Quick transitional physical activity breaks can be provided when a class is changing from one subject matter to another (e.g., language arts to math). Sometimes referred to as energizers or moving breaks, these activities are easy to organize and require very little space and time. For most of the activities, the students can stand beside their desks or tables. The activities are designed to last 3 to 10 minutes at the discretion of the teacher.

The transitional activities have been created by the authors or are modifications of activities from the following resources:


### Transitional Activities

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Moving Through the Alphabet

Grade Level
Kindergarten through second

Equipment
None

Organization
Standing by desks or in open space in the classroom

Activity Description
Challenge the students to perform the following activities in their own space. You may choose to do part of the alphabet at one point in the day and then complete it later in the day.

A is for airplane. Can you move your arms as if flying like an airplane?
B is for breathing. Take a deep breath, hold it, and let it out slowly. Repeat. Repeat.
C is for catching. Can you jump up in the air and catch a pretend ball high above your head? Try it two more times.
D is for dancing. Pretend like you are dancing in your own space to your favorite music.
E is for elevate. Can you stretch high on your tiptoes and elevate your body?
F is for float. Pretend you are a feather and float slowly to the ground.
G is for gallop. Can you put one foot in front of the other and gallop in place?
H is for hop. Hop up and down on one foot.
I is for inflate. Start low to the ground and pretend to be a balloon. As I blow air, inflate to a large round balloon.
J is for jog. Jog in place.
K is for kick. Kick an imaginary ball high into the air with your foot.
L is for lunge. Keep one foot in place and stretch the other foot forward, taking a lunge step.
M is for march. March in place, right, left, right, left, right, left, right, left, right.
N is for narrow. Can you make a tall and narrow shape with your body and hold all of your muscles tight?
O is for over. Can you pretend to jump over a rope that you are turning?
P is for prance. Raise your legs high and prance in place like a horse.
Q is for quick. Can you run in place quickly?
R is for rotate. Can you spin around in a circle and rotate your body?
S is for swim. Use your arms and pretend to swim forward. Now backward.
T is for turn. Turn around and around in a circle. Try it the other way.
U is for up. Jump up and down on two feet.
V is for vibrate. Can you make your body shake and vibrate from head to toe?
W is for walk. Walk in place, raising your legs high on every step.
X is for X ray. Point to a large bone in your leg and then shake that bone. Point to a large muscle on your arm and shake that bone.
Y is for yes. Yes, you are a great mover. Choose your favorite way to move.
Z is for zigzag. Can you slide in a zigzag pathway?
Imagination Alphabet

Grade Level
Kindergarten through second

Equipment
None

Organization
Scattered in an open area of the classroom, multipurpose room, or outdoors.

Activity Description
The students are to use their imagination to move with the alphabet.

A is for apple, and it is high in the tree. Stretch as high as you can and pick the apple from the tree.
B is for bicycle. Lie on your back and ride your bicycle to a friend’s house.
C is for catch. Throw and catch with someone near you.
D is for dunk. Jump and slam dunk a basketball.
E is for egg. You are an egg. Hold your legs tight by using your arms and rock side to side, being careful not to crack.
F is for frog. Jump from lily pad to lily pad.
G is for goose. Move like a goose waddling on the ground and then jump in the water.
H is for horse. Gallop to the barn and back.
I is for ice cream. Make the shape of a scoop of ice cream and slowly melt.
J is for Jell-O. Wiggle and jiggle like your favorite flavor of Jell-O.
K is for kangaroo. Kangaroos jump high off their back legs. Jump as if you are playing with the other kangaroos.
L is for lasso. You are a cowboy or cowgirl and need to twirl your rope and lasso the cow.
M is for monkey. Climb a tree and use a vine to swing to another tree.
N is for net. Shoot a basketball into the net.
O is for octopus. You are an octopus living in the ocean. Remember, you have eight legs.
P is for pretzel. You have just been made into dough and then turned into a twisty pretzel.
Q is for quack. Waddle to the water and jump in and swim.
R is for robot. Robots are made of metal and make slow, jerky movements.
S is for spaghetti. Start in the box and then jump into the pan. Show me what you would look like in the box. Now show me how you would move in the pan as you were cooked.
T is for trampoline. You can jump and turn on your trampoline, but you should not do flips.
U is for umbrella. When you open your umbrella, the wind is so strong you fly away.
V is for volcano. Start out low and then explode like a volcano, jumping high into the air.
W is for wagon. Pull your little brother or sister or a friend in your little red wagon.
X is for X-out. Can you write your name in the air and then X out or erase it with your other hand?
Y is for yo-yo. Make your yo-yo go up and down. Can you make it go forward and back?
Z is for zoo. What is your favorite animal at the zoo? See if the person next to you can guess what you are.
Animal Mimics

