



Irish Heart  
Foundation

# Bizzy Breaks

*for Bizzy Bodies  
and Bizzy Minds*

*COVID  
friendly*



The Irish Heart Foundation is the national charity dedicated to eliminating preventable death and disability from cardiovascular disease. Its mission is to lead the fight to prevent, save lives and make life better for those living with heart disease and stroke.

It promotes health in communities, workplaces and schools through healthy eating and physical activity programmes, public awareness campaigns and CPR training.

The Irish Heart Foundation advocates for change in public policy to improve care for patients and those affected by heart disease and stroke and gives vital patient support through support groups and quality information.

In Ireland today, just 13% of children meet the National Physical Activity Guidelines of at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity every day. We know that physical inactivity is a significant risk factor for heart disease; Bizzy Breaks is designed to encourage children to be active throughout the day and help them to reach the recommended guidelines.

The Irish Heart Foundation's dedicated Children and Young People team provide a wide range of health promotion support to schools through curriculum-friendly physical activity, Physical Education, health and wellbeing programmes.

For more information, visit [www.irishheart.ie](http://www.irishheart.ie) or contact [schools@irishheart.ie](mailto:schools@irishheart.ie).



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# Bizzy Breaks

## for Bizzy Bodies and Bizzy Minds

**Bizzy Breaks is a collection of short activities for the primary school classroom, incorporating physical activity and mindfulness.**

- Choose an active activity to get pupils moving, or a mindfulness activity to calm and focus the mind.
- Bizzy Breaks activities require minimal equipment.
- Ideal for use indoors.
- Many activities could also be used outdoors.
- Each activity lasts 5 to 10 minutes.
- All activities are designed to link with your class curriculum.

**(COVID-19) Please note:** All Bizzy Breaks activities have been adapted for compliance with the *COVID-19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable reopening of Primary and Special Schools* (Department of Education and Skills, August 2020). Activities that can be done within pods are noted. Measures such as physical distancing, hand hygiene and cleaning of equipment are encouraged for all activities. Teachers are advised to adapt activities where necessary to adhere to their own school COVID-19 policy and latest public health advice.



## Curriculum and Wellbeing Links

- The Bizzy Breaks booklet is a valuable resource for the promotion of wellbeing across the school community.
- Committing to daily movement and mindfulness breaks using Bizzy Breaks can help to support the implementation of the *Wellbeing Policy and Framework for Practice* (October 2019). An overview of how the Bizzy Breaks programme links to the key areas of the Wellbeing Framework for Practice and strand units of the SPHE curriculum can be found online at [www.IrishHeart.ie](http://www.IrishHeart.ie)
- Each activity also contains a ‘Learning across the Curriculum’ section, outlining linked curriculum strands and strand units, with ideas for activities to extend the activity to classroom learning. Why not try using these activities as a launchpad for introducing new curriculum areas?
- Additional printable and interactive resources to complement the suggested curriculum links are available online at [www.IrishHeart.ie](http://www.IrishHeart.ie)

**Bizzy Breaks contributes to the 60 minutes of daily moderate to vigorous physical activity recommended for children’s growth, development and heart health.**

### **Bizzy Breaks can be used:**

- First thing in the morning to kickstart the day.
- As a transition between subjects.
- As an energiser when energy levels are slumping.
- As an activity to move outdoors for a little movement break.
- As a warm up for PE or sport.



# Introduction to Mindfulness

In China, the written symbol for mindfulness translates as 'heart in the present'. That is why mindfulness is sometimes referred to as 'Heartfulness'

**Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to whatever is happening, as it is happening – both inside us and in our surroundings.** It means being more aware of our thoughts as we are thinking them, our body sensations as we are sensing them and our feelings as we are feeling them. Simply put, we could say that mindfulness is *Being Aware, Right Here, Right Now.*

The mindfulness activities in *Bizzy Breaks* have accompanying scripts to guide you in using them with your class. The language can be amended for different age groups depending on the abilities and interests within your class.

## Benefits can include:

- ☆ Increased focus and attention
- ☆ Stress reduction
- ☆ Decreased anxiety
- ☆ Emotional balance
- ☆ Resilience
- ☆ Calmness



## Teaching Tips

- 1 NOTICE:** Hang a **sign** on the classroom door before your mindfulness practice to let visitors know not to disturb the class.
- 2 ATMOSPHERE:** Background **music** is always **optional**. It may help at times to cultivate a mindful mood. Other times it may be too distracting. Use your own judgement, depending on the needs of your class on any given day.
- 3 SIGNAL:** A **bell or chime** can be used to signal the beginning and end of the practice. This is also optional.
- 4 MIND:** Reassure pupils that it is normal for the mind to get distracted and **wander off** during mindfulness practice. Encourage them to be patient and just keep bringing their mind back to the practice each time it wanders off.

- 5 **BODY:** There are three main **postures** for the mindfulness activities (see ‘Mindfulness Postures’ below). These postures help pupils to tune into their bodies in a purposeful way. Focusing on the body can be an ‘anchor’ to help us to stay present in the moment.
- 6 **BREATH:** Focusing on the **breath** is another ‘anchor’ that can help to steady us in the present moment. Our lungs work best when we breathe in through the nose and out through the nose (mouth closed). It is particularly effective when teaching ‘belly breathing’. Head colds, specific lung conditions etc. may prevent pupils breathing this way. In that case, reassure pupils to just breathe in their usual way.
- 7 **PAUSES:** Pauses are indicated within the scripts (...). As you become more familiar with the practice you are encouraged to use your own judgement in terms of where, when and for how long to pause. The **length** of pauses can be extended as pupils become more comfortable and familiar with mindfulness practice.
- 8 **SMILING:** The act of smiling sends a message to the brain resulting in a feel-good chemical response in the body. This aids in lowering heart rate and helps us relax and feel good. We can activate this ‘**feel-good response**’ by simply incorporating smiling into the mindfulness practice.
- 9 **CLOSING:** When coming to the end of a practice, it can help with transitioning to say something like “*Now you are ready to continue with your day*” or “*you can bring this calmness to every moment of your day*”. Prompt reflection on the experience and allow a few moments for pupils to re-adjust before returning to classwork.

