



TransformUs Active Break TAB Model

The TransformUs Active Break (TAB) Model for integrated classroom-based lesson delivery positions active breaks within an overall approach to proactive classroom management and as a key contributor towards effective teaching.

What?

Proactive classroom management is the practice of managing student behaviour by using positive strategies that prevent disruptive behaviours before they occur.

Why?

The rationale behind proactive classroom management is that if students are engaged in learning activities and feel connected, they are less likely to move off task and therefore teaching will be more effective. Effective teaching is the single biggest determinant of student improvement in the school. Teachers have not only a direct impact on student achievement but also on student engagement and motivation for learning. What teachers do in the classroom and how they interact with students is vital.

How?

Teachers maximise student learning when they create a classroom environment that is supportive, well-controlled and characterised by a clear focus on learning. By prioritising the planning for active breaks, where they are meaningfully integrated into the teaching and learning, teachers can mitigate the instances of off-task behaviour, increase student engagement, and enhance student learning outcomes. Planned active breaks have the potential to support teaching and learning, add to the teachers' repertoire of teaching strategies, and maximise the impact on student learning.

The five types of Active Breaks in the TAB Model

The TAB model consists of five types and demonstrates how active breaks can be integrated meaningfully into lessons to enhance teaching and learning.

1. Structure

The purpose of the structure active break is to use movement as part of the structure of the lessons. Here the active break serves an instructional purpose. This allows students to move without disrupting the flow of the lesson nor the planned instructional practice or purpose. These breaks often incorporate the use of signage erected around the room such as yes/no, true/false, agree/disagree on the side walls of the classroom, or A/B/C/D in the corners. Or tape/line markings on the floor representing scale or continuum. Instead of planning for a traditionally seated 'question and answer', teachers may ask the students to respond to the question by moving to the relevant sign/location. Teachers can then build on this by asking students to justify their response or build an argument for or against a statement using evidence or content covered in previous lessons.

2. Transition

The purpose of the transition active break is to allow intentional, structured and task orientated movement as students' transition between one learning task and the next, or between one phase of the lesson and the next. Regardless of the instructional model used, the transition period between phases of lessons often remains sedentary. Whereas in the TAB model, these transitions serve as opportunities for purposeful movement.

For example, the Gradual Releases model (i.e., I do, we do, you do) progresses from a worked example delivered by the teacher, to group work, to independent learning, and contains defined transitions from one phase to the next. Moving from 'I do' to 'we do', rather than remaining sedentary and performing group work in the table groups they are already seated in, teachers ask students to stand and move into appropriately sized groups using the game of 'clumps'. Here, students move around the class and form groups according to various categories or similarities called out by the teacher e.g., hair colour, month of birthday, suburb, number of siblings etc. or simply grouping by numbers called.

In addition, transition active breaks (e.g., stand pair share), could be used as diagnostic assessment to ascertain student knowledge prior to the commencement of a new topic. Furthermore, this type of break could be used as formative assessment throughout a topic, as an indication of whether the teacher needs to spend more time on the current content or task, or whether they can transition to a new task or phase of the lesson. By including active breaks in lesson transitions, activity as part of the lesson becomes 'normalised', and it is integrated purposefully and seamlessly within the processes of teaching and learning.

3. Manage

The purpose of the manage active break is to implement planned and regular active breaks to proactively manage the class. Off task behaviour often results from a decline in focus, interest and concentration, commonly associated with prolonged periods of seated learning. By proactively implementing an active break, instances of undesirable behaviour are reduced. This regular and proactive use of active breaks mitigates the need to implement reactive, negative, and more disciplinary approaches towards classroom management, resulting in a more positive learning environment.

4. Energise

The purpose of the energise active break is to alleviate the impact of long periods of sedentary learning. It is intended to activate muscles increasing circulation, thereby moving more oxygen to areas of the brain for learning and enhance the students' ability to sustain focus on academic work. This allows students to become (re)energised, (re)focused and (re)engaged. The energise active break does not have to be curriculum linked, but rather serves to break up prolonged sitting through the provision of physical movement, like a traditional 'brain break'.

