

# Touch, Smell, Move:

## Increasing Sensory Input to Maximize Learning

Incorporate movement into class lessons to reinforce learning. Have students:

- Jump back and forth across a long taped line or a low hanging rope while reciting math facts.
- Break into small groups and work together to form their bodies into weekly spelling words.
- Play a letter telephone game by sitting in a line or a circle and “passing” the message by using their finger to write the letter on their neighbor’s back.
- Tape math worksheets or art paper to the wall or white board and let students stand to complete their class work.
- Lie on the floor and use a finger to “write” spelling words on the classroom carpet or on individual carpet squares while reciting the letters aloud.
- Play vocabulary charades. Review important terminology by having students take turns acting terms out for their peers to guess.
- Practice math equations by spreading shaving cream or scented foam soap on desks and using fingers to copy problems from the white board (or try the same activity with trays of art sand, salt, rice, or cinnamon-sugar).
- Apply scented hand lotion before silent work sessions (citrus scents can be stimulating, while vanilla or lavender scents have a calming effect).
- Find a “cozy” position for silent reading in the classroom. Offer a variety of seating options such as beanbag chairs, weighted blankets, t-stools, exercise balls, or rocking chairs so each student can find the optimal spot.
- Mark important vocabulary words using scented highlighters, or underline the main idea with scented markers or colored pencils.
- Participate in a “claymation challenge.” Have students race to answer review questions using coils of play dough or clay to “write” answers on their desks.
- Complete science lessons in a quiet outdoor area, where fresh air, natural light, and opportunities to move will increase student’s focus. Increase the sensory input by requiring students to carry all necessary materials.
- Read in the weeds. When the weather allows, move independent reading sessions outdoors, or have students gather around a tree while a story or chapter is read aloud.
- Break into acting troops to plan and present an event from a history lesson or a scene from a class novel.
- Use different body parts to measure items or distances in the room, then compare to measuring tape or yardstick measurements.
- Venture outside to practice writing letters or words in the air with ribbon streamers, or use a paintbrush and water to write on dry cement.
- Play balloon volley or ball toss games to answer review questions or practice math facts such a multiplication tables.

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