**Grade Level**
Kindergarten through second

**Equipment**
None

**Organization**
Open space around the perimeter of the room; clean floors are best.

**Activity Description**
Instruct students to stay spaced and not to pass any other students as they travel mimicking the following animals. Encourage them to make only the movements and not the sound of the animal.

- **Crab walk:** Sit on the floor with knees bent and hands on the floor behind you. Raise your bottom, keeping hands and feet on the floor. Continue until your stomach looks like a flat table. Keeping the hips high, travel around the room leading with the feet.

- **Puppy walk:** Crawl on hands and knees like a puppy.

- **Bear crawl:** Start in the puppy crawl position but raise hips up so as to travel on your hands and feet. Move forward keeping your head up. As the right hand moves forward, so does the right foot.

- **Alligator crawl:** Lie on the floor with arms bent and legs extended. Bring your right knee forward as you reach forward with your right hand. Do the same with your left hand and knee. Continue alternating, keeping the knees and hands close to your body like an alligator.

- **Frog jump:** Squat like a frog with your hands by your sides. Push with hands and feet at the same time, extending legs and jumping forward. Land back in the squat position. Continue.

- **Inchworm:** Squat on the floor like a frog with hands by your sides. Lean forward with both hands and raise your seat high in the air. Now, walk the feet forward. When you get your feet as close to your hands as you can while still maintaining your balance, stop. Now, walk hands forward again and repeat with the feet. Continue.
Row Your Boat to Fitness

Grade Level
Kindergarten through third

Equipment
None

Organization
Standing by desks or in open classroom space

Activity Description
Students sing to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” and perform the following movements. Between each one they sing the chorus.
Chorus: Turn, turn, turn around and here we go again.

- Row, row, row your boat gently down the stream . . .
- Raise, raise, raise the roof high above your head . . .
- Punch, punch, punch your fists out in front of you . . .
- Twist, twist, twist your tummy going side to side . . .
- Bend, bend, bend your side right, left, and right . . .
- Jump, jump, jump in place, up and down you go . . .
- Hop, hop, hop on one foot, right, left, and right . . .
- Kick, kick, kick your legs out in front of you . . .
- Jump cross, jump cross two times in a row . . .
- Row, row, row your boat gently down the stream . . .
Travel Mode

Grade Level
Kindergarten through third

Equipment
None

Organization
Standing by desks or in open classroom space

Activity Description
The following activities are performed to the tune of “Wheels on the Bus.”

- The kids on the bus go up and down, up and down, up and down. The kids on the
  bus go up and down, all the way to school. (Squat up and down.)
- The captain on the ship says sweep the deck, sweep the deck, sweep the deck. The
  captain on the ship says sweep the deck, all the way to shore. (Pretend to sweep.)
- The wheels on the skates go round and round, round and round, round and round. The
  wheels on the skates go round and round, all around the rink. (Turn in a circle
  or pretend to skate in a circle.)
- The fisherman on the boat says cast that line, cast that line, cast that line. The fisher-
  man on the boat says cast that line, way out to sea. (Pretend to cast.)
- The pilot on the plane flies up and down, up and down, up and down. The pilot
  on the plane flies up and down, to the sky and back to the ground. (Pretend to fly.)
- The racecar driver goes round and round, round and round, round and round. The
  racecar driver goes round and round, to the finish line. (Use a steering wheel motion.)
- The conductor on the train says jump on board, jump on board, jump on board. The
  conductor on the train says jump on board, we have places to see. (Jump up
  and down.)
- The legs of a child go real, real fast, real, real fast, real, real fast. The legs of a child
  go real, real fast, all around the playground. (Run in place.)
Musical Freeze

