

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE CONCENTRATION AND AROUSAL LEVELS IN READINESS FOR LEARNING

To assist in developing skills that your student needs in school

Caution – Please read before you begin

1/ - Ensure the area is free of hazards.

- Use of exercise mat or folded blanket required for a softer landing to prevent any injuries
- Always stay close to your student if needed

2/ - Control doing the exercises is very important. Encourage your student to do them slowly and in a steady manner, to get the muscles working harder. 2 or 3 good repetitions are much better than 10 poor ones.

3/ - Don't push your student to the point of pain

4/ - If your student seems to struggle excessively or you are concerned, please contact your health professional.

Classroom exercises at the desks

Chair push ups (shoulder strength and core stability, proprioceptive + tactile input)

Ask your student to push up on their chairs until their bottoms are off the chair.

Increase the difficulty by:

- Holding the push up position for 3-5 seconds
- Holding the feet off the floor and lifting their bottom off the chair



Desk push up's

Place both forearms on the desk, palms facing downwards and flat

Have your student lean their body weight over their forearms, lifting their bottoms off the chair.

Return to seated position and repeat several times.

Abdominal Twists – Do not do with a student that has difficulties with their balance. Helps develop midline crossing essential for motor skills

Student to sit towards the front of their chair.

Touch knee with opposite elbow

Repeat 5 times each side



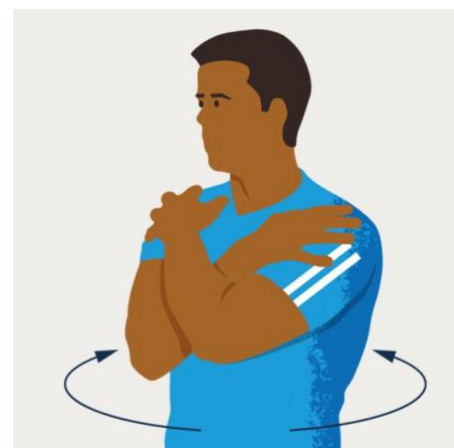
Body Rotations

Make sure student's feet are flat on the floor and their back is away from the chair.

Placing both hands on their shoulders, slowly turn to one side without moving their feet, then return to the middle before turning to the opposite side.

Make sure their head moves the same way as they are turning, as if trying to look behind them.

Repeat 5 times each side



Hand Pushes (shoulder strength and stability, proprioceptive + tactile input)

A great activity to do before a writing task or to regain focus during the task.

Place palms together, elbows out.

Push hands together as hard as you can. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.



Wall Press ups (Proprioceptive, tactile input)

Place both hands onto a plain wall at shoulder height. Slowly lean towards the wall by bending at the elbows.

Gently push away from the wall keeping hands in contact with the wall

Repeat 5 - 10 times.

Alternatively, just push against the wall with arms extended for 5-10 seconds.



WALL PUSH UPS

Crab Position (proprioceptive, vestibular, tactile input, core and shoulder strengthening, stability)

Make sure hands are facing towards their feet

Hold crab position for up to 10 seconds

Progress challenge by walking in this position – forwards and backwards.

Stop activity if your student complains of wrist pain – do exercise within your student's ability and slowly progress.

Progress to gently kicking a ball whilst in this position, making sure bottom keeps off the floor.



Midline Ball Pass (Bilateral skills and midline crossing)

Good exercise for a quick movement break or as a warm up for PE activities
With a partner, sit back to back, and pass the ball through left and right side to each other.

Repeat 5 - 10 times each side.



Warm up hand exercises (improve body awareness, proprioception, tactile input in readiness for a writing task)