## Mindfulness Postures

There are three main postures for the mindfulness activities; **Standing Mountain**, **Sitting Mountain** and **Lying Down Mountain**. These are illustrated on the following pages. Each activity states a recommended posture, but many of the practices can be done in any of the three positions.

# Mindfulness Posture

## Standing Mountain

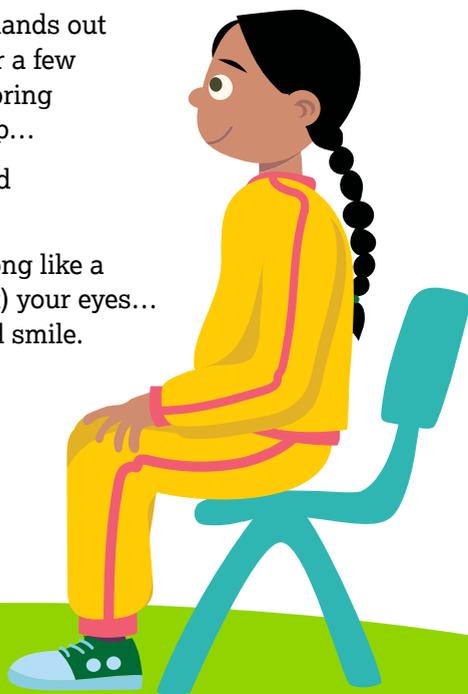
- 1 We are going to stand strong like a mountain. Stand up straight and tall, with feet apart (about hip distance)...
- 2 Shift your weight to the back of your feet (heels), try to wiggle your toes. Keep your knees nice and soft, not fully straightened out...
- 3 Feeling strong and steady like a mountain, relax your neck and head.
- 4 Taking a breath in, roll your shoulders back and down, then relax your shoulders...and your arms.
- 5 Let your arms hang by your sides, hands nice and soft.
- 6 Now soften (relax) your eyes... breathe normally... and smile.



# Mindfulness Posture

## *Sitting Mountain*

- 1 We are going to sit straight and tall like a mountain...
- 2 Shift your bum forward, away from the back of the chair.
- 3 Place your feet flat on the floor, with knees bent, hip distance apart.
- 4 Feel your weight being supported by your bottom. You should be able to wiggle your toes, try to give them a wiggle...
- 5 Shake your arms and hands out gently by your sides for a few seconds...now gently bring them to rest on your lap...
- 6 Soften (relax) your head and shoulders...
- 7 Feeling steady and strong like a mountain, soften (relax) your eyes... breathe normally... and smile.



# Mindfulness Posture

## Lying Down Mountain

- 1 We are going to lie down on our backs, like the strong base of a mountain...
- 2 Lie on your back, looking up at the ceiling, legs straight and arms by your sides, close to your body.
- 3 Wiggle your fingers gently for a few seconds... then let your hands relax, touching the floor...
- 4 Feel the different parts of your body as they touch the floor; your head... your shoulders... back...your bottom.. arms... legs...
- 5 Wiggle your toes gently... then let your feet fall out to each side...
- 6 Soften (relax) your eyes (close your eyes, if that's comfortable)... be still... feeling steady and strong like the base of a mountain....breathe normally and smile.





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**SENIOR  
INFANTS**

**FIRST  
CLASS**

**JUNIOR  
INFANTS**



# Funky Fruit

Teacher puts on upbeat music.

Pupils stand behind their chairs with space to move.

Pupils march on the spot.

Teacher calls out and leads the actions below.



- **Active Apples:** Jumping jacks.
- **Kicking Kiwis:** Kick to low height.
- **Leaping Lemons:** Jump from one foot to the other.
- **Bouncing Bananas:** Bounce on the spot.
- **Skipping Strawberries:** Skip without a rope.
- **Climbing Clementines:** Alternate lifting opposite knees with opposite arms in a climbing action.
- **Wobbling Watermelons:** Wobble your whole body.
- **Running Rhubarb:** Run on the spot.
- **Punching Pineapples:** Punch at shoulder level, alternating arms.
- **Napping Nectarines:** Rest head on hands and pretend to sleep.



## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **fruit and vegetables for health**. You might like to try the below activities.

**Maths**

**Strand:** Early mathematical activities  
**Strand Unit:** Classifying/Ordering

- Classifying and sorting fruit and vegetables.
- Sequencing pictures of instructions for how to prepare fruit salad.

**SPHE**

**Strand:** Myself  
**Strand Unit:** Taking care of my body

- Exploring the importance of fruit and vegetables for a healthy happy heart.
- Discussing fruit and vegetable preferences.

# Pencil Jumps

Pupils stand behind chairs with enough space to jump.

## Equipment:

One pencil per pupil.

**Sideways jumps:** Pupils place their pencils on the floor beside them vertically (like a number one).

- Jump with two feet together, side to side over pencil.
- Hop on one foot, side to side. Swap feet and hop side to side on other foot.
- Bounce side to side from one foot to the other.

**Forwards and backwards jumps:** Pupils place their pencils on the floor in front of them horizontally (like a minus sign).

- Jump with two feet together, over the pencil and back.
- Hop on one foot, over and back. Swap feet and hop on other foot.
- Rock from one foot to the other over the pencil, forward and back. Swap feet.
- Split bounce (from Bizzy Breaks poster) over pencil.

Use arms to help the jumps.



## TOP TIP

Encourage pupils to create different jumping patterns over the pencil.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **positional language** and **spatial awareness**. You might like to try the below activities.

### Primary Language Curriculum

**Strand:** Oral language  
**Learning Outcome:** (5) Vocabulary

- Playing “Simon Says” using positional language or “I Spy” with prepositions to describe the location of objects.

