

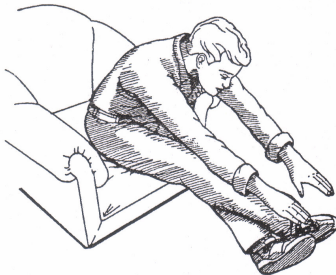


LENGTHENING STRETCHES

The lengthening exercises stimulate the **front and back sides** of the brain which, when integrated, improve **comprehension**. These stretching exercises activate the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic centers all at the same time.

Examples:

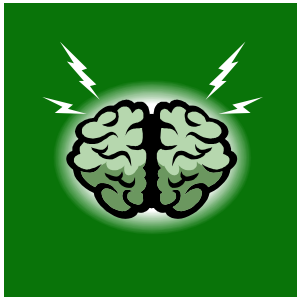
- Any of the runner's stretching and limbering movements
- Shoulder rolls and neck rolls
- Gravity Glider (*see below*)



Sit comfortably. Cross your ankles. Keep your knees relaxed. Bend forward and reach out in front of you, letting your arms glide down as you exhale and up as you inhale. Repeat to the left and center. Change legs and repeat.

MID-LINE MOVEMENTS

When doing an exercise known as the Cross Crawl, the student is able to integrate the **right and left sides** of the brain and help with **communication**. Integrating the right and left sides of the brain are important because each side deals with different aspects of learning.

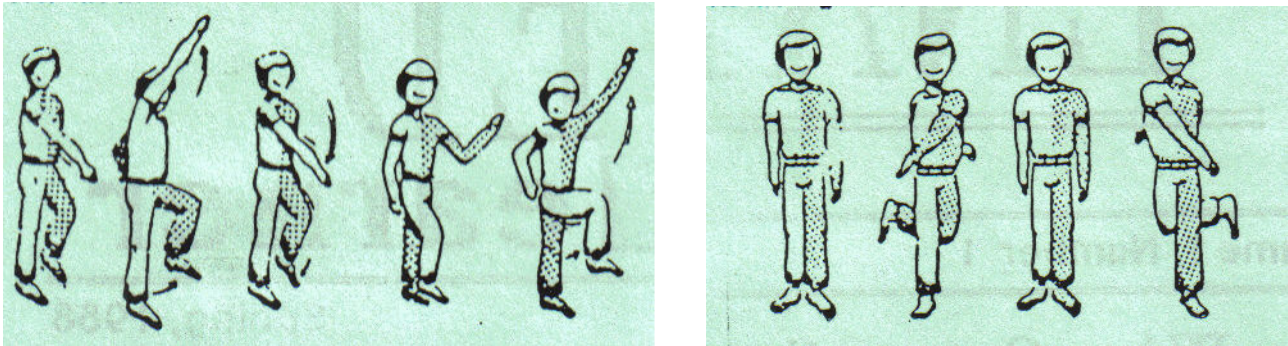


Examples:

- Scissors – Alternate swinging the opposite arm and leg across the midline of the body (*see below*)
- Hand to Knee – Alternate touching the hand to the opposite knee
- Marching – Alternate raising the opposite arm and leg (*see below*)

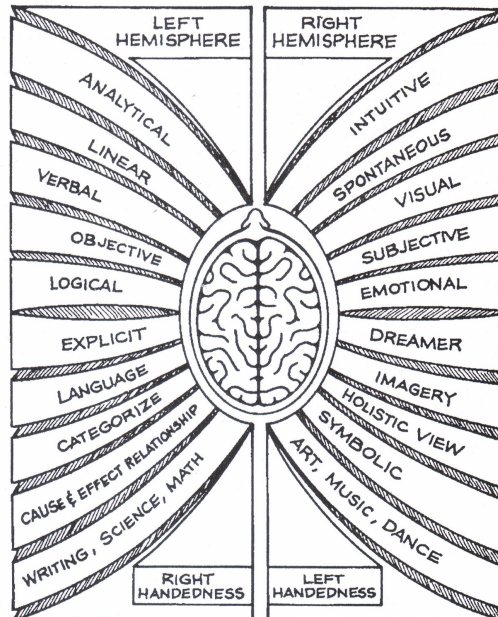
- **R:** The right hemisphere is the gestalt brain and sees the whole picture; it is the intuitive, visual, emotional part of the brain that is most commonly associated with art, music, and dance.
- **L:** The left hemisphere sees information as parts of a whole. The left hemisphere is considered the analytical or logical half of the brain that is associated with language, writing, science, and math.

When a student does a Cross Crawl, the muscles throughout the nervous system stimulate not only the right and left hemispheres, but also the front lobe and the parietal lobes of the neo cortex.



You are probably familiar with definitions of left brain/right brain characteristics; the left brain (which controls the right side of the body, resulting in right-handedness) has a pattern of thinking that is positive, analytical, linear, explicit, sequential, verbal, rational, goal-oriented; the right brain (which controls the left side of the body, resulting in left-handedness) is more emotional, intuitive, spontaneous, holistic, nonverbal, visual, artistic, playful, symbolic. (You realize, of course, we do not have TWO brains. This popular terminology refers to the two hemispheres of our ONE brain.)

LEFT/RIGHT BRAIN FUNCTIONS





DEEPENING ATTITUDES & ENERGY EXERCISES

Doing the exercises that stimulate the **top and bottom** of the brain to work together activates the neo cortex away from the survival centers in the brain stem and helps the student **focus** on the task at hand, as well as **increase concentration**. The deepening attitude exercises help the student **relax** when faced with new information instead of feeling overwhelmed and giving up.

Examples:

- Zip-Ups (*see below*)
- Positive Points (*see below*)

Zip-Ups. There are two energy meridians that run up the midline of the body. The Central Meridian runs up the front of the body from the pubic bone to just below the lower lip. The Governing Meridian runs up the back of the body from the tail bone to just above the upper lip (not shown). "Zipping up" or tracing these meridians with the flat of the hand in the upward direction of the energy flow, stimulates the meridian. One should alternate hands to activate both sides of the brain.

The Central Meridian is associated with brain stimulation (mental energy) and basic metabolism. Excessive activities such as writing or reading may inhibit the flow of central meridian energy. The Governing Meridian is associated with the brain, spinal column and central nervous system. Stimulating energy flow in this meridian facilitates optimal functioning.

As an alternative to "zipping", the end points of the meridians can just be held or massaged.