**Grade Level**
Kindergarten through third

**Equipment**
None

**Organization**
Scattered in open space with room to move

**Activity Description**
Name a locomotor movement (e.g., skip, walk, gallop) for the children to use to travel, and turn on the music. When the music stops, instruct the students to freeze as one of the following:

- Flower
- Bird
- Statue
- Fish
- Puppet on a string
- Butterfly
- Tall tree
- Dog
- Cat with an arched back
- Monster
- Their selection
Green, Yellow, Red

Grade Level
Kindergarten through third

Equipment
None

Organization
Students standing by desks

Activity Description
Students are instructed to do one of the following movement actions. When you say “Green,” they start; when you say “Yellow,” they are to slow down; and when you say “Red,” they are to stop.

- Walk
- Jump (two feet to two feet)
- Hop (one foot to the same foot)
- Run
- Punch arms
- Dance
- Make arm circles
Moving Through the Seasons

Grade Level
Kindergarten through third

Equipment
None

Organization
Students standing by desks or in open classroom space

Activity Description
Move the students through each season by calling out the following actions for the students to do in their own space. Have students do each one for about 15 seconds. These are sample movements:

<table>
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<th>Movements by Season</th>
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<td><strong>Spring</strong></td>
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<td>-Fly like a bird</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Pop up like a flower</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Blow around like a kite in the wind</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Hit and catch a softball or baseball</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Chase butterflies with a net</td>
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</table>
Rhyme Time

Grade Level
Kindergarten through third

Equipment
None

Organization
Standing by desks or in open classroom space

Activity Description
Create rhymes with specific movements and numbers, for example:

- If you have ever been late or if you eat off of a plate, skate eight.
- If you can draw a line until it stops, complete nine hops.
- If you have ever seen someone dive, kick five.
- If you like to have fun, stomp one.
**Giant Clock Stretch**

**Grade Level**
First through third

**Equipment**
None, or a large movable clock face

**Organization**
Students standing by desks

**Activity Description**
Based on their knowledge level for telling time, have students use their arms to stretch and demonstrate various times.

- Hour hand only
  - Place your hands together and stretch high over your head for 12:00; stretch them to your right for 3:00; and so on.
- Hour hand and minute hand
  - Have one hand be the hour hand and one be the minute hand; students stretch their hands to demonstrate various times. (This will stretch both their brains and their bodies.)
  - Have students hold an object in the minute hand to demonstrate that they are stretching across their body as necessary.
Move As If . . .

Grade Level
First through fourth

Equipment
None

Organization
Standing by desks

Activity Description
Read an action sentence to the students and have them act it out for 15 seconds. Have students take turns being the leader and making up a sentence. These are some examples:

- March in place and play an instrument as if you are in the half-time marching band show of the football game.
- Skip in place as if you are going through a field and picking flowers.
- Swim as if you are racing Michael Phelps.
- Slide your feet as if you are ice skating.
- Walk as if you have bubble gum all over your shoes.
- Reach as if you are picking oranges from a tree and placing them in a basket.
- Bounce as if you are popcorn popping.
- Run as if you are being chased by a lion.
- Kick as if you are punting a soccer ball or a football.
- Spin as if you are the mixer making a cake.
Spelling in Motion

Grade Level
First through fifth

Equipment
None

Organization
Students standing beside desks

Activity Description
Call out a spelling word and an action, and have the students perform the action as they spell the word out loud. (Possible actions include jump, hop, high step, jab punch, and kick.) Another option is to have the students work in pairs to quiz each other on spelling words while they are performing the action.
Math in Motion

Grade Level
First through fifth

Equipment
None

Organization
Students standing beside desks

Activity Description
Call out a math concept and an action, and have the students perform the action as they practice the math concept. (Possible actions include jump, hop, high step, jab punch, kick, and pretend to jump rope.) Another option is to have the students work in pairs to quiz each other on the math concept. Possible math concepts are counting forward (by 2s, 5s, 10s, and so on), counting backward, adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing.
Uno Circle

Grade Level
First through fifth

Equipment
The number cards of an Uno deck (pull out enough for the entire class with an equal
distribution of each color). A written display of the color codes (poster, board, or elec-
tronic display).

