

Give 'em a break

**Brain Breaks Increase  
Learning and Stamina**

## The Research –

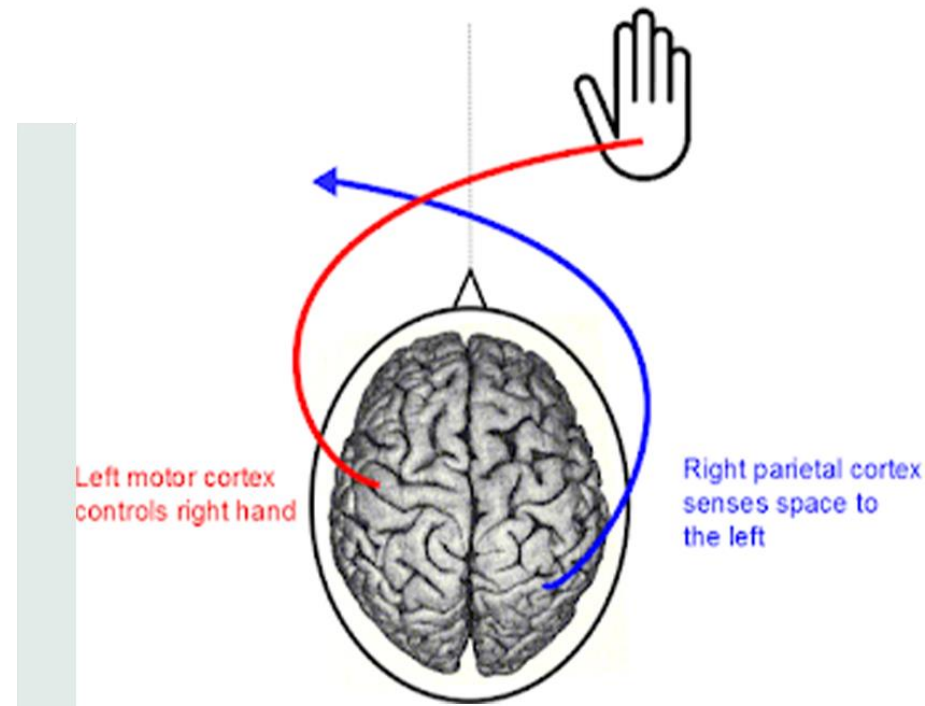
Attention =  
Movement

*“Children naturally start fidgeting to get the movement their body so desperately needs. What happens when they start fidgeting? We ask them to sit still and pay attention; therefore, their brain goes back to “sleep.”*

For children to learn, they need to be able to pay attention. To pay attention, we need to let them move.

# The Research – Crossing the Midline

*“Crossing the  
midline...develops a  
child’s gross motor  
skills ... A child’s poor  
gross motor skills can  
also negatively impact  
their attention and  
working memory. ”*



## The Research –

### Crossing the Midline strengthens brain connectivity

*“Midline crossing tasks help strengthen the neural connections between the two hemispheres of the brain. This enhanced connectivity is crucial for various cognitive functions, including problem-solving, reading, writing, and math skills.”*

*“Crossing the midline helps with cognitive functions like reading, writing, math, and problem-solving.”*

## The Research-

### Neurotransmitters

#### Necessary

- to keep one's calm
- focus attention
- maintain new memory

Can deplete after 10 mins of continuing **same** type of learning activity: attentive listening, practice drills, note-taking

By switching **type** of mental activity, shift brain communication to networks with fresh supplies of neurotransmitters, allowing brain's chemicals to replenish

## The Research –

Boosts brain  
power

*“Using well-developed activities positively impacts students’ reading comprehension”*  
(Norman, 2003; Greany & Rodd, 2003)

Breaks during a lesson have a positive impact on learners’ motivation and achievement (Greany & Rodd, 2003)

## The Research –

### Learning disability help

*“Children with neuroatypical brains require downtime as much if not more than neurotypical students. Giving them an opportunity to have a break and then refocus, allows them to...improve their standard of work.”* (Ramsay & Rostain, 2003)

11% have ADHD (cdc.gov.adhd.data)

Brain breaks give students with ADHD a fair chance to learn and achieve (Silver 2004)

