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### Get Up, It Is Time to Move

Can you imagine what the world would look like today if the only advancements were made sitting down, statically thinking? Neither can I, along with many intellectuals. Even Thoreau once stated, “the moment my legs begin to move, my thoughts begin to flow”. Today, the typical classroom is mostly static, and one study showed “Adolescents spend over 50% of a 24-hour period and 63% of the school day sedentary” (Parish). Another study from Pediatrics reported that inactivity correlates to health issues, low self-esteem, and lower academic performances (Rapaport). Experts agree that students need more exercise and movement in their day, yet current classroom models disagree with these professionals. Current classrooms consist of students sitting at their desks, either doing work on computers or by hand, along with listening to lectures. Physical activity is beneficial to not only students’ physical health but mental health as well. Schools should do a better job of implementing physical activity and movement inside the classroom itself, as well as promoting different kinesthetic learning styles, letting students discover the amount of movement that suits them.

Activity in general, regardless of age, has been statistically shown to reduce people’s stress and anxiety, yet despite this fact schools still choose to keep students sitting at their desks, sedentary. Reduced anxiety is simply a short-term side effect of activity (Physical Activity Facts). Long-term benefits of consistent physical movement are improved brain health, lowered

risks of disease, healthy weights, as well as improved energy levels (Physical Activity Facts). However, despite all of these benefits associated with physical activity, the school system still would rather students sit for hours, and listen to lectures. Not only is this method of teaching ineffective, it is also harmful to the students. Without immediate outlets inside the classroom itself, students' productivity is hindered, resulting in miscomprehension. This not only hurts them at the moment, but also when they have to go back and try to understand the material. High levels of stress are the product of this combination, causing students' overall health to deteriorate.

Movement and a more kinesthetic based learning style should be implemented inside the classroom because of the mental benefits as well, and not just the physical benefits. Not only does movement help reduce students' stress and anxiety, it benefits the brain itself. Blackmer invokes the statistic that “movement also helps to stimulate the hippocampus” (Blackmer). The hippocampus is the section of the brain that controls memories and retention. Therefore, students activating the hippocampus directly helps them remember information, improving their overall success in the classroom. One might argue that implementing movement takes away students' ability to sit and focus on a certain topic. Drew brings up this point by saying, “the problem is that achievement tests and other types of tests, like the SAT or GRE, are all paper-and-pencil measures” (Dr. Drew). Drew is implying that students won't be able to sit and focus for long periods of time, such as during the SAT. However, this is a very biased and impractical way of looking at real world implications, and long-term effects. Standardized tests are becoming less and less relevant as time goes on, and compared to actual real world situations they aren't important. It is more important for schools to prepare students to be adaptable to different problems and situations they might encounter in the real world, as opposed to preparing them for standardized tests that may help them get into college.

Schools should actively promote and encourage different activities and methods of movement based learning, and expose students to kinesthetic learning. There are many different ways to implement movement and a kinesthetic based learning style into the classroom. A couple of methods proposed by Mckee are the incorporation of whiteboard presentations and gallery walks (Mckee). Having students present to another group of students, whether it is a group of 10 or the entire class, forces those students to learn. In order to teach a topic successfully, one must already understand it well enough to then help another person understand it. Gallery walks have a similar effect as whiteboard presentations, with a few slight differences. Gallery walks not only get students moving, but they also make sure that other students will see each person's work. This creates the incentive for students to work hard, as other people will be viewing their work. Students will also have the ability to view problems from different angles, finding unique solutions, furthering comprehension of the material. Both of these techniques will also help students with public speaking and the ability to present in front of an audience. These are two important life skills that will assist students in finding success later on.

Another easy way for schools to incorporate kinesthetic learning into the classroom is through different types of furniture, enabling students to choose the right amount of activity they personally need. There's a variety of different furniture that could suit different classroom needs, while allowing students to move, helping them to stay focused. Standing desks, pedal desks (biking desks), and wobble chairs are a few examples of furniture shown to help students (Stebbins). Students are able to reposition themselves and move as they find necessary to help them stay focused and on task. One example from my past, having personally disrupted class unintentionally by tapping my foot without even realizing, any one of these pieces of furniture

would have been very beneficial. These examples of kinesthetic furniture are non-disruptive, and simple ways for students to subtly move during class.

One common concern regarding interactive activities is it “could lead to classroom misbehavior because students are not concentrated in one area of the room ” (Ferlazzo). Strong student performance does not have to be policed, but rather can be learned in a more positive atmosphere. Always having a teacher monitor and supervise students hinders their growth towards independence. Schools should slowly build support for students, teaching them how to learn, and when they are ready, steadily easing back, allowing students to do certain things on their own. When students misbehave, they will face the consequences of not getting their work done, work that they will likely present. This will allow students to more strongly connect actions to consequences without the intervention of teachers, further helping them grow more independent.

Overall, there are many benefits associated with student movement and kinesthetic learning. Schools should actively promote movement in the classroom, and encourage students to try out various different methods of kinesthetic learning, helping them find the right amount of activity required to focus. Students having the ability to move in class will ultimately increase productivity, and better prepare them for the real world.

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