

Vocabulary in Motion: A Quick Reference Guide

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Presentation Link: <https://bit.ly/2OIOxG5>



Background:

Vocabulary in motion was created after reading *Teaching with the Brain in Mind* by Eric Jensen (2005). In particular, the foundations of this curriculum integration focused on Chapter 4, *Movement and Learning*. Jensen lays out many points that activated my interest in increasing movement in my middle and high school science classrooms. After moving from K-12 classrooms to a methods instructor role at Indiana University East, I focused on modeling the success that movement had on formative and summative assessment scores (seen on the presentation board) to my pre-service teachers. The games below are ways that I use to create station-rotations, movement and divergent thinking in my classrooms.

Key Takeaways:

- Increasing involuntary response in the brain stem increases voluntary responses in the cerebellum
- Increasing movement, therefore, increases cognition
- Nearly 70% of American high school students never move in classrooms throughout the school day
- Teachers suggest that boredom creates behavioral management issues
- Ironically, teachers stray away from movement-based learning because they believe it “creates too much chaos”

Games to Teach:

- *Heads Up* – This is a game adapted from Ellen Degeneres’s popular app Heads Up. Rather than focus on pop-culture related content, Heads Up focuses on using higher-order questioning and evaluation-based thought processes to prompt guessers to select appropriate vocabulary terms.
- *On the Line* – This game is designed to force students to cross-the midline of their bodies by matching definitions with vocabulary terms. Using ring stand lab poles, clothesline and clothes pins, students actually “hang their vocabulary up to dry”.
- *Divergent Stations* – These are easy to set up stations that include word cloud synthesis. Students are given a prompt and time to come up with as many solutions or associations with central thoughts or terms. At the conclusion of the rotation cycle, groups will synthesize the three to five best solutions or responses to the prompt.
- *Pictionary* – Using mini white boards, students play timed Pictionary sessions built around standard-aligned vocabulary.
- *Trash Ball / Swat It* – These are both games that involve auditory learning and motion. Students hear the definition of a vocabulary term and either swat the board or wall (flyswatter). In trash ball, students are then able to shoot at a trash can for points.

Extensions:

Implementations of these games were used in a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model. Using foundations of B.F. Skinner, students were given rewards (sometimes food, sometimes free time, sometimes test points) based on their group scores over time. Most of these cycles were unit-based, but the idea sprung forth after a 2013 push from my middle school science team in order to increase state test scores. It worked so well that I integrated in future years into every unit.

Book Link: <https://amzn.to/35vsMzo>

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