### Maths

**Strand:** Shape and space  
**Strand Unit:** Spatial awareness

- Pupils discussing who sits behind, in front of, beside, near and far from them, with or without eyes closed.

# Alphabet Actions

Teacher puts on upbeat music and calls out the following verbal prompts for the following movement responses:

**Equipment:**  
Flashcards with letters of the alphabet.

- **A for apple:** Reach up high to pick an apple from a tree and place in an imaginary basket.
- **B for bouncing ball:** Dribble an imaginary basketball.
- **C for climbing:** Lift knees to hip level and reach arms overhead in climbing motion.
- **D for dancing:** Dance and move to the music.
- **E for elephant:** Bring palms together with straight arms to make an elephant 'trunk'. Bend down to get water from a stream and spray water over right shoulder and left shoulder.
- **F for frog:** Jump like a frog on the spot.



## TOP TIP

Encourage pupils to suggest other activities for different letters.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **letters** and **phonics**. You might like to try the below activities.

### Visual Arts

**Strand:** Clay  
**Strand Unit:**  
Developing form  
in clay

- Moulding first initial (or all letters) of name with clay, leaving unique fingerprints.

### Primary Language Curriculum

**Strand:** Reading  
**Learning Outcome:**  
(4) Phonological and phonemic awareness

- Reviewing what letters come next and what sounds they make.
- Writing words or drawing pictures of action words.

# Rain Shower

Pupils sit on, or stand behind, their chairs. Teacher narrates the following story and leads pupils with the accompanying actions.

Story	Action
It was a lovely sunny day; the washing was drying on the line and the birds were singing quietly in the trees	Flapping arms like wings and whispering "tweet, tweet".
The birds got louder...	Flap bigger and faster and tweet a little bit louder...
And louder...	And tweet a little bit louder.
Suddenly the birds stopped singing	Freeze.
The clouds went grey and the rain started to fall lightly on the roof	Rubbing palms of the hands together.
Dad ran out to bring the washing in when the rain started to get even heavier	Run on the spot (or move arms and legs if seated).
The dog ran and hid in the kennel when it started POURING down	Bang feet on the ground while drumming hands on hips.
But in the distance the clouds started to break, and a little bit of sun shone through.	Click fingers (or drum fingers onto palms).
And the sky got brighter...	Stretch arms up and clap gently overhead.
And brighter...	Stretch arms up to clap higher overhead and look up.
A beautiful rainbow appeared	Stretch arms slowly out and down in an arch like a rainbow.
And the birds, Dad and the dog were all happy!	Give yourself a big hug.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **weather** and **body percussion**. You might like to try the below activities.



**Strand:** Natural environments  
**Strand Unit:** Weather

- Identifying what clothes are needed for different weather conditions (sorting or dress-up).



**Strand:** Listening and responding  
**Strand Unit:** Exploring sounds

- Exploring different types of body percussion or simple percussion instruments to accompany a story.

# Tasty Tunnel

This activity can be performed with each pod as a group, with space maintained between each pod/group. If using a ball, this should be cleaned before and after the activity.

Pupils stand in groups of 4-5, one behind the other, all facing the same direction. Ensure there is a gap of least an arm's length between pupils.

## Equipment:

A plastic ball or scrunched up ball of paper for each group.

- Starting at the front of the line, pupils pass (not throw) the ball backwards overhead to the pupil behind them.
- When the ball gets to the end of the line, the last pupil runs to the beginning of the line, says the name of a fruit or vegetable and starts passing it again from the front.
- When pupils become more confident with the activity, progress to passing the ball through the legs.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **food and nutrition**. You might like to try the below activities.

### Maths

**Strand:** Early mathematics activities  
**Strand Unit:** Classifying/Matching

- Sorting foods into 'every day' and 'not every day' foods for a balanced diet (refer to HSE *Healthy Food for Life* Food Pyramid).
- Matching the food with the source or qualities.

### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself  
**Strand Unit:** Taking care of my body

- Exploring the importance of food for growth, development and keeping healthy.
- Discussing what a balanced diet means.

# Floating Fabric

Each pupil gets a tissue and stands behind their chair. Teacher leads a selection of the suggested actions below with the tissue.

## Equipment:

Large clean tissue or piece of kitchen paper for each pupil.

- Wave it high or low with each hand.
- Swing it slowly above head with both hands.
- Pass it around waist from one hand to the other.
- Make a figure of 8.
- Balance it on the head, elbow, knee or foot.
- Throw it in the air and try to catch on the shoulder/elbow/knee/foot.
- Trace the shape of letters or numbers in the air with it.
- Squash it into a ball, throw with one hand and catch with the other.

In pairs (within pods):

- Take turns being the 'mirror' and copy partner's movements with the tissue.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **working in pairs** and **objects moving through the air**. You might like to try the below activities.

### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself and others

**Strand Unit:** My friends and other people

- Discussing qualities associated with being a good friend and sharing examples from pupils' own experiences of friendship.

### Science

**Strand:** Energy and forces

**Strand Unit:** Forces

- Classifying and comparing heavy and light objects.
- Making and testing predictions about objects that will sink or float.



## Finger Surf

- ☆ Teacher guides pupils through the following mindfulness practice, using the script below.
- ☆ Pupils begin in **Sitting Mountain** posture.

Holding up the left hand with palm facing you, spread your fingers out like a starfish. Look at the middle of your starfish hand. Listen to your breathing, coming in... and going out... all by itself

Shhh... (*whispering*) When you are still and quiet, you can hear your body breathing (*pause to allow pupils to focus on breathing*).

Put Peter Pointer (*index finger*) from your other hand beside the thumb of your starfish hand (*demonstrate placing pointed index finger at the edge of the wrist under the thumb*).

