## Language Arts Activities

### Integrating Physical Activity Into Language Arts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of activity</th>
<th>Lesson focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Act or Link</td>
<td>Distinguish between action and linking verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read and React</td>
<td>Verbs, adverbs, and prepositions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter Line-Up</td>
<td>Letter identification and order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha-Body</td>
<td>Letter identification or spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Moving Alpha-Body</td>
<td>Letter identification or spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha Freeze Tag</td>
<td>Letter identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Long, Short, or Silent Vowel</td>
<td>Vowels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Rhyme Every Time</td>
<td>Rhyme words or poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposites Attract</td>
<td>Antonyms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Does Your Body Move?</td>
<td>Verbs and adverbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Do We Get There?</td>
<td>Words that define direction or prepositions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast, Faster, Fastest</td>
<td>Comparatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllables in Motion</td>
<td>Syllables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark It!</td>
<td>Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A B C Me Move</td>
<td>Alphabet, words, or action verbs (or more than one of these)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action–Reaction Fresh Verbs</td>
<td>Word analysis and vocabulary strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Act or Link

Subject
Language arts

Lesson Focus
Distinguishing between action and linking verbs

Equipment
Chalkboard, whiteboard, electronic display, and a list of sentences. Each sentence should include one action verb or one linking verb that is underlined. The action words should express actions that can take place in self-space such as jump, run, hop, and shake.

Organization
- Move desks and chairs to create an open space in the middle of the room.
- Students form a large circle in the open area.

Physical Activity
1. Read or show (or both read and show) one of several written sentences.
2. While standing in the circle, the students will respond accordingly:
   - If the underlined or emphasized word in the sentence is an action verb, the students do the action. For example in the sentence “Jane jumped up high,” “jumped” is an action verb, so the students would jump in place until you say “Freeze” (approximately 10 seconds).
   - If the underlined or emphasized word in the sentence is a linking verb, all students will quickly link arms. For example, in the sentence “The dog is sick,” the verb “is” is a linking verb, so the students would link arms until you say “Release.”

Content Modifications
If the students are ready for compound sentences, use a timer and have them change the movement when the timer sounds. For example, with “Linda ran outside to play while Joe was content to keep reading,” they would run in place for 10 seconds and then quickly link arms.
Read and React

Subject
Language arts

Lesson Focus
Verbs, adverbs, and prepositions

Organization
Standing beside desks

Equipment
Music (optional). Flash cards with action verbs, or the words projected on the screen (e.g., jog, jump, hop, bend, twist, crawl, skip, walk, leap, march, gallop, slide); adverbs added to the action verbs (e.g., slowly, softly, gladly, sadly, loudly, swiftly, timidly, joyfully); prepositions added to the action verbs (e.g., in front of, behind, over, under, around, through, below, up, down, between, beside). Sample flash cards for jump may include jump, jump loudly, and jump over.

Physical Activity
1. Hold up or project the verbs on the screen; the students duplicate the movements in place (e.g., walk).
2. After completing the list of verbs, go back through the list and add an adverb to each verb; the students perform the action (examples: walk happily, crawl timidly, march loudly).
3. Last, divide the students into groups of three. Using open space in the room, the students perform the movement with the prepositions (example: walk happily between). Here the students will have to decide who will do the action and who will stand side by side so one person can walk between, or they may decide to use two objects to walk between.
Letter Line-Up

Subject
Language arts

Lesson Focus
Letter identification and order

Organization
Space in the middle or on a side of the classroom

Equipment
Cards with letters of the alphabet

Physical Activity
Cards are placed facedown in a line, and students pick up one card each. They then see how quickly they can line up in alphabetical order.

Content Modifications
Use upper- or lowercase. Use words for the students to alphabetize.
Alpha-Body

Subject
Language arts

Lesson Focus
Letter identification or spelling

Organization
Students sitting individually or in small groups on the floor

Equipment
None

Physical Activity
Students are given letters to make with their bodies. This can be done individually but is best done with a partner or in a small group. Students can be instructed to make either a line or a half circle (curves). These two shapes can make all letters. Students can make letters standing, sitting, or lying down.

Content Modifications
Teach contrast of upper- and lowercase letters by having students make each. Have them combine as a larger group to spell spelling words.
The Moving Alpha-Body

**Subject**
Language arts

**Lesson Focus**
Letter identification or spelling

**Organization**
Students scattered in open space indoors or outdoors—individually, with partners, or in small groups

**Equipment**
None

**Physical Activity**
Students are asked to travel, around the room or outdoors, the pathways of the letters.

- Have them travel using limited space, much as if an ant were writing the letter, or using a large space, as if an elephant were writing the letter.
- Have them travel in different locomotor patterns (walk, jog, skip, gallop, hop, jump, slide, and so on).
- Have them travel in different directions (forward, backward, sideways).
- Have them play follow the leader, with the follower guessing the letter.
- Have them make up their own crazy letter as they travel.
- Ask them to write the letters with their finger on a partner’s back. The partner is to travel each letter after it is written. Students then change roles.

