



Light Exercises

Kids doing light physical exercises breathe normally as they do basic gross motor activities at a controlled pace.

Sky reaches *Do this three times:* Stand up. Swing arms up to the sky. Rise up on your tippy toes. Reach for the sky while keeping your body tight. Hold for 15 seconds. Lower your heels and arms.

Shoulder blast *Do this 10 times:* Hold your arms straight out to the sides. Make arm circles forward (start with small circles, then gradually larger circles). Reverse direction and make arm circles backward (large circles, then gradually smaller circles). Raise your arms in front of your body and move your arms up and down. Raise your arm above your head and wave them side to side, like a windshield wiper. Pump your arms above head to "raise the roof."

Squats *Do this 10 times slowly:* Stand with your legs a little wider than shoulder-width apart. Hold your arms out in front of your body. Slowly bend your knees and squat down until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Rise up slowly.

Hand walks *Do this five times:* Bend forward at your waist. Reach down and touch hands to floor. Walk your hands out for a count of 8. Walk your hands to left for a count of 4. Walk your hands back to the center for a count of 4. Walk your hands right for a count of 4. Walk your hands back to the center for a count of 4. Walk your hands back for a count of 8.

Star jump *Do this 10 times:*

1. Squat until your thighs are parallel to the floor (see **squats**). From this position, jump up reaching your hands and feet out like a star. Land softly on your feet, dropping back to the squat position.

Mountain climbers *Do 20 foot switches:*

1. On the floor, go to a plank position by putting your:
 - Hands flat on the floor
 - Hands shoulder-width apart
 - Arms straight
 - Back flat
2. Mimic a running motion by switching one foot at a time. Students can add intensity by adding speed.

The Many Benefits of Exercise

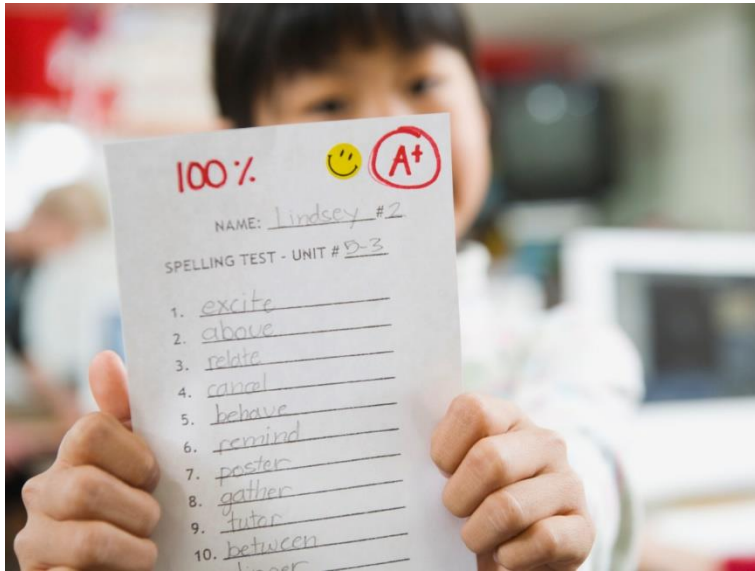


Everyone can benefit from regular exercise. Kids who are active will:

- have stronger [muscles and bones](#)
- have a leaner body because exercise helps control body fat
- be less likely to become [overweight](#)
- decrease the risk of developing [type 2 diabetes](#)
- lower [blood pressure](#) and blood cholesterol levels
- have a better outlook on life

Besides enjoying the health benefits of regular exercise, kids who are physically fit sleep better. They're also better able to handle physical and emotional challenges — from running to catch a bus to studying for a test.

