Brain Breaks for 6th Graders
Fargo Public Schools
2007-2008

1. FIND THE LEADER The idea is for the group, excluding one person, to perform varying exercises every 15 seconds following the actions of a chosen leader. The one person who was excluded tries to guess who is leading the group. Give the guesser about 10 seconds to guess who is leading the exercises and allow them three guesses. If the guesser correctly identifies the leader, then they can continue to be the guesser. If the guesser does not identify the leader, then the leader becomes the guesser. Give the students some examples of exercises that they can perform so that they perform smooth transitions.

2. LUCKY FOUR CORNERS Number the corners in the room 1-4. Each person chooses a corner to stand in to start. Start music and have the students a designated locomotor movement around the room for 30 seconds and signal them to find a corner they feel will be lucky for them. The teacher will draw a number out of the four. Whichever corner gets called, all of those participants do 20 jumping jacks for joy and score a point. The other three corners perform 10 jumping jacks, and the music continues. Students can keep track of their points. Single leg kicks can be substituted for the jumping jacks where the students clap their hands together on each leg kick.

3. PUSH-UP WAVE Students form a circle or square with their bodies readying for push-up position. The student closest to you begins by rising into push-up position and maintains that position until everyone has done the same, one after the other. Once it gets back to the starting person, that person and those thereafter return to the floor by lowering their bodies. After several times, have the students perform the wave in the opposite direction. You may also adjust the speed (slow motion or fast).

4. SIMON SAYS, "ACTION" Students break into four separate groups and work in a corner of the room. One person is designated as "Simon" and students do whatever Simon tells them to do if he/she says, "Simon says." If Simon gives a command but doesn't say "Simon says," and a person starts or completes the action, then they are awarded a letter. When a student reaches "A-C-T-I-O-N" they become Simon. If time reaches two minutes and no one has earned all of the letters, switch Simons.

5. "CORRECTLY STATED" This activity can be used to reinforce or review concepts (an active way of reviewing for a quiz or test). Students stand beside their desks and start doing side steps in place (step, touch right, step, touch left, repeat). The teacher asks a question, if a student gets the correct response, the teacher announces, "Correctly

stated." For every correct response, the students perform five jumping jacks. If a response is incorrect, the teacher responds with "Give me ten (squats)." The students perform ten squats. The exercises can be anything you choose, from the standing exercise to the performance ones on correct or incorrect responses (e.g. opposite elbow to opposite knee, opposite hand to opposite foot behind).

6. BEACH BALL TOSS Develop questions or short tasks related to your instructional unit on sticky notes and tape them on an inflated beach ball. Toss the ball out into the class and allow students to volley (soft, two-handed touches) for a predetermined amount of time (e.g. until the music stops, once six people have touched the ball, until the ball touches the floor). At the designated time, one student peels off a sticky note, reads the question, and provides a response.

7. THE CONGA LINE Students can scatter or form lines to the song "Best Years of Our Lives" by the Baha Men, Shrek Soundtrack. The basic pattern of the conga is **walk, walk, walk, heel**. Students may add arm and/or hip actions, words, or sounds.

8. THE CHICKEN DANCE Most likely one or more students will know the actions. They can serve as leaders. Start the music, and join in. The actions are as follows: hands open and close like a beak, arm-flaps, twist; when the music changes, students lock elbows and swing as partners as a whole group or in three's.

9. PUSH-UP HOCKEY Students partner up and face each other in push-up position, 3 feet apart with arms shoulder-width apart. Students can use a ping-pong ball, bean bag, or similar object to push back and forth trying to score through their opponent's goal (arms).

10. NOODLE AND CHAIR WORKOUT (Actions can be performed with or without noodles.) (p. 62)

References:

"No Gym? No Problem!" Physical Activities for Tight Spaces Charmain Sutherland, Human Kinetics, 2006

"Climbing My Pyramid" Marilyn Grechus, Ph.D., University of Central Missouri

"Turning Health Education into Child's Play: Interactive Games to Enhance Instruction" Karen Berard-Reed, M.Ed., Rhode Island College; 2007 AAHPERD National Convention

Meg Greiner's "TEAM Time: Get your Body, Brain, and School Connected," Independence Elementary School, Independence, OR; 2007 Roughrider Health Promotional Conference