Breathing in, Peter Pointer moves up the side of the thumb to the very top, nice and slowly, just like a feather. Barely touching the skin... like a gentle tickle...

When Peter Pointer is at the top of the thumb, we breathe out while he goes down the other side of the thumb, nice and slowly...gently like a feather...

Now let's keep him going, taking a breath in as he moves slowly and gently up the edge of the finger... then breathing out as he moves down the other edge, barely touching the skin...

- ☆ Continue across all fingers, breathing in when moving the index finger up and breathing out when moving it down.
- ☆ At the end of the pinky finger, reverse the direction and continue moving in the same way, all the way back to the thumb.
- ☆ Repeat on the other hand.
- ☆ To finish, allow hands rest on the lap. Pause, breathe normally and smile.



## Teddy Tap

- ☆ Teacher guides pupils through the following mindfulness practice, using the script below.
- ☆ Pupils begin by lying on their backs on the floor (**Lying-down Mountain** posture). If space does not allow for lying down while maintaining physical distancing, start in **Sitting Mountain** posture.

### Equipment:

A teddy for each pupil (alternatively, use a picture of a teddy\* or imagination).

\*available in accompanying online resources

Put Teddy on your tummy, lying down like you, with belly facing the sky.

Take a moment to listen to the music and the sounds around us... breathing in... and out... When we tap the different parts of our bodies, we wake them up, like we have magic dust on our fingertips. Let's use that magic now on Teddy.

Let's start by tapping Teddy's feet gently with our fingertips, a few little taps... waking his feet up... Now wiggle your own toes gently... feel your toes waking up. Just hold Teddy now and feel him moving up and down on your tummy as you breathe... Now, gently tap Teddy's legs a few times... His legs feel awake and so do yours... feel your legs waking up... (*little pause*) And back now to holding Teddy, with your arms around him... As you breathe, feel him moving on your tummy, up... and down...

Next, tap Teddy's tummy, just little tiny taps... feel that tapping going through to your own tummy... feel your tummy waking up... listen for any sounds coming from your tummy.. (*little pause*)

And back now to holding Teddy; feel him moving up and down on your tummy as you breathe... This time tap Teddy gently up and down his arms... he loves this... and now your own hands and arms are beginning to feel nice and tingly and awake... A little rest now... holding Teddy again and feeling him moving up and down as you breathe... (*little pause*)

Be extra gentle for this one; tap Teddy gently on the top of his head and now tap your own head gently a few times... Back to Teddy, very gently tap his forehead... now tap your own forehead gently

Back to Teddy, very gently tap his cheeks... now tap your own cheeks gently...

And back again to Teddy, very gently tap his chin... now tap your own chin gently... Now just hold Teddy and feel him moving up and down on your tummy as you breathe... (*little pause*)

Time to put Teddy down on the floor beside us... roll over on to your right side (*point to the correct side*). Slowly come back up to Sitting Mountain on the floor and cross your legs. Pause, breathe normally and smile.

## Learning across the Curriculum

### Finger Surf

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **feelings and emotions**. You might like to try the below activities.

#### Visual Arts

**Strand:** Paint and colour  
**Strand Unit:** Looking and responding

- Creating a whole-class 'happy hand' collage (trace outline of hands and decorate with things that make us happy).

#### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself  
**Strand Unit:** Growing and changing

- Acting out and guessing different emotions through charades.

### Teddy Tap

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **parts of the body**. You might like to try the below activities.

#### Science

**Strand:** Living things  
**Strand Unit:** Myself

- Identifying parts of the body through stories, images or song.

#### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself  
**Strand Unit:** Growing and changing

- Discussing ways to calm our minds when we are worried or upset.



**Irish Heart  
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**SECOND  
CLASS**

**THIRD  
CLASS**

**FOURTH  
CLASS**



## Arm Dance

Teacher plays some upbeat music. Pupils sit on, or stand behind, their chairs. Teacher leads the following upper body actions.

- **Monkey:** Reach arms up and down pretending to climb a vine/tree.
- **Horse:** Pretend to hold your reins and bounce up and down.
- **Swim:** Move arms like you are swimming (front crawl, breaststroke, doggy paddle, back stroke).
- **Hitch-hike:** Stick up thumb of right hand and move it back and forth in front of body. Repeat with left hand.
- **Twist:** Bend elbows with hands on shoulders and twist body at waist.
- **Funky Chicken:** Make arms like wings and flap up and down.
- **Batman:** Make V's with fingers and sweep in front of your eyes in the shape of batman's mask (without touching your face).



### TOP TIP

Encourage pupils to come up with their own ideas for upper body actions.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **healthy growth and development**. You might like to try the below activities.

### Science

**Strand:** Living things  
**Strand Unit:** Myself

- Identifying different body parts (or muscles) and the senses.

### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself  
**Strand Unit:** Taking care of my body

- Exploring the different things that the body can do (breathing, feeling, thinking, making energy etc.)

# Dance Dice

Teacher plays some upbeat music. Pupils sit on, or stand behind, their chairs. The dice is rolled and class performs the corresponding movement for the number.

## Equipment:

Large dice (or online dice generator displayed on whiteboard), list of numbers and corresponding actions on whiteboard.



**Skier:** Feet together, knees bent, jump side to side, using arms.



**Pirate:** Climb the rigging with arms and legs.



**Soldier:** March on the spot with swinging arms.



**Orchestra Conductor:** Point fingers and swoop arms up and down and side to side.



**Portrait Painter:** Mime painting a canvas on an easel.



**Irish Dancer:** Dance the 1-2-3s.



## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **people living and working in the community**. You might like to try the below activities.

### Geography

**Strand:** Human environments

**Strand Unit:** People living and working in the local area

- Discussing different jobs and roles played by people in the community.
- Identifying clothing for different types of jobs.

### Drama

**Strand:** Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas leading to understanding

**Strand Unit:** Exploring and making drama

- Acting out different jobs through mime.
- Role playing interactions with different people in the community.

