

**INTEGRATING  
MOVEMENT IN THE  
CLASSROOM**



**What does it mean to integrate movement in the classroom?**

- It means providing opportunities to move and change position within regular classroom routines.

**Why incorporate movement in the classroom?**

- Research shows that physical activity helps activate the brain, improve thought processing, boost attention and enhance students' overall learning.

**How to incorporate movement in the classroom?**

- Movement activities can be chosen for an individual student, the whole class or as an activity to do between other work tasks.
- A variety of movement options should be scheduled frequently in the daily routine.

**1) Integrate actions or gestures into teaching:**

- ➔ Sing songs that have simple body actions.
- ➔ Have students imitate your body movement to gain attention before giving instructions.
- ➔ Use different body movements to accompany letter drawing or jump while counting.
- ➔ Create songs with rhymes and actions to help students remember academic concepts.
- ➔ Encourage students to demonstrate directional and size concepts with their bodies.
- ➔ Place math flashcards on the floor, asking a question and creating a relay race to skip, hop, jump, or gallop to pick one up as an answer.
- ➔ Tape sight words high on the wall and encourage students to jump to touch them as they read aloud.
- ➔ Encourage older students to demonstrate science or mathematical concepts (e.g. the water cycle) with their bodies or act out a scene from a story.



## 2) Incorporate daily movement exercises:

- ➔ Movement Break: YouTube is a great resource to guide short exercises for the whole class. Choose videos with upbeat music and dance to energize students or videos that model deep breathing paired with slower movement to calm students (e.g. after recess, before a test, etc.).
- ➔ Movement Minute: Students may participate in simple exercises at the carpet or beside their desks. One student could lead the class or use a short song clip (e.g. jumping jacks, jogging on the spot, hopping in a circle, mountain climbers, speed-bag motions with arms, stretching, etc.).
- ➔ Gym class, recess and outdoor play: These are vital opportunities for students to move. Encourage active play by providing age-appropriate tools, such as balls, tricycles, playground equipment, hula hoops, hopscotch pitches, jumping ropes, wagons, sleds, etc.

## 3) Incorporate a variety of positions in work stations or centres:

- ➔ Include a high table that is suitable for students to work at while standing.
- ➔ Include a very low table that allows students to work while kneeling or sitting on floor cushions.
- ➔ Provide clipboards near the carpet so students can work while lying on their stomach or sitting in bean bag chairs.
- ➔ Try active seating options, such as rockers, wobble stools, ball chairs or air cushions.
- ➔ Create an activity corner with gym equipment (e.g. stationary bike, yoga/gym mat or resistance bands) and post instructions to guide exercises.



**1) Take midday walks:**

- ➔ Walking outside offers fresh air and is one of the simplest and most effective forms of everyday physical activity. When possible, plan lessons that can occur outside in different areas of the schoolyard and incorporate new movements such as animal crawling, tip toeing, walking on heels, walking backwards, high knee march, walking lunges, frog jumps, etc.

**2) Classroom jobs:**

- ➔ Some students need more movement than others. These students may benefit from “physical jobs” such as stacking chairs, moving desks, carrying book or bins, bringing items down to the office, wiping down tables and boards, cleaning up the closet area, sweeping, setting up/putting away gym materials, carrying the recycling bins, etc.