**Content Modifications**
Teach contrast of upper- and lowercase letters by having students make each. Combine letters for blends. Combine for words.
Alpha Freeze Tag

Subject
Language arts

Lesson Focus
Letter identification

Organization
Students scattered in the classroom or in an open outdoor grassy area

Equipment
Objects to denote taggers

Physical Activity
If played in the classroom, this will be a walking tag game. If played outdoors in an open grassy area, running is more appropriate. Three people are taggers and attempt to tag other players. If tagged, a player must freeze in the shape of a letter of alphabet. Other players come to the rescue by facing the frozen person and mirroring that letter. When someone is mirroring, he or she is safe from a tagger. Each time an individual is tagged, he or she should make a different letter. After a few minutes, select new taggers.
The Long, Short, or Silent Vowel

**Subject**
Language arts

**Lesson Focus**
Vowels

**Organization**
Students standing by desks

**Equipment**
None

**Physical Activity**
Write a word and underline a vowel. Students are asked to spread their arms out wide for a long vowel sound, hug themselves for a short vowel sound, and sit for a silent vowel.
A Rhyme Every Time

Subject
Language arts

Lesson Focus
Rhyme words or poetry

Organization
Students standing by desks or scattered in open space in small groups

Equipment
None

Physical Activity
- Students create a movement sequence using words that rhyme (e.g., bump, dump, jump, and pump). Students then teach the movement to another group.
- Students create an entire dance to a poem. Each group is responsible for a line or two, and the parts are combined for a dance.
Opposites Attract

Subject
Language arts

Lesson Focus
Antonyms

Organization
Students standing by desks or scattered in open space in small groups

Equipment
None

Physical Activity
Develop a list of antonyms, and have students create a movement sequence (movements or still shapes). They then teach the sequence to another group.
How Does Your Body Move?

**Subject**
Language arts

**Lesson Focus**
Verbs and adverbs

**Organization**
Students standing by desks or scattered in open space

**Equipment**
None

**Physical Activity**
Using action verbs, add simple adverbs that express “how,” and have the students contrast the movements (e.g., kick softly, kick quickly, kick slowly, kick smoothly, kick gently).

How Do We Get There?

Subject
Language arts

Lesson Focus
Words that define direction, prepositions

Organization
Students scattered in open space indoors or outdoors

Equipment
None

Physical Activity
Using movement and direction words or prepositions, have students travel in the classroom or outdoors on the playground. These are sample activities:

- Walking beside a partner
- Climbing over the bar
- Crawling through the tunnel
- Stepping over the ball
- Rolling under the table
- Jogging around the swing set

You may also choose to use pretend actions. Have the students travel around the room and pretend to go

- over a steep mountain,
- around a rock,
- through a dark cave,
- over a wiggly bridge,
- under a tree,
- around a small pond,
- through a creaky door,
- over a thorny bush,
- through a window,
- through a haunted house,
- under a waterfall,
- around a pile of garbage,
- under a bed,
- over a creek,
- through a sand castle, or
- over a campfire.
Fast, Faster, Fastest

Subject
Language arts

Lesson Focus
Comparatives

Organization
Students standing by desks or in groups of three

Equipment
None

Physical Activity
Students are asked to contrast comparatives through movement or body shapes, for example, big, tall, short, slow, fast, hot, and cold.

Content Modifications
For words that require doubling the last consonant before adding -er or -est, have the students jump twice. For those that do not require doubling, have the students jump once. When you show a word in which y is changed to i before -er or -est is added, have the students hop on one foot with arms stretched high above head.
Syllables in Motion

**Subject**
Language arts

**Lesson Focus**
Syllables

**Organization**
Students standing by desks or in an open area

**Equipment**
None

**Physical Activity**
- Have students make a different movement for each syllable in a word (e.g., punch, kick, twist, sway, bend, stretch, pull, push).
- Have them alternate jumping (two feet) with hopping (one foot) on each syllable.
- Have students make a balance such that the number of body parts touching the floor (base of support) is equal to the number of syllables in a word. Then have them stand up and repeat the balance, placing a body part back in the balance as you call out one a syllable at a time.
- Ask them to combine different movements to create a syllable dance. For example, “President Obama” = “Pres-i-dent-O-ba-ma” = Turn–punch–kick–pull–bend–jump.
- Ask them, “Can you jump on the accented syllables and stay still on the unaccented syllables?” (Use other movements such as hop, punch, kick, turn, pull, and bend.)
- Have students take a giant step on the accented syllables and a short step on the others.
Mark It!