Organization
One large circle or two or more smaller circles (depending on room space). Shuffle the
deck well, and send half of the deck facedown around the circle one way and the other
half around the circle in the other direction. Instruct the students to take the top card
and pass the deck on quickly.

Activity Description
When you signal “go,” the students look at their card to see what color it is and perform
as follows for 10 seconds.

- Blue: jump in place
- Red: jab punch
- Yellow: cross crawl (touch one elbow to opposite knee and continue to alternate, or
touch one hand to opposite foot and alternate)
- Green: jog in place

After the 10 seconds, have all students pass their card to the left (clockwise) and repeat.
After about four repetitions of passing and completing the activities for 10 seconds, add
the call “Skip” (pass twice or reach across one person and hand to the next). Then, add
“Reverse, go right” (counterclockwise). Finally, call out “Wild card.” Students can do any
activity they have not done yet or pick a favorite to do again.
Sports Slow Mo

Grade Level
Second through fifth

Equipment
None

Organization
Groups of three to five

Activity Description
- Each small group works together to act out a sport in slow motion.
- For example, if the sport is football, one player may center the ball in slow motion and another take the role of quarterback and pass to a receiver, who pretends to run in for a touchdown. Another player can be the umpire and hold up both hands to signal the touchdown. Allow the students to be creative, but emphasize the slow-motion actions.
- The teacher calls out a sport and gives the students 2 minutes to discuss it and act it out. Options include baseball, golf, football, basketball, boxing, karate, and soccer.
- After groups have done several sports, allow them to show their favorite to the others.
Cardio-Suit

Grade Level
Second through fifth

Equipment
One card of each suit from a deck of playing cards and a visual providing a key to the suits and activities (poster, board, or electronic)

Organization
Students stand beside their desks. Cards are placed facedown on a table or desk.

Activity Description
One student is called to the table to draw a card. That student then leads the class in the given activity for 30 seconds.

- Hearts: Straddle jumps (feet together and then apart, alternating on each jump)
- Spades: Jogging in place
- Diamonds: Scissors jumps (wide-stride front-back jumps; right foot in front and left in back alternates with left in front and right in back)
- Clubs: Skier jumps (side to side with feet together)

After 30 seconds, the cards are “shuffled” and another student takes on the leader role.
12 Days of Fitness

Grade Level
Second through fifth

Equipment
Written description for each “day” on poster, board, or electronic device

Organization
Students standing beside desks

Activity Description
The teacher leads the students through the 12 Days of Fitness by building upon each day (first day; second day followed by first day; third day followed by second day and then first day; and so on). If time is limited, you can start with day 12 and count down, but best results and enjoyment come from completing the entire building process. Have children sing along to the tune of “The Twelve Days of Christmas.” The song begins with “On the first day of fitness, my coach told me to do . . . a stork standing very, very still” (balance on one foot with arms extended outward). It continues with the second day, followed by the first day, and so on.