# Clapping Games

Pupils sit or stand and practise the below clapping games solo.

## Pease Porridge

**Pease porridge hot** (*Pease* = clap both hands to thighs, *porridge* = clap hands together, *hot* = clap both hands to tummy)

**Pease porridge cold** (*Pease* = clap both hands to thighs, *porridge* = clap hands together, *hot* = clap both hands to tummy)

**Pease porridge in the pot** (*Pease* = clap both hands to thighs, *porridge* = clap hands together, *in the* = clap right hand to left side of tummy, *pot* = clap hands together)

**Nine days old** (*Nine* = clap left hand to right side of tummy, *days* = clap hands together, *old* = clap both hands to tummy)

## Double, Double

Double double this this,  
Double double that that,  
Double this, double that,  
Double double this that.

*Instructions:*

Double = clap hands together

This = clap both palms to lap

That = turn wrists and clap lap with back of hands (with palms facing up)

# Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **games from the past** and **rhymes**. You might like to try the below activities.

## History

**Strand:** Myself and my family/Local studies  
**Strand Unit:** Games (and pastimes) in the past

- Researching other clapping (or skipping) rhyme games using books or interviews with grandparents/older family members.

## Primary Language Curriculum

**Strand:** Writing  
**Learning Outcome:** (6) Genre, purpose and voice

- Composing short rhymes, with or without clapping actions, using clapping games above as inspiration.

# Active Outdoors

Pupils sit on their chairs. Teacher plays music and leads pupils in performing the following actions.

- **Hiking:** Swing arms and reach left and right while tapping toes and lifting knees.
- **Swimming:** Move arms like doing the front or back crawl and kick legs in a flutter kick.
- **Cycling:** Hold on to the seat of the chair and pedal legs while seated as if riding a bike.
- **Paddling:** Use an imaginary paddle to paddle a canoe, alternating paddling on left and right sides.
- **Rowing:** Reach both arms forward and pull arms back to chest level.
- **Horse riding:** Pretend to hold reins and bounce gently up and down on chair.
- **Fishing:** Pretend to hold a fishing rod, bring back behind shoulder and cast the line.



## TOP TIP

Encourage pupils to come up with their own ideas to represent activities performed outside.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **being active outside**. You might like to try the below activities.

### Geography/ Science

**Strand:** Environmental awareness and care  
**Strand Unit:** Environmental awareness

- Discussing features of the natural environment that help us to do different enjoyable activities outdoors.
- Brainstorming ways that the natural environment can be damaged by humans; what can people do to protect and conserve the environment?

### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself and the wider world  
**Strand Unit:** Developing citizenship

- Sorting pictures of waste items into correct type of bin (compost, recycling and landfill).
- Creating posters for the school to raise awareness of environmental issues and steps pupils can take to protect the planet.

# Hand Jive

Pupils stand in pairs within their pods, as far apart from their partner as is practicable. Teacher calls out one movement at a time from the list below and partners complete the movement, without touching their partner. Movements are called out in the order provided.

**All movements should be completed without partners touching:**

- 1 High five right hand
- 2 High five left hand
- 3 Low five right hand
- 4 Low five left hand
- 5 High ten
- 6 Low ten
- 7 Turn around
- 8 Backwards high ten
- 9 Backwards low ten
- 10 Tunnel ten (facing away from each other and feet apart, reach between knees like hitting a low ten)
- 11 Sole of shoes right
- 12 Sole of shoes left
- 13 Elbow right
- 14 Elbow left

Partners repeat the movements beginning with the first movement each time. Pupils practise the full sequence and see how fast they can perform the sequence with accuracy.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **working as a team** and **spatial awareness**. You might like to try the below activities.



**Strand:** Myself and others  
**Strand Unit:** Relating to others

- Thinking about the benefits and challenges of working as part of a team.



**Strand:** Shape and space  
**Strand Unit:** Spatial awareness/Symmetry

- Exploring symmetry, angles and shapes created with these and other body movements.

# Step Sequence

With music playing, teacher calls out different movements for pupils to perform. Count eight beats for each movement (whole class count out loud together). Change to the next action after eight beats, then repeat each of the previous movements in sequence.

**Marching** on the spot.

**Jumping Jacks** (jumping jacks → marching).

**Twisting** from the waist with hands on hips (twisting → jumping jacks → marching).

**Jogging on the spot** (jogging → twisting → jumping jacks → marching).

**Knee Lifts** with arms out in front (knee lifts → jogging → twisting → jumping jacks → marching).

**Split Bounce** one leg in front and one behind, jump and swap legs (split bounce → knee lifts → jogging → twisting → jumping jacks → marching).

**Side Stepping** (side stepping → split bounce → knee lifts → jogging → twisting → jumping jacks → marching).

Marching

Jumping Jacks

Twisting

Jogging

Knee Lifts

Split Bounce

Side Stepping

## TOP TIP

The number of actions included should be appropriate to the level of the class; use only the first 3-4 movements for a shorter and less challenging movement break.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **what our bodies need to be healthy**. You might like to try the below activities.

### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself  
**Strand Unit:** Taking care of my body

- Discussing things that our bodies need to keep healthy.

### Maths

**Strand:** Data  
**Strand Unit:** Representing and interpreting data

- Conducting a survey to see how many days per week pupils in the class meet the physical activity recommendations of 60 minutes per day. Tally the total number and plot results on a bar chart of 0-7 days per week.

## Precious Pearl

- ☆ Before beginning this practice, teacher explains what a clam is and uses hands to demonstrate the action of a clam shell opening and closing, keeping the edge of the palms and little fingers together.
- ☆ Teacher guides pupils through the following mindfulness practice using the script below.
- ☆ Pupils start in **Sitting Mountain** posture.

Bring both of your hands out in front of your body. Bend the elbows, arms close by the sides, finger and thumb tips together, like a clam that's closed.

