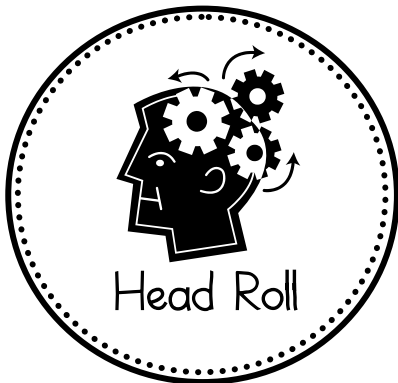
Hand  
Washing



X and O



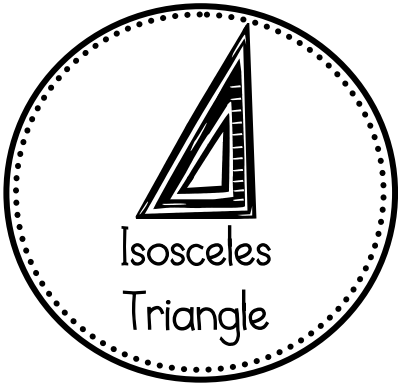
Pitch  
Perfect



Head Roll



Windmills



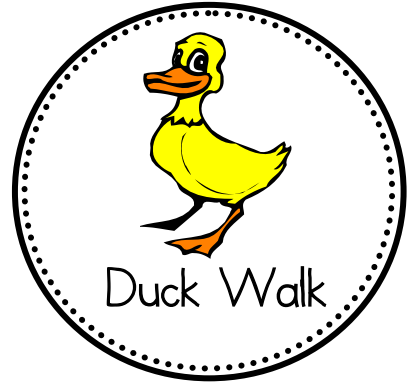
Isosceles  
Triangle



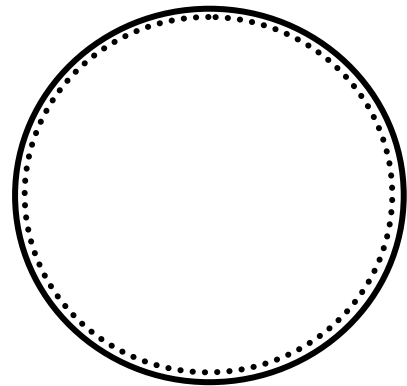
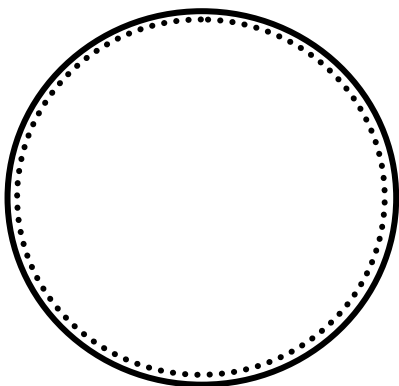
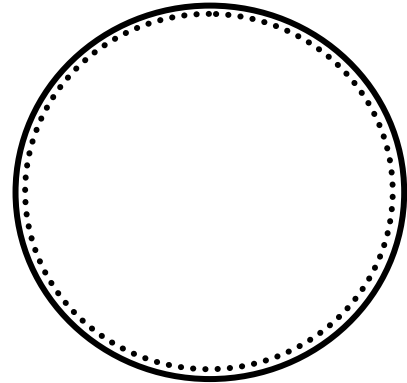
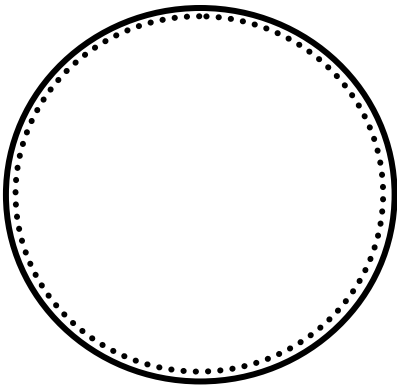
Swinging  
Samurai

