**“Quick lesson breaks to improve behaviour, focus and concentration.”**

Sitting still for long periods is not only bad for our long-term health, it’s bad for behaviour, focus and concentration too. There are some easy ways of breaking up sitting time that should help you make your lessons more active, engaging and enjoyable.

## **A Bolt of Energy**

This activity only takes a few seconds, but can ‘kick-start’ the metabolism as well as re-energise and re-focus pupils who have been sitting still for too long. It can be done in the classroom without moving any furniture.

Everybody stands up and makes a ‘Usain Bolt lightning bolt’ shape. On ‘go!’ everyone runs as hard as they can on the spot for six seconds before finishing with a ‘Mo Farah mobot’ pose. Pupils (and you) should feel that their heart is beating faster, a little out of breath and a little hotter. More blood will be pumping around the body, and more oxygen will be reaching the brain. The effects of this high intensity exercise can have a positive effect on the metabolism for several hours.

For pupils will mobility challenges, they could wave their arms or clap their hands as hard as they can for six seconds.

Schools have adapted the start and finish shapes to fit a topic they are studying, such as making dinosaur shapes, letter shapes or mathematical signs.

## **Classroom Winter Olympics**

When pupils sit still for too long, their core muscles become less and less active and their posture gets worse. Poor posture leads to slower, less tidy handwriting and poorer attention.

To re-activate the core muscles, try some of these Winter Olympic events from your chairs.

**Downhill slalom:** Pupils should sit up straight on their chairs and follow you (or a Youtube video clip such as [this](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F23sHW3zlRk)), leaning left and right through the slalom course. Beginners can keep hands on chair and feet on floor, intermediates can lift their hands up and advanced can lift hands and feet in the air.

**Ski Jump:** Lean forward in your chair with feet off of the ground to simulate the approach, then lift your bottom off of the chair using your arms to simulate the flight. You can copy a clip like [this](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=undVQi_AgnE) or have a class competition to see who can hold themselves up the longest.

**Bobsleigh:** Stand behind your chair and run on the spot, using a video like [this](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnJArS1QDkk) for timing. When the driver jumps in their sled, sit down in your chair. Lean left when the driver steers left, lean right to go right. Lean forward to go faster and lean back at the end to slow down. This can be done at the pupils’ desks, or, for a competition, lined up in teams of four. The best synchronised team wins.

**For other ideas:**

This Change4Life 10 minute shake up [video](https://vimeo.com/132353068) is a good example, or try this [streetdance](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NqUtOp2MZo) workout with Change4Life.

[Gonoodle](https://www.gonoodle.com/) is a free, American site with a wealth of ideas and activities aimed at primary schools, most of which are accompanied by video clips.

There are plenty of other examples around.