Now soften your eyes, listen to your body breathing... not trying to change it in any way... just letting it be as it is right now... (*pause*)

Breathing in we press the fingers and thumbs together gently...

Breathing out, the hands open up; just like clams opening to show their precious pearls.

Breathing in, close your clam again to protect the precious pearls.

Keep going... opening and closing your clam in time with our breathing, nice and slowly.

Breathing in as the clam closes... and breathing out as it opens...  
(*repeat 2-3 times*)

In a moment\*, we'll finish with open clams...  
(*take another couple of breaths*)

Slowly now letting our hands rest back on your lap.

Coming back to Sitting Mountain... Pause, breathe normally and smile.



\*If using a bell or chime, say "*When the bell rings*" here and gently ring the bell after another couple of breaths.

## Easy-Peasy-Squeezy

- ☆ Teacher guides pupils through the following mindfulness practice, using the script below.
- ☆ Pupils start in **Lying-down Mountain** posture. If space does not allow for lying down while maintaining physical distancing, start in **Sitting Mountain** posture.

Take a nice long deep breath in through your nose... As you breathe out, feel your head, back, legs, feet and arms touching the floor... Take a couple of nice steady breaths, in... and out... *(pause)*

Now squeeze your hands into fists. Pretend that you are squeezing a spongy ball in each hand... gripping tighter... squeeze even tighter... feel the tightness in your hands and up through your arms.

Now let go of the balls and relax the hands and arms... See how nice it feels when they relax.

Breathing in, stretch your arms up over your head like Superman, way back as far as they will go... Feel the squeeze and the gentle pull on your shoulders and arms.

Now let go of the squeeze and relax.... the arms are loose, like strings hanging down at your sides. *(pause)*

Now pretend to be a turtle pulling your head down into your shell. Breathing in, push your shoulders up to your ears... Squeeze tight... hold... and breathing out, let go of the squeeze... Your head comes back out and your neck gets long again. Allow the shoulders to fall back and down, nice and relaxed. *(pause)*

Pretend you just got a really nice, big surprise... stretch your mouth open wide... and open your eyes as wide as you can... hold it there... show that big surprise on your face... breathe out and relax your mouth... your jaw... your eyes... Smile as you think of that nice surprise... *(pause)*

Now pretend you're on the monkey bars in the playground... squeeze your tummy tight as you picture yourself grabbing each bar and swinging... Keep the tummy muscles tight until you reach the last bar... Breathe out and relax the tummy now. See how light you feel when you are relaxed... *(pause)*

Breathe in and squeeze your feet, curling your toes... Feel the squeeze spreading up your legs and around your bottom... Hold that squeeze... and now breathe out and relax. Feel your bottom, legs and feet relaxing... *(pause)*

Now, wiggle your toes and your fingers.... Breathe in and taking one big body stretch... reach your toes down as far as they'll go and your fingertips up as high as they'll go... like Superman, feeling strong and powerful. *(pause)* Breathe out... relax and smile...

## Learning across the Curriculum

### Precious Pearl

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **what being healthy means** and **marine life**. You might like to try the below activities.



#### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself  
**Strand Unit:** Taking care of my body

- Brainstorming what it means to be a 'healthy' person and capturing this in a drawing, painting or collage.



#### Science

**Strand:** Living things  
**Strand Unit:** Plants and animals

- Investigating the seashore as a habitat.
- Naming and learning about other land and sea animals that have shells.

### Easy Peasy Squeezy

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **relaxation** and **pushing/pulling**. You might like to try the below activities.



#### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself  
**Strand Unit:** Taking care of my body

- Discussing the importance of rest and relaxation for health and wellbeing.
- Listing different things we can do to help us to relax.



#### Science

**Strand:** Energy and forces  
**Strand Unit:** Forces

- Classifying different physical activities as pushing, pulling or both.



**Irish Heart  
Foundation**

**SIXTH  
CLASS**

**FIFTH  
CLASS**



# Opposites Game

Pupils stand behind their chairs. Teacher calls out movements below and pupils do the opposite of this movement. Begin by calling out movements slowly, then gradually increase speed as pupils become familiar with the opposite movements.

Movement	Opposite
Squat down	Stand on tip-toes
Run fast on the spot	Run slowly on the spot
Right hand in the air	Left hand in the air
Raise left leg	Raise right leg
Crouch down low	Jump up high
Step to the right	Step to the left
Touch the floor	Stretch up tall
Hands in front	Hands behind back

## TOP TIP

Encourage pupils to come up with their own movements and opposites to add to the list.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **communicating** and **antonyms**. You might like to try the below activities.



**Strand:** Myself and others  
**Strand Unit:** Relating to others

- Exploring verbal and non-verbal ways to communicate by completing a team task with no talking. What other ways can we communicate without using our voices?



**Strand:** Reading  
**Learning Outcome:** (6) Vocabulary

- Matching words with their antonyms.

## Catch 100

Pupils scrunch up their paper into a ball. The aim of the activity is to throw and catch the paper ball 100 times, but after every 10 throws the pattern has to change. This can be done individually or in pairs, with one pupil throwing and catching and the other keeping count.

### Equipment:

One recycled/  
used A4 sheet  
of paper  
per pupil

- Throw and catch 10 times with **both hands**.
- Throw with and catch with **one hand** 10 times, then swap hands.
- Throw with the **right**, catch with the **left** 10 times, then swap.
- Throw and **clap once** before catching, 10 times.
- Throw and **clap twice** before catching, 10 times.
- Throw and **tap shoulders** before catching, 10 times.
- Throw and **tap thighs** before catching, 10 times.
- Throw and **spin around** before catching, 10 times.



### TOP TIP

Encourage pupils to come up with their own ideas for throwing patterns.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **patterns** and **data**. You might like to try the below activities.

### Primary Language Curriculum

**Strand:** Writing  
**Learning Outcome:**  
(3) Conventions of print and sentence structure

- Challenging pupils to create their own throwing patterns and write down the instructions clearly (procedural writing genre).