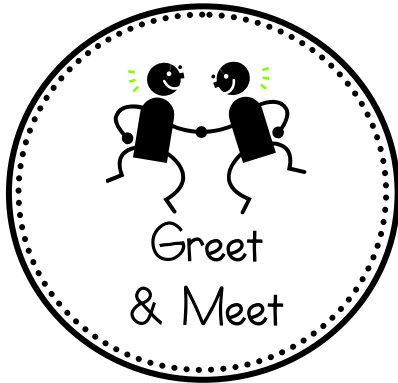


Belly  
Breathing

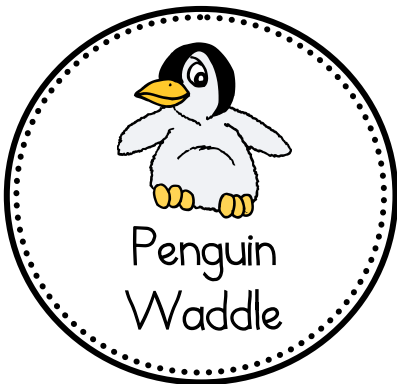


Duck Walk









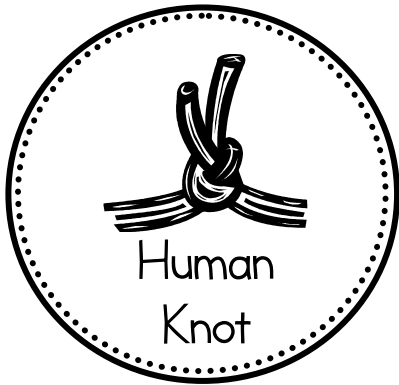




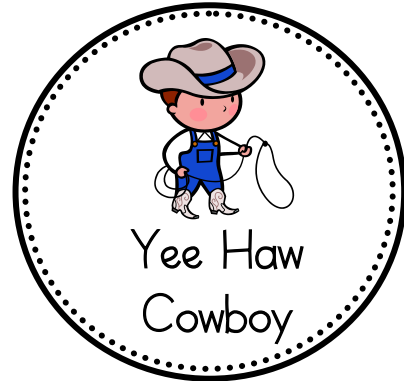
Mountain  
Climber



Eat Healthy!



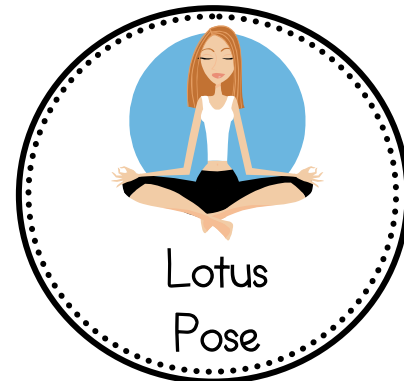
Human  
Knot



Yee Haw  
Cowboy



Zoo  
Freeze



Lotus  
Pose



Upward  
Dog

- **Air Band**—put on music and have kids play an air instrument
- **Animal Action**—“walk” around the room like an animal—they choose or you say
- **Belly Breathing**—with hands on their belly, breathe in deeply and feel the belly go out, then exhale feeling the belly go back in
- **Book Balance**—have them balance a book on their head and walk around
- **Chair Balance**—go on tip toes, using back of chair to help balance; practice bending knees, practice lifting up one leg, then the other, practice lifting up one hand, then the other, etc.
- **Class Wave**—start at one side of the room and have kids do a standing or sitting wave with their arms. Go around a few times, then get back to work
- **Criss-Cross Simon Says**—just like the game, but kids have to have a right body part touch a left body part (cross lateral)
- **Dance Off**—put on music and dance
- **Dribble, Shoot & Score**—pretend you are dribbling a soccer ball between your right and left foot, shoot an imaginary goal and celebrate like you made the shot—can be done silently
- **Duck Walk**—crouched down, students will walk across the room trying to keep their balance
- **Ear Rub**—rub the lobes of your ears
- **Eat Healthy!**—pretend to eat fruits & veggies—call out (or have different students call out) healthy foods and students will act out how to eat it. Some examples include: corn, apple, banana, carrot, grapes, etc. Great for a nutrition unit!
- **Empty Breath**—exhale all of your air in your lungs, then inhale; repeat 3-4 times
- **Eye Roll**—roll eyes up and down, then to the right and to the left
- **Focus Ball**—bring finger tips together in front of your chest to make a ball, then lift it toward their head, bending all finger joints and breathing
- **Frankenstein**—walk around with arms extended straight and legs not bending
- **Frog Jump**—acting like a frog, crouch down, hands on the floor, then jump two to three times around the room or in place—add a “ribbitt” if you’d like!
- **Greet & Meet**—have kids introduce themselves and shake hands with 4 other people. Works great first thing in the morning if the day starts sluggish!
- **Hand Jive**—the dance from Grease! Tap your thighs twice, clap twice, shuffle your hands over each other twice, then move your thumbs up over each shoulder—work slowly then get faster!
- **Hand Knot**—this requires 2+ people to face each other and grasp each other’s wrists until you make a “knot”. One person starts by squeezing the other person’s hand. The squeeze travels around the hands 3-5 times.
- **Hand Washing**—pretend to wash your hands and forearms—can be soft, then vigorous, then soft again
- **Head Roll**—roll head to the right and to the left, then to the front and to the back
- **High Cinquos**—give high fives to five people, then get back to work
- **Human Knot**—use with groups of 4-6. Everyone puts their hand into the circle and grabs a hand that is not theirs. Without letting go, try to get out of the “knot” and make a circle- great team-builder!!
- **I’m Melting!**—pretend you are in the Wizard of Oz and are the Wicked Witch that just got splashed with water—“melt” down to the ground slowly, while twisting your body to the left and right until you are lying

down. You can add the "I'm Melting!" cry, too!

