

20 Ideas to Keep Kids Active and Engaged in the Core Classroom

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1. **Simon Says:** Come up with hand/arm motions for a topic that needs reviewing. Have students play Simon Says to review.
2. **Fist to Five:** Students hold up one hand with a number from zero to five. Zero (fist) means they totally disagree and five means they totally agree.
3. **Stand Up Writing:** Students stand up to answer a problem on their paper and then sit down “so that you know when they’re done.”
4. **Partner Check:** Students check their answers with someone on the other side of the room.
5. **Thumbs Up:** Students give a “thumbs up” if they agree with you or a “thumbs down” if they don’t agree.
6. **Reminder Chant:** Students stand up and “act out” a concept with their hands and arms. They can chant it super loud, with a really low voice, etc.
- 7a. **Problem Scavenger Hunt:** Put students into groups of 2 or 3. Have papers around the room with different problems on them. (You could also do this around the entire school, with hints to lead the students to the next problem.) Students then have to go around and find all of the problems in order to complete the task.
- 7b. **Answers Scavenger Hunt:** Just like the Problem Scavenger Hunt but have the answers around the room.
- 7c. **Classroom Posters Scavenger Hunt:** Just like the Problem Scavenger Hunt but have the students go around the room and find helpful posters (that have been there all year) that the student can use to help them on state tests or in their daily class.
- 7d. **Problem Scavenger Hunt with iPads:**



Just like the Problem Scavenger Hunt but the problems are revealed when students use the camera on an iPad to scan a QR code. Once the problem is revealed, students solve the problem and write the answer on their answer sheet. *This works especially well when you want students to look up something online or use an online tool. You can make QR codes for free at <http://www.qurify.com/en/>*

ScanLife is one free QR code reader for smartphones.

8. **Crimes/Investigations:** Students become detectives to determine if a crime has been committed. (IE: A math rule wasn’t followed.)
9. **Y=MX+B Song (to the tune of YMCA):** Sing the YMCA song with alternate lyrics while doing the hand motions for Y=MX+B. “What does y equal? M X + B...” (One version of this song is at <http://portal.bentonvillek12.org/rflowers/Algebra%20Songs/Y=MX+B%20Lyrics.pdf/>)

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10. **Memory Card Games:** Write problems and solutions (such as addition integer problems, equivalent fractions, or combining like terms problems) or definitions and words on cards. Shuffle and lay the cards face down. Students find the matches.

11. **BINGO/MATHO:** Bingo but with a twist. Numbers in Matho squares are answers to integer operation problems, one-step equations, etc. *This works for any subject area. Vocabulary is an easy fit for this game.*

12. **Question Ball/Number Ball:** Take a Nerf soccer ball or a beach ball write positive and negative integers on the ball or review questions. Toss the ball around the room. Students then have to do an operation with the numbers that their thumbs land on or answer the review question that their thumb is on.

13. **Salute:** Students take turns being the “general” and the “soldiers” and guessing the card that they are holding up on their forehead.

14. **“I have... Who has...?”:** Write a series of questions and answers. Put one answer and a different question on one card. Students take turns standing up and reading their answer and their question. Example: Student A says, “I start the game. Who has 9 times 3?” Student B says, “I have 27. Who has 4 times 5?” Student C says, “I have 20. Who has 2 times 6?” etc...

15. **Who’s Up?:** Use the Random Word Generator on the Smartboard to randomly call on kids in class. (The “low tech” version is to use notecards to call on kids.)

16. **Question Toss:** Students write a review question on a piece of paper. They crumple up the paper into a ball and toss it across the room. Students pick up a new ball and toss it across the room. After a few tosses, stop the throwing and have each student uncrumple his/her question and read it aloud to the class.

17. **Koosh Ball Review:** Use the Koosh Ball template on Smart Exchange to make a review game. Students will throw a koosh ball at the Smartboard to uncover a review problem.

18. **Whiteboards:** Have students answer problems on dry erase whiteboards. They then hold up their boards to show you their answers and say their answer really loud, really soft, etc.

19. **3-Point Battle:** Put students into two teams. Do review problems orally, calling on one student at a time. If the student gets the problem correct, he/she gets 1 point for the team and the opportunity to shoot a “3-pointer” (IE: a Nerf basketball into the trashcan.)

20. **Relays:** Divide the students into 2-4 teams. Each team has its own section of a chalkboard. Have the kids line up in a row facing the chalkboard. Read a question. The first person in the line from each team writes the first part of the answer on the board. The next person does the next part and so on. The first team to finish the answer is the winner