### Maths

**Strand:** Data  
**Strand Unit:** Representing and interpreting data

- Tracking how many times the paper ball is dropped for each pattern. Then construct and use frequency charts or tables to display results individually and overall for whole class.

## Line as you Like

- Each pod stands in an assigned area within the room, maintaining distance between pods. An imaginary line is created in each pod's area, with enough room for pupils to move from one side to the other.
- One end of each line is designated 'really like', the other side 'really dislike' and the middle 'not sure/don't mind'. Signs with these words could also be stuck to the wall.
- Teacher explains that they will call out a specific thing (e.g. colours) and pupils walk to the part of their line that describes how they feel about that thing on a scale of 'really dislike' to 'really like'
- Teacher emphasises that everyone's choice should be their own and we might have different opinions than our friends. This shows that we are all unique.
- Words to call could use different themes like sports, physical activities, subjects, days of the week, music etc.
- When pupils have positioned themselves on the line, teacher can ask pupils to use one adjective to describe what they like/dislike about the chosen thing.

### TOP TIP

This activity could also be done outside with one long line for the whole class.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **opinions** and **preferences**. You might like to try the below activities.

### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself and the wider world  
**Strand Unit:** Media education

- Analysing an advertisement for food aimed at children and discussing the techniques advertisers use to make people want to buy these foods.
- In groups, coming up with an advertisement (poster, video or performance) for a fruit or vegetable using some of the techniques discussed.

### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself  
**Strand Unit:** Making decisions

- Listing, as a group, all of the decisions that pupils have made so far today and reflecting on how these choices were made. Discuss how pupils made certain decisions.

# Shuffle

- Pupils stand at desks behind their chairs, ensuring there is space to move arms and legs without touching other pupils.
- Teacher holds up a card from the deck, or generates a card on the whiteboard for the class to see.
- For each card, all pupils perform a movement, determined by the suit and the number on the card (e.g. 4 of clubs = 4 jumping jacks). For picture cards a different action is performed for six seconds.
- The teacher chooses another card from the deck (or holds a card in each hand and invites pupils to pick a hand) or generates a new card on the screen.
- Alternatively, picture cards could be interpreted as numbers (Ace = 1, Jack = 10, Queen = 11, King = 12, Joker = 13).

## Equipment:

Large deck of playing cards or online card generator displayed on whiteboard.

	Split Bounce (from Bizzy Breaks poster)
	Jumping Jacks
	Twists
	Bounceroo (from Bizzy Breaks poster)
<b>Jack</b>	Stretch up high for six seconds
<b>Queen</b>	Shake whole body for six seconds
<b>King</b>	March on the spot for six seconds
<b>Ace</b>	Rest for six seconds
<b>Joker</b>	Stand on one leg for six seconds

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **chance** and **healthy hearts**. You might like to try the below activities.

### Maths

**Strand:** Data  
**Strand Unit:** Chance

- Conducting an experiment to investigate chance and the likelihood of drawing a specific card or card type (a black card, a picture card, a 7 etc.) at random from a 52-card deck of playing cards.

### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself  
**Strand Unit:** Taking care of my body

- Demonstrating how to take a pulse on the wrist or neck. Experiment with taking the pulse at rest and after different activities.
- Discussing the function of the heart and how to keep it healthy.

## Mystery Mover

- Pupils stand in a circle around the edge of the room. Ensure physical distancing is maintained by making the circle as large as possible. This activity can also be done outside.
- One pupil is selected as the 'Detective' and either stands outside the door or faces the wall (closing eyes and covering ears).
- Teacher points at one pupil who will be the 'Mystery Mover'
- The Mystery Mover starts a movement (e.g. clapping hands, waving arms, punching forward, running on the spot) and everyone follows this movement.
- The Detective returns to the room and the Mystery Mover changes the movement every so often. Everyone in the circle must try to follow the movements without the Detective seeing who the Mystery Mover is.
- Pupils will need to try and make it challenging for the Detective, by quickly following the Mystery Mover's actions and not looking straight at the Mystery Mover.
- The Detective can move around the middle of the circle while trying to guess who the Mystery Mover is.
- When the Detective has figured out who the Mystery Mover is (or has made three incorrect guesses) a new Detective and Mystery Mover are chosen and the activity is repeated.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **how other people influence our choices**. You might like to try the below activities.

### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself and others  
**Strand Unit:** Relating to others

- Discussing how other people might influence us in positive or negative ways. List some people who can influence our choices (e.g. friends, family, celebrities, YouTubers).

### Drama

**Strand:** Drama to explore feelings, knowledge and ideas, leading to understanding  
**Strand Unit:** Exploring and making drama

- Writing and performing short role plays that demonstrate peer pressure taking place (teacher can give each group a scenario). Discuss what we could do in each situation.

# Water Cycle Stretch

Pupils stand away from their chair, with enough space to bend forward. Teacher narrates the water cycle story below and leads pupils with the accompanying movements.

<i>Pretend you are a large body of water (ocean, river or lake).</i>	Sway from side to side like gentle water lapping.
<i>The sun's rays are beaming down, nice and warm.</i>	Stretch arms up and take a big breath, stretch arms out and down.
<i>The rays are heating up the surface of your water nicely.</i>	With arms at sides, roll shoulders back and down slowly 3-4 times.
<i>With the sun's warmth, droplets from the surface turn to vapour and move up to the sky. (Evaporation)</i>	Wiggle fingers like twinkling droplets of water. Take a deep breath and raise arms up.
<i>In the sky the air temperature gets colder. The water starts to cool down.</i>	Cross arms over chest to hug yourself, like you are cold.
<i>The droplets cooling down in the sky start to join together to form clouds. (Condensation)</i>	With both feet on floor, bend body forward, like trying to touch your toes.
<i>The clouds start to become heavy with all this water.</i>	Lift knee to waist height, balance on one leg. Then swap legs.
<i>It's so heavy now, the water falls as rain. (Precipitation)</i>	Bend body forward, like trying to touch your toes.
<i>Rain falls onto the land; water returns to oceans, rivers and lakes.</i>	Repeat cycle again, or flow like water back onto your chair.