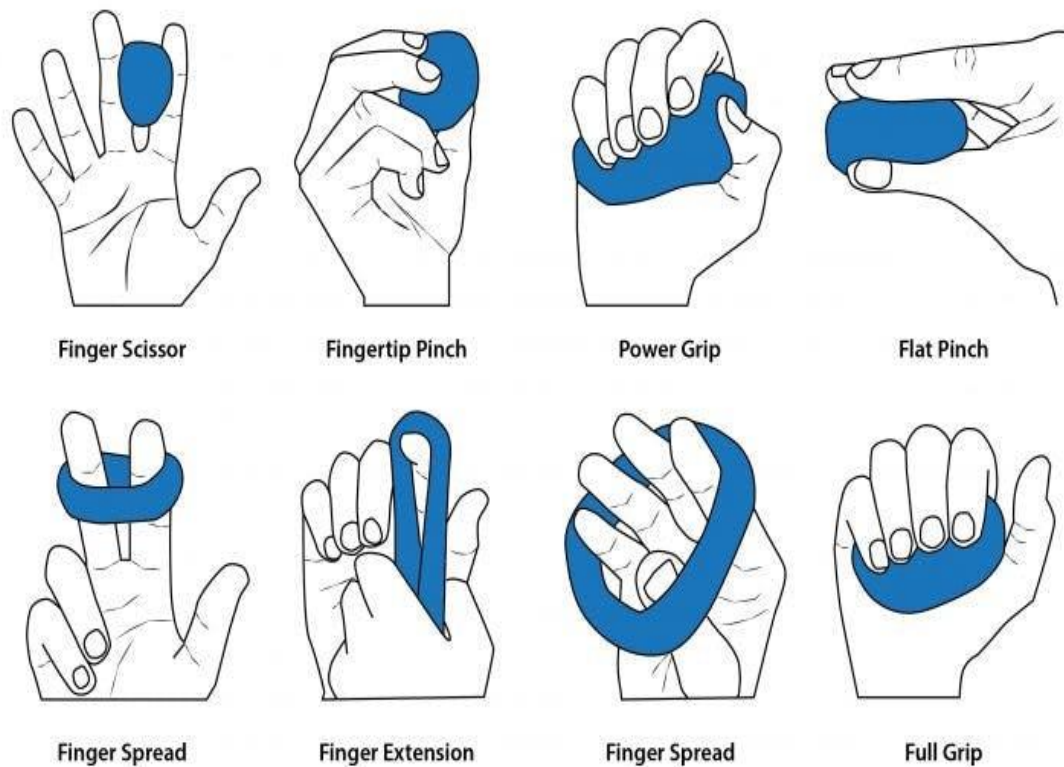
1/ Sitting on both hands under your thighs
Gently rock side to side for count of 30

2/ Hand squeezes. Gently press thumb into palm of opposite hand and massage.

3/ Arm squeezes. Use one hand to give firm arm squeezes up the opposite arm, starting at the wrist. Repeat with the other side.



4/ Theraputty / Play Dough warm up exercises



Other ideas for added proprioceptive (regulating and calming effects) can include:

- Washing the desks or boards
- Stacking / unstacking chairs
- Organize or hand out the books
- Use a hand held pencil sharpener (good for proprioceptive input into the hands and fingers prior to writing task)
- “Proprioceptive station” (heavy muscle work) within the classroom, or outside the room, such as, a “push” station on the wall (hand prints laminated onto a wall), “Jump” station on the floor (footprints to jump, hop, hopscotch over). There could be a maths sum to figure out how many of each activity needs to be done. Very useful as a morning routine to get the body ready to learn.

Examples of proprioceptive (movement) stations

Inside a classroom



Outside a classroom example



Activity ideas for younger children

“Pencil” Pick Up (Vestibular + tactile input)

Place pencils (or other small objects) onto the floor and have your child bend to pick up one object at a time and place on their desk.

- The repetitive bending up/down allows the child’s head to move in/out of an inverted position and also the turning side – side gives strong vestibular input
- Add a clapping / singing rhythm as child bends and rises for added fun.



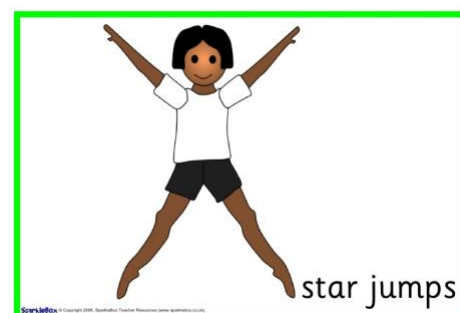
Marching on the Spot (Bilateral coordination, Core strengthening, proprioceptive input)

Use marching songs for added enjoyment
Make sure your student lifts the opposite arm and leg whilst marching
Encourage student to lift his/her knee high (to work the core muscles)



Star Jumps (Vestibular, proprioceptive input, Bilateral coordination)

Helps to wake the leg muscles up. Good activity to do before activity that requires body awareness such as sitting during circle time or walking in a classroom line.



Start with hands by side and feet together.
Make sure hands go above their head.
If struggling with coordination, practice with feet only to start with then introduce arms.
To increase the challenge, have your child clap their hands above their head

Wall Press ups (Proprioceptive, tactile input)

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Repeat 5 - 10 times.

Alternatively, just push against the wall with arms extended for 5-10 seconds. Eg, “let’s try and push this wall over”, “push as hard as you can” etc



WALL PUSH UPS

Bridge Game (Core strength, proprioceptive input)

Lying on your back with knees bent, feet together on the floor.

