



OPTIONS CENTER EDUCATION TOPIC



Brain Gym® Exercises for TEST TAKING

Many schools encourage teachers to test students as a way of seeing if the students have remembered facts and/or problem solving skills. Most information learned by the students is stored in their long-term memory. The ability to retrieve and utilize this information when taking a test also tests the students' ability to focus and remember without confusion, anxiety, or distraction. Six Brain Gym® activities can be done by students before and during test taking to help them to relax and remember information easily.

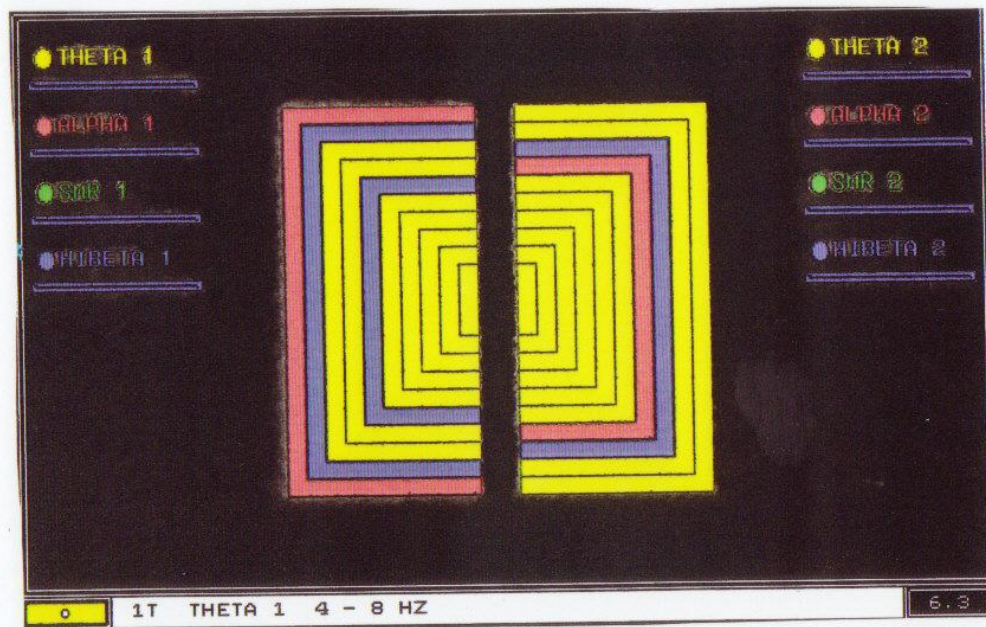
The first and probably most important activity before and during test taking is to drink **Water** [*Brain Gym® Teacher's Edition Revised*, p. 24]. Keeping the body hydrated allows the electrical impulses of the nervous system and primarily the brain to easily "communicate" with the rest of the body. Water increases the efficiency of electrical and chemical actions between the brain and the nervous system and also increases the efficiency of storage and retrieval of information which is most needed when taking tests. It has been shown that all academic skills are improved by getting enough water. Stress depletes the body of water, so in stressful or anxiety producing situations one should drink even more water, many times doubling the amount normally ingested. All other liquids such as tea, coffee, soda, kool-aid, and flavored water are processed in the body as food and do not serve the body's water needs. Water improves concentration, mental and physical coordination, and provides stress release.

The second activity is drawing **Lazy 8s** [*Brain Gym® Teacher's Edition Revised*, p. 5]. A Lazy 8 is an 8 on its side. Drawing Lazy 8s also cross the body's midline which then helps the right and left hemispheres to integrate or cross, bettering communication and accessing information from both sides. Lazy 8s are especially useful to do while taking a test because they clear thoughts and help the student easily remember information and experiences.

The next two exercises are compatible and can be done one right after the other. The first, **Earth Buttons** [*Brain Gym® Teacher's Edition Revised*, p. 26], is done by touching the index and middle fingers of the left hand under your bottom lip. The index and middle fingers of the right hand are placed on the upper edge of the pubic bone or lower belly. You can increase breathing depth which allows for further relaxation. Hold the position for 30 seconds or more. Earth Buttons allows the student to experience the connection between the body's upper and lower halves which then causes an improvement in organizational skills, mental alertness, and better posture.

There is a woman in Canada by the name of Sue Maes who has a machine that with EEG and a computer is able to monitor the changes in the brain wave as her students/clients do Brain Gym®. For more information on her machine, click Newsletters/ Education Newsletters in Alpha.../P.A.C.E. Part 1: Water.

EARTH BUTTONS



©SUE MAES-THYRET

This person started to create some focus [Beta-purple] but couldn't maintain it.

Beta	Outer Conscious Mind	Action	Time/ Space
SMR	Between Outer/Inner	Sleep/Thought	Between Time/Space
Alpha	Inner Conscious Mind	Sleep/Thought	No Time/Space - ESP
Theta	Inner Conscious Mind	Sleep/Thought	
Delta		Sleep	Unconscious Sleep

The second exercise, **Space Buttons** [*Brain Gym® Teacher's Edition Revised*, p. 28], are done by placing the index and middle finger of one hand on the upper lip and then placing the index finger and middle finger of the other hand on the lower back just above the tailbone. Again, breathe deeply which aids in further relaxation. Space Buttons help organizational skills, increases focus and attention, and also helps maintain interest and motivation.

Hook-ups [*Brain Gym® Teacher's Edition Revised*, p. 31] is done by doing the following: 1) Cross ankles. 2) Hold arms out in front of your body (palms facing outward, thumbs down). 3) Put one hand over the other and intertwine fingers. 4) Fold in arms to body. 5) Close eyes, look down, and put tongue behind top front teeth. 6) Hold this position for 30 seconds. 7) Keeping eyes closed, look up and put tongue behind bottom front teeth. Hook-Ups increase attention span, improve balance and coordination, encourage deeper respiration, and relax the student which in turn improves test performance.

The last exercise is the **Cross Crawl** [*Brain Gym® Teacher's Edition Revised*, p. 4]. The Cross Crawl is done by taking the right hand and touching the left knee and then vice versa for the left hand and right knee. The Cross Crawl exercise allows the student to cross the midline of the body, which simultaneously crosses the two hemispheres of the brain. The Cross Crawl improves coordination and allows better visual/auditory/kinesthetic processing which in turn allows the student to access both hemispheres when s/he needs to remember information.

Source:

Dennison, Paul and Dennison, Gail. *Brain Gym® Teacher's Edition Revised*. Ventura, CA: Edu-Kinesthetics, Inc. 1994. p. 40.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Cox, Helen K. and Blaine Patino, *Alternative Health Care, Space Age Interpretations of Age-Old Truths*, M. Press. 1994.

Dennison, Paul and Dennison, Gail. *Brain Gym® Teacher's Edition*. Ventura, CA: Edu-Kinesthetics, Inc. 1989.

Dennison, Paul and Hargrove, Gail. *Personalized Whole Brain Integration*. Ventura, CA: Edu-Kinesthetics, Inc. 1989.

Dennison, Paul. *Switching On*. Ventura, CA: Edu-Kinesthetics, Inc. 1981.

Options Center for Health and Education, Inc.

4316 N. Prospect Road

Peoria Heights, IL 61616

(309) 685-7721 • email: options@mtco.com

www.options-center.com