## Learning across the Curriculum

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **the water cycle** and **using the body to help us learn**. You might like to try the below activities.



**Strand:** Natural environments  
**Strand Unit:** Weather, climate and atmosphere

- Exploring the water cycle and experimenting with condensation and evaporation.



**Strand:** Drama to explore feelings and ideas  
**Strand Unit:** Exploring and making drama

- Acting out other natural processes or scientific concepts using the body and story.

## Balloon Breathing

- ☆ Blow up a balloon and demonstrate to the class how it expands when it is full of air and deflates when the air is let out. Explain that in this mindfulness activity we will be visualising our bellies as balloons, inflating and deflating. This is called ‘belly breathing’ and helps us to relax and calm our minds.
- ☆ Note that breathing in through the nose and out through the nose (if possible) is best for belly breathing.
- ☆ Guide pupils through the following mindfulness practice, using the script below.
- ☆ Instruct pupils to start in **Standing Mountain** posture.

**Equipment:**  
Balloon



Put one hand on the chest, over your heart, and the other on your belly, under the belly button... Close your eyes or gaze softly at a point in front of you...

*(pause)*

Listen to your breathing... feel the air coming in and going out of your body. Notice how your chest and your belly move up and down with the movement of the breath... *(pause)*

Now slowly breathe in through your nose for 1,2,3,4. Feel your belly rising like a balloon inflating.

And breathe out through your nose for a little longer than you breathed in (if you can) for 1,2,3,4,5,6. Feel your belly going back down slowly, like letting the air out of the balloon. Gently push the belly out as you breathe in – making room for lots of air and gently pull the belly in again as you breathe out.

Breathing in, the belly gets bigger for 1,2,3,4. Breathing out, the belly gets smaller for 1,2,3,4,5,6.

Let's keep going for a few more rounds, breathing in for 4 and out for 6; I'll let you know when we're going to stop. *(continue to count in for 4 and out for 6 for up to a minute)*

Let's finish on the next breath now, breathing out for a full count of 6... 1,2,3,4,5,6.

Now, when you're ready, gently let the hands rest back down at your sides... Coming back to Standing Mountain... Pause, breathe normally and smile.

## Butterfly Body Scan

- ☆ Guide pupils through the following mindfulness practice, using the script below.
- ☆ Instruct pupils to start in **Lying-down Mountain** posture. If space does not allow for lying down while maintaining physical distancing, start in **Sitting Mountain** posture.

Close your eyes and imagine you are lying down on lovely green grass, maybe in a garden or a park, on a nice sunny day... You see a beautiful butterfly. Picture in your head what colour it is - Blue? White? Red? Orange? Maybe it's your favourite colour or a mixture of colours. Take a moment to really notice the butterfly... *(pause)*

This is a friendly butterfly and it is fluttering around peacefully, gently landing on flowers here and there...

Now the butterfly is landing softly on your forehead... you can barely feel it there... It rests there for a moment and you feel your forehead relaxing... *(pause)*

Breathe in now, as the butterfly moves onto your right shoulder and flutters down your arm, relaxing your shoulder and arm as it lands, so softly and gently... Then it flies onto the other shoulder and arm ...relaxing your whole arm as it moves. Feel how both arms are relaxed now... *(pause)*

The butterfly flutters over to your tummy... As it lands you feel your tummy softening and relaxing... Breathe slowly and gently, careful not to frighten it away... *(pause)*

Now, the butterfly moves to your right leg... Feel your whole leg relaxing as it pauses there for a moment, nice and still... and it flits over to the other leg now.... Feel both of your legs relaxing from the butterfly's touch... *(pause)*

The butterfly is fluttering down to your right foot... As it lands on the tip of your big toe you feel the whole foot starting to soften and relax... After a moment, it flutters over to your other big toe... Now that whole foot begins to feel warm and soft as it relaxes... Feel your whole body relax; head... shoulders... arms... hands... tummy... legs... feet... *(pause)*

After a few moments the butterfly lifts off and it is gone... disappearing off into flowers and trees...

Breathing in, begin listening to the sounds in the classroom... Breathing out, feel the floor under you... *(pause)*

Breathing in, open your eyes and gently wiggle your fingers and toes... and when you're ready, roll over slowly onto your right side and come up to Sitting Mountain... pause here, take a few deep breaths and smile...

## Learning across the Curriculum

### Balloon Breathing

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **breathing** and **feelings**. You might like to try the below activities.



#### SPHE

**Strand:** Myself  
**Strand Unit:** Growing and changing

- Discussing how specific feelings and emotions make our bodies feel. Think about how our breathing is affected by different emotions and how we can use our breathing to help us deal with feelings.



#### Science

**Strand:** Living things  
**Strand Unit:** Human life

- Investigating the lungs and the different parts of the respiratory system. (Note that in the above activity, the belly breathing aims to engage the diaphragm muscle).
- Creating a model of the lungs using balloons, recycled plastic bottles and straws.

### Butterfly Body Scan

This Bizzy Break can be used as a starting point to explore **butterflies** and **descriptive language**. You might like to try the below activities.



#### Science

**Strand:** Living things  
**Strand Unit:** Plants and animals

- Researching the role of pollinators (such as bees and butterflies) in nature; discuss ways that they are in danger and things we can do to help create pollinator-friendly habitats.



#### Primary Language Curriculum

**Strand:** Writing  
**Learning Outcome:** (5) Vocabulary

- Brainstorming descriptive words associated with each of the five senses. Challenge pupils to write a short story or poem using descriptive language that engages the reader's/listener's senses.



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