**Subject**
Language arts

**Lesson Focus**
Punctuation

**Organization**
Students standing by desks or in an open area

**Equipment**
None

**Physical Activity**
- Ask students to make the shape of a period and then a comma with their body. Using printed phrases and sentences, have students make the punctuation shapes as you read.
- Have students work with a partner and make a colon, a semicolon, and an exclamation mark. Using printed phrases and sentences, have them make the punctuation shapes as you read.
- Using word cards, have one group of students create a sentence without punctuation and the other group make the punctuation marks where needed. Then they reverse roles.
- Have them do the same tasks with movements to depict punctuation marks. Examples:
  - Stomp lightly for a comma and stomp strongly for a period.
  - Jump for an exclamation mark.
  - Turn in a half circle for a semicolon and a full circle for a colon.
A B C Me Move

Subject
Language arts

Lesson Focus
Alphabet, words, action verbs

Organization
Scattered in open space in classroom, multipurpose room, or outdoors

Equipment
None

Physical Activity
When introducing letters or as a review, you can add movements to help the students learn words that start with certain letters or help them learn action verbs. These are a few examples:

A: ants scurrying, airplanes soaring, alligators crawling, apes swinging
B: birds flying, bees buzzing, balloons inflating, butterflies fluttering, bubbles bursting, balls bouncing, bats swinging
C: cats arching, chicks chirping, cars racing, crabs walking, crows flying, crocodiles crawling
D: dogs walking, ducks waddling, dancers spinning, deer running, daisies growing
E: elephants stomping, Eskimos fishing, elbows bending, eagles soaring
F: fish swimming, feet stamping, frogs jumping, fireflies dodging
G: goats head butting, gerbils scurrying, geese flying, goldfish swimming, gophers digging, gorillas swinging
H: hammers pounding, hands clapping, hippopotami swimming, helicopters flying
I: ice melting, ice skaters skating, insects crawling
J: jets soaring, jump ropes turning, jellyfish floating, jaguars running
K: kittens stretching, knots twisting, kites soaring, keys turning
L: lions pouncing, lambs prancing, lungs breathing, lizards scurrying
M: mice scampering, mops swishing, motorcycles speeding, muscles flexing
N: nets falling, nightingales flying, noodles boiling
O: owls hooting, oak trees swaying, octopi swimming
P: pigs rolling, popcorn popping, penguins shuffling, paper wadding
Q: quails cooing
R: rabbits jumping, roosters strutting, rhinoceroses charging, reindeer prancing
S: slugs slithering, sleds dashing, squirrels scampering, spiders crawling, seals clapping, snow falling, skiers skiing
T: tigers creeping, tails wagging, trains climbing, trees swaying, trout swimming, turkeys gobbling
U: umbrellas opening, unicorns charging
V: vehicles zooming, vines climbing, vultures circling
W: water dripping, whales diving, woodcutter chopping, wolves creeping, woodpeckers pecking, worms wiggling
X: xylophones playing
Y: yo-yos rising and lowering, yachts sailing
Z: zebras galloping
Action–Reaction Fresh Verbs

**Subject**  
Language arts

**Lesson Focus**  
Word analysis and vocabulary strategies

**Organization**  
Students standing by desks

**Equipment**  
List of fresh words for action verbs *run, walk, laugh, and cry*. See the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Run</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Laugh</th>
<th>Cry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bolt</td>
<td>Amble</td>
<td>Cackle</td>
<td>Bawl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charge</td>
<td>Dawdle</td>
<td>Chortle</td>
<td>Bellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dart</td>
<td>Hike</td>
<td>Chuckle</td>
<td>Bleat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dash</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>Crack up</td>
<td>Blubber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flee</td>
<td>Mosey</td>
<td>Giggle</td>
<td>Boo-hoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fly</td>
<td>Patrol</td>
<td>Guffaw</td>
<td>Grieve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hasten</td>
<td>Plod</td>
<td>Jibe at</td>
<td>Howl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurry</td>
<td>Ramble</td>
<td>Joke</td>
<td>Lament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jog</td>
<td>Roam</td>
<td>Lampoon</td>
<td>Mewl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Saunter</td>
<td>Mock</td>
<td>Mourn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rush</td>
<td>Stride</td>
<td>Parody</td>
<td>Shed tears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scurry</td>
<td>Stroll</td>
<td>Satirize</td>
<td>Snivel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scamper</td>
<td>Traipse</td>
<td>Scoff at</td>
<td>Sob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed</td>
<td>Tramp</td>
<td>Scorn</td>
<td>Squeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprint</td>
<td>Trek</td>
<td>Sneer</td>
<td>Wail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trot</td>
<td>Tromp</td>
<td>Snicker</td>
<td>Weep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoom</td>
<td>Trudge</td>
<td>Tee-hee</td>
<td>Whimper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wander</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Some verbs may be appropriate only for more advanced students.*
**Physical Activity**

1. Students should be familiar with and have used and reviewed the word list.

2. Go over actions for *walk, run, laugh,* and *cry.*
   - Walk—walk in place raising legs high on each step
   - Run—run in place
   - Laugh—jumping jacks
   - Cry—cross crawls (touch left elbow to right knee followed by right elbow to left knee, continue to alternate)

3. Call out a word and have students do the corresponding action for 30 seconds. For example, if you say “Scurry,” students run in place; if you say “Chuckle,” students do jumping jacks.

4. Continue calling out fresh words from the list to keep the students moving.