- **Isosceles Triangle**—kids sit on their knees on the floor, backs straight; as an add-on, they can jump up from this position to standing
- **Lion Breath**—inhale through nose, exhale with a loud breath out, sticking out your tongue and looking up toward the ceiling (no voices, just breath noise)
- **Lotus Pose**—sit with legs crossed and back very straight. Place palms of hands together in front of your chest or place palms on knees. You could also place palms up on top of each other in your lap. Practice deep breathing with eyes closed.
- **Macarena**—remember this dance? Play this [video from YouTube](#) for added fun! (*Note: Video may not be appropriate for viewing, I'd just use it for listening 😊*)
- **Marching Band**—have someone be the conductor and kids choose their favorite instrument to "play", then lead the class around the room
- **Mirror Partners**—find a partner and copy exactly what they do
- **Moonwalk**—2 choices: either like Michael Jackson (yay!) or you could have them walk like an astronaut (great if you are studying space!)
- **Mountain Climber**—pretend to climb a mountain by jogging in place and using your arms to grab high above your head, alternating right & left—alternate the pace from slow to fast
- **Partner Sit and Stand**—have partners sit on the ground, back to back, link arms and try to stand up
- **Penguin Waddle**—keep arms to your side and legs as close together as possible, moving only feet and ankles
- **Pharaoh Walk**—walk like an Egyptian (could even play the song for more fun!)
- **Pitch Perfect**—practice pitching a pretend baseball
- **Plank**—get your body ready to do a push-up, but hold the position, making your body a straight line
- **Pretzel**—Have them sit on the ground, crossing right leg over their left and crossing their arms in front of them, right arm over left, and fold their hands together—switch sides so left will be over right. Repeat, twice for each side.
- **Rainstorm**—have kids start by tapping their fingertips on their desk, then all 5 fingers, then hands, then stomp their feet, then repeat the opposite way to simulate a rainstorm sound
- **Scarecrow**—pretend you are in the Wizard of Oz and have no bones, just straw—have the students walk, hop, skip, and/or walk backwards in this way
- **Sign Time**—begin by teaching your students the alphabet in sign language- you can sing the ABC song as you do it. As the year progresses, mix it up by having them spell vocab words, content words, each other's names, etc.
- **Skiing**—like jump roping, but without the rope—have them hold their hands like their ski poles and go left, then right—have them move their feet front to back like CC skiing, etc.
- **Skips & Clicks**—pretend you are in the Wizard of Oz and skip 3 times, then click your heels 3 times. Repeat 3 times.
- **Stretch it Out**— see how far you can stretch up, down, out, etc.
- **Superman**—laying on the ground, lift up your right arm and left leg, then left arm and right leg, then both arms and both legs
- **Swimming**—like Superman, but move both arms and legs at the same time, up and down



- **Swinging Samurai**—pretending they have a sword, they can swing right to left, taking long strides across the room
- **Test, Test**—repetition game- can be done with words and/or motions- teacher says/does and class repeats- great for vocab work!
- **Tin Man**—pretend you are in the Wizard of Oz and have no joints, you are very stiff—have students walk and lean from front to back and side to side
- **Up, Down & Around**—have kids reach high to the sky, down to the floor, and then twirl around and sit back down- quick & painless!
- **Upward Dog**—lie on your belly on the ground. Place palms next to your body and push your chest off of the ground. Look to the front (don't crane neck back) and breathe deeply
- **Waiter Walk**—carry notebook/folder/book/etc. up in the air like a waiter
- **Windmills**—roll arms in small and large circles like a windmill; can go in opposite or similar directions
- **X & O**—sitting on a chair, cross feet and arms and bring shoulders to knees in a compacted X; then, spread out, reaching up to the sky to make an extending O
- **Yee Haw Cowboy**—this is a fun one with lots of variations. Have kids pretend to lasso, bull ride, ride a galloping horse, walk like a cowboy—lots of possibilities!
- **Zoo Freeze**—a fun, fast-paced game! Call out the name of an animal at the zoo and have kids act it out. Say "Freeze!" and choose the best student imitation. That student then tells the next animal and chooses the best imitation, and so on.

\*If practicing any pose, make sure to do both right and left sides