Lift your bottom off the floor to make a bridge.

- For younger children give a small toy/car to pass under the bridge
- Increase the number of times the “car” can drive under the bridge.
- Sing nursery rhyme/song as maintain the bridge position, such as, London Bridge is falling down.



Tummy Curls (Core strengthening, proprioceptive input)

Lying on your back, knees bent and feet together.

Hands on thighs.

Lift your head off the floor and slide your hands up to your knees.

SUPINE FLEXION



Slowly lower head back onto the floor.

Progress by holding your head off the floor for a few seconds, building up to 10 second hold.

Try rocking forwards and backwards whilst holding this position.

If you struggle to keep your knees together, try placing a bean bag, rolled up socks, between your knees.

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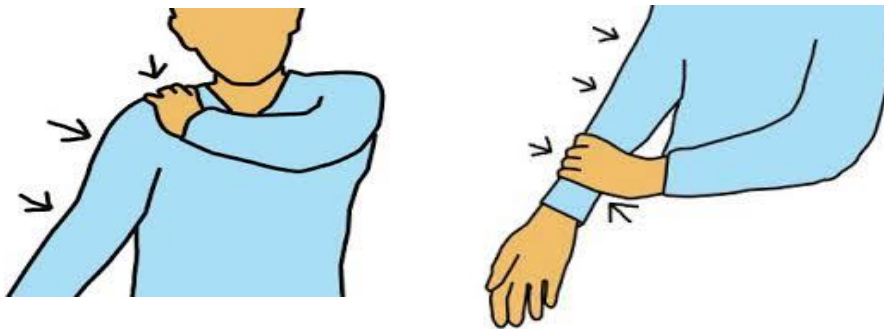


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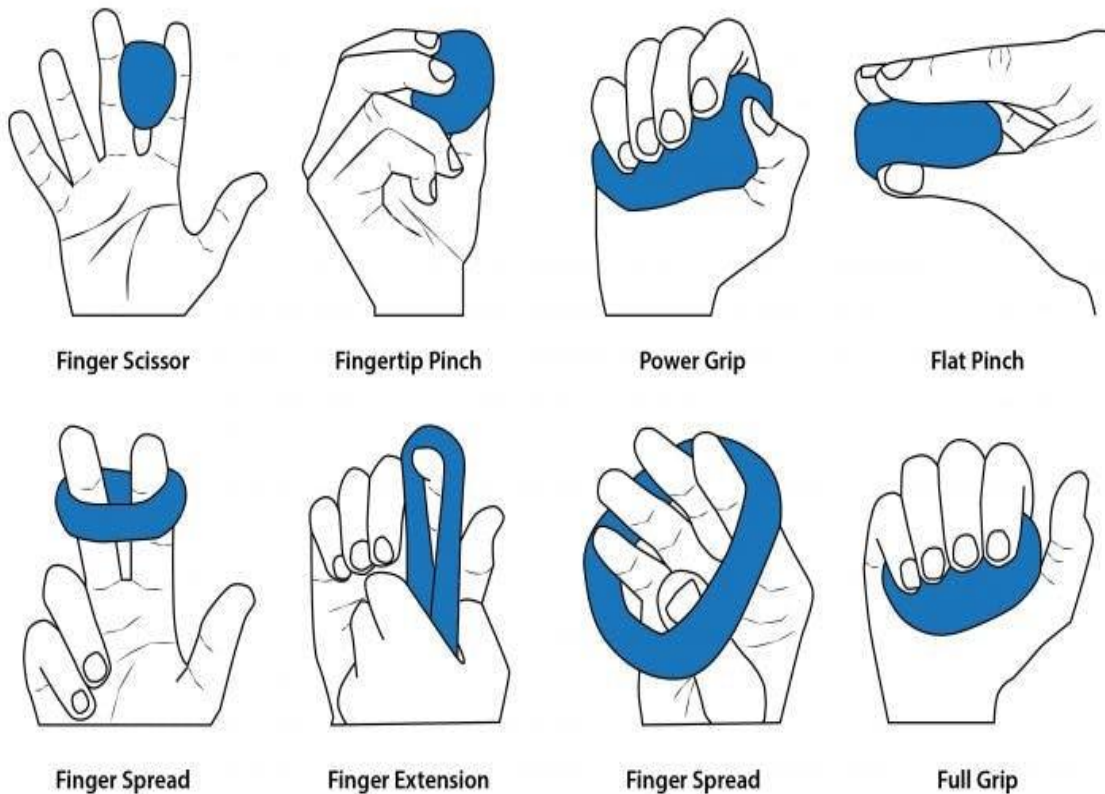
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