1st day: A stork standing very, very still (Stand on one foot with opposite foot against knee and arms extended outward.)
2nd day: Two side stretches (With one hand on hip, bend on the same side and stretch opposite arm across head in a “C” shape. Take second stretch the other direction.)
3rd day: Three muscle poses (Bend arm and flex bicep alternating arms.)
4th day: Four jumping jacks (Jump into a wide shape while simultaneously extending arms above the head in a wide shape.)
5th day: Five hula hoops (Pretend to turn a hula hoop around your waist slowly five times. Sing it slowly like the “five golden rings” in 12 Days of Christmas.)
6th day: Six front kicks (Alternate kicking legs in front of body.)
7th day: Seven jab punches (Alternate punching fists in front of body.)
8th day: Eight jogs in place (Alternate jog steps in place.)
9th day: Nine jumping ropes (Pretend to turn a rope and jump.)
10th day: Ten knee lifts (Alternate lifting the foot and raising knees up.)
11th day: Eleven scissor kicks (Alternate jumping and landing with right foot in front and left in back, and then left in front and right in back.)
12th day: Twelve raise the roofs (Bend arms at elbows and turn palms facing the ceiling. Extend arms toward ceiling as if “raising the roof.”)
Memory Connection

Grade Level
Third through fifth

Equipment
None

Organization
Students standing by desks facing a partner

Activity Description
Call out one task at a time for the students to perform. When a new task is called, they have to do the previous task plus add on the new task (in the following example, they do high five right, then high five right and high five left; then high five right, high five left, and low five right; and so on). This is a sample sequence:

- High five right
- High five left
- Low five right
- Low five left
- High ten
- Low ten
- Backward ten high
- Backward ten low
- Tunnel ten (feet apart, back to back, reach between legs and hit low ten)
- Inside of shoes right (soccer pass style)
- Inside of shoes left
- Elbow right
- Elbow left
- Both elbows
- Hold hands and jump up and land feet apart
- Hold hands and jump and land feet together
- Right knuckle punch with a partner
- Left knuckle punch with a partner

Hints
- A new sequence can be created each day, or part of a sequence can be learned one day and new tasks added on each of the following days.
- Students can be asked to change partners after every four tasks, which makes this a mixer activity.
- The length of the sequence can vary based on age of students.
- You can have students repeat the sequence as fast as they can but with accuracy, and time them.

Sports Practice

Grade Level
Third through fifth

Equipment
None

Organization
Standing by desks or in open space in the room

Activity Description
Students mimic the following sport skills as in team practice.

- Basketball practice:
  - Dribble a basketball
  - Pass the basketball
  - Take a shot
  - Jump up for the rebound

- Football practice:
  - Run through the tires
  - Pass a football
  - Catch a football and run for a touchdown
  - Kick for an extra point

- Baseball practice:
  - Pitch the ball
  - Swing three times and on the third swing hit a home run
  - Run the bases
  - Make a great catch
  - Field a ground ball and throw it to first base

- Tennis practice:
  - Toss the ball and serve it
  - Hit a forehand
  - Hit a backhand
  - Do an overhead slam

- Soccer practice:
  - Juggle a soccer ball
  - Pass a soccer ball with the inside of your foot
  - Dribble a soccer ball
  - Shoot for a goal
  - Make a great goalie catch

- Volleyball practice:
  - Serve the volleyball underhand or overhand
  - Do a forearm pass or bump
– Set the ball up to a teammate using an overhead pass
– Spike the ball down and hard

* Mixing sports:
  – Shoot a hockey puck
  – Shoot an arrow
  – Jump and cheer with arms high above your head
  – Swim the crawl
  – Hit a golf ball a long way
  – Putt a golf ball gently
  – Ski downhill
  – Throw a Frisbee
  – Jump a rope
  – Spin in a circle like a ballet dancer
Sculpture Art

**Grade Level**
Third through fifth

**Equipment**
None

**Organization**
Scattered in pairs

**Activity Description**
One student starts on the floor as a pile of clay, and the partner must mold the clay into a person who is doing something active (i.e., a sport, dance, or fitness action). Have another pair try to guess the action and then have the partners change roles.
Circle Review (For Any Content Area)

Grade Level
Fourth and fifth

Organization
An inner circle and an outer circle. Students in one circle face clockwise and those in the other counterclockwise.

Equipment
Music (optional)

Activity Description
On the signal “go” or when the music starts, the students walk in a circle. When the music stops, give them a review question to discuss with the person directly across in the other circle. Start the music again and have the students continue moving. Vary the locomotor movements (skip, gallop, hop, jump, slide) and the direction (forward, backward, sideways).