## The Research –

Keep them  
engaged

Students tuning out is **rational**,  
**predictable** and **healthy** when

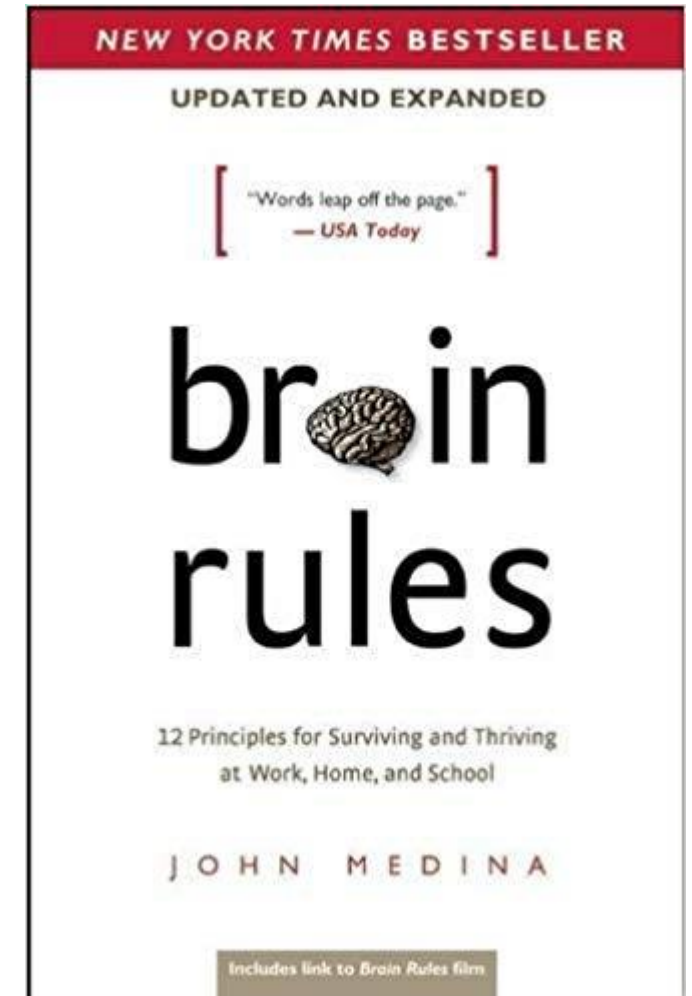
- They think they already know it
- They think they have no hope in learning it
- Without background knowledge it makes no sense