Boost Grades, Improve Behavior



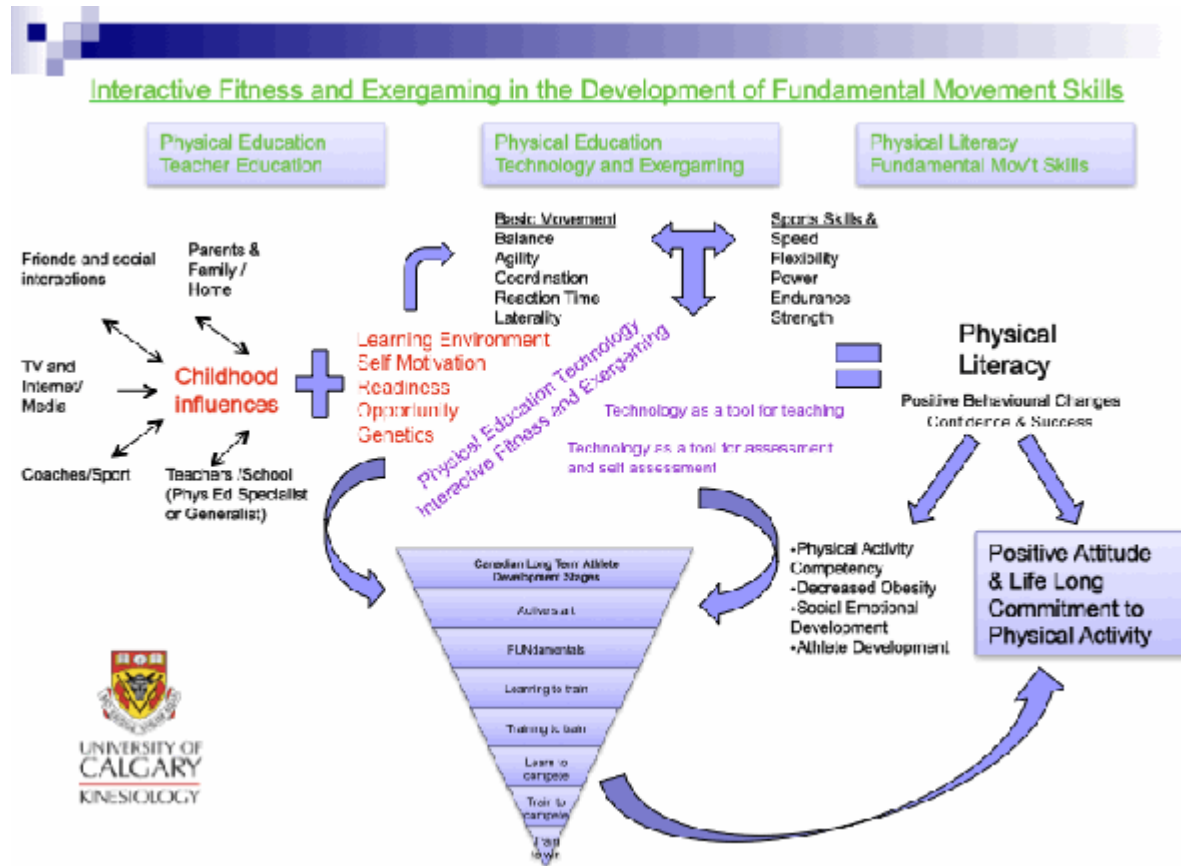
Teachers can help improve test scores and student behavior by incorporating physical activity breaks into their daily classroom routines.

Research has shown that students who do brief bursts of exercise before taking tests score higher. In addition, regular activity breaks during the school day can help sharpen students' abilities to focus and stay on task.

Before trying these exercises in your classroom, make sure none of your students have health conditions that require restrictions on physical activity. Make sure each student has plenty of space, and won't bump into classmates or anything else in your room.

Also check to see if all your students are wearing appropriate shoes, such as sneakers. If students touch the floor during any exercises, make sure they wash their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer when they're done their exercise break.

When taking a break, encourage activities that get the body moving and the heart pumping, such as dancing, jumping, and running in place. You also can try some of these easy-to-do exercises that work on flexibility, strength, and cardio. Each of these fun exercises for K-5 students takes 2-3 minutes, and kids can do them right at their desks. No equipment is needed.



Inactive children are likely to become inactive adults

<http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/elementary-exercises.html>

http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/HealthyKids/ActivitiesforKids/The-AHAs-Recommendations-for-Physical-Activity-in-Children_UCM_304053_Article.jsp#.Vw8Z1_krLIU

[**http://www.ucalgary.ca/exergaming/research**](http://www.ucalgary.ca/exergaming/research)