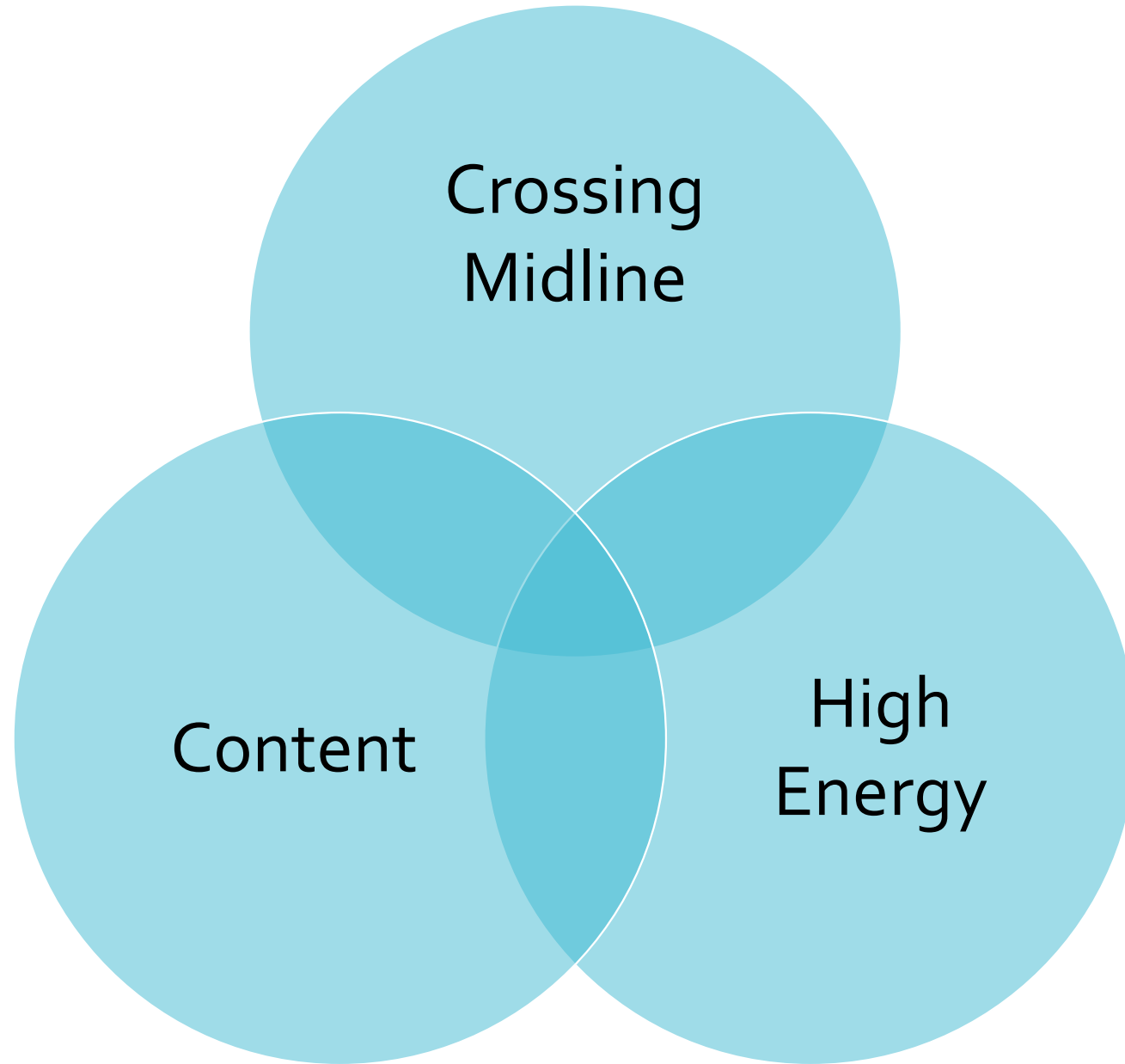
The Research –  
John Medina

Brain rule #1.....

**MOVE**



# Different Types



# The Rules



Must be standing

**FOLLOW**  
— **THE** —  
**RULES**

Follow my rules

Classroom  
management  
is **essential**

- Call and response
- Waterfall
- Bell
- Count down

**Think about: How do you call your class's attention?**

# Count This

- Hands behind back
- Partners count to 3 then bring hands forward exposing however many fingers they want
- 1st person to add them and say correct answer "wins"
  - Step 1 = Count by 1's
  - Step 2 = Count by 10's
  - Step 3 = Count by 100's

Partners/Triangles/Small group

# Count the High-5's

High energy

- T rolls a die
- Sts run around giving that many people a high-5, counting out loud
- Quickly return to seat
- T rolls the die again and Sts repeat

Don't be afraid to use more than one die

Full Class

# Would You Prefer?

- Sts go to side A or side B depending on their answer
  - Would you rather live in the **country** or the **city**?
  - Which is worse: **bad breath** or **body odor**?
  - Would you rather be **indoors** or **outdoors**?
  - Which is better: **playing sports** or **watching sports**?

Full Class

# Where Are You?



A lot



It depends



Not at all

- Agree = Hands in air
- It depends = Hands on head
- Don't agree = Hands on shoulders

School uniforms are wise

Your boss can tell you what to wear

Soda is unhealthy

Religion is important to me

No organized sports in HS

American football is dangerous

College should be free

Parents should choose kids' spouse

## Full Class



# Mannequin Challenge

- Put Sts in groups of 3-5
- Give them 97 seconds (odd times work best) to create a scene – or answer a question
- Record class
- Wait until the next day to show the video

**Full Class** – La Maestra Loca

# Apple Orange Banana

- Sts form a circle, turn to the right, and place hands on the shoulders of person in front
- T calls out a command and class responds accordingly:
  - APPLE: jump forward
  - ORANGE: jump backward
  - BANANA: Flip 180 degrees
- Option: do individually

Change vocab  
to reflect  
current unit

**Full Class** — Martina Bex → Cynthia Hitz → Krista Kovalchick

# Rock, Paper, Scissors – Brain Burst

- *Rock, Paper, Scissors, Shoot*
- Sts play best out of three

Partners

# Get on the Train

High Energy

- Rock, paper, scissors
- Winner takes the lead
- Loser puts their hands on the winner's shoulders
- Play until there is a single winner in the class

Partners → Full Class

# Evolution

High Energy

- Egg, chicken, dragon, unicorn
- Can only play same level (egg to egg)
- Loser de-evolves

Partners → Full Class – La Maestra Loca

# Roche-jambeau

High Energy

- Legs together = rock
- Legs crossed = paper
- Legs scissored = scissors

Partners

# Rock, Paper, Me

High Energy

- Sts start playing Rock, Paper, Scissors
- T randomly calls out “feet!” and Sts change to *Roch-jambeau*
- T calls “feet!” and “hands!” randomly and Sts keep switching

Partners

# 2 & 21

- Hold 2 fingers up on one hand like bunny ears – or the number 2 in ASL – palm out, thumb in
- With the other hand, use thumb & index finger to look like a gun – or the number 21 in ASL
- Switch back and forth

Full class



2 & 21



Full Class

# Hop to it!

## High Energy

- Sts hop up to a partner
- While hopping, St 1 asks St 2 a question
- St 2 answers and asks St 1 a question
- Once St 1 answers, they switch feet and hop to find a new partner

Partners → Full Class