The TAB model encourages teachers to align the intensity of the physical movement with the purpose of the energised active break, the environment they wish to create and the phase of the lesson. For example, teachers may choose to implement a high intensity active break upon the completion of a seated learning task (e.g., dance break); to allow students to reinvigorate themselves before the next period of seated learning. Conversely, teachers may choose to implement a low intensity and calmer active break as a positive and integrated approach towards settling the class (e.g., standing focused breathing and stretching). When using active breaks in this way, the TAB model encourages teachers to build student agency, by conveying the importance of movement for behaviour regulation, focus and productivity, and allowing students to choose or contribute to the active break selection.

5. Learn

The purpose of the learn active break is to introduce, reinforce, consolidate, or demonstrate learning in a visual and physically active way. This type of active break creates opportunities for students to 'embody' the learning. An embodied perspective proposes that cognitive processes are deeply rooted in the body's interactions with the world. Embodied activities involve students engaging in physical actions to help them better understand concepts. Current research shows these types of activities have great potential to help students develop deeper conceptual understanding, engage in the learning process, and retain the content in a more meaningful way. For example, if teaching time or angles, students could be asked to stand and demonstrate a particular time or angle using their body and/or arms.

The TAB Model purpose, considerations, and examples

Active Break	Purpose	Considerations	Examples
1. Structure	To actively structure the lesson	Substitutions for sedentary tasks Phase of the lesson Purpose of the existing structure or instructional tool	Active questioning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes/No • Agree/disagree • A/B/C/D Use of tape on floor to represent a scale - students vote with their feet
2. Transition	To transition the learning of between phases of the lesson	Intensity of the activity Goal/task orientated movement Clear instructions and parameters	Stand and Share: 3 things you know about a topic prior to its start – <i>baseline or diagnostic assessment</i> Partner share: 3 key learnings 'Clumps' to group students
3. Manage	To proactively / positively manage the classroom	Timing Phase of the lesson Type and intensity of movement required	Dance break Breath work - Breath ball Stand and stretch
4. Energise	'Energiser' to break prolonged periods of sitting	Intensity of activity Lesson content/focus Position within the lesson	Hammer and Saw Switch-a-roo Pop corn Snap and wink
5. Learn	To link the learning to movement	Learning intentions Success criteria	What's the time? Fractions/decimals Clumps - class groupings Buzz I know/you know

Main resources

[Register | TransformUs](#) - register here to the TransformUs platform.

[Playmeo \(ssv.vic.edu.au\)](#) - sign up here for free access to Playmeo.

Links/instructions to active breaks used in the session

1. Structure

TRUE/FALSE or YES/NO

Allocate one wall of the classroom as 'true' and the opposite wall as 'false' (or write true and false on separate pieces of paper and stick these to the walls). The students must be silent during this activity. Ask students a question (that has a true or false answer) about something they have just learnt. The students who believe the answer is true must line up against the 'true' wall and the students who believe the answer is false must form a line at the 'false' wall. Ensure the students are always standing during this activity. Students must think about the answer without discussing it with classmates.

VOTE WITH YOUR FEET

The classroom is set up as a continuum with 'strongly agree' to the far-right wall and 'strongly disagree' to the far-left wall, 'agree', 'neither' and 'disagree' spread out in-between. Students are asked to move to the location in the class which represents their thoughts on a matter.

2. Transition

CLUMPS

- Assemble your group in front of you.
- Explain that everyone will soon be invited to form a series of smaller groups.
- Each group will comprise a defined number of people matching the number you announce. For example, if you announce "SIX," everyone must form small groups of six people, including themselves.
- Loudly announce the first number.
- Encourage people to locate or form their groups quickly.
- Upon gathering, consider asking the group to complete a task, such as share a response to a question you pose.
- Repeat, by continuing to announce a series of numbers until you are satisfied you have created sufficiently random small teams.

STAND and SHARE

At designated times, the teacher invites students to; "stand and discuss what you've just learned with a partner". Ensure students are aware that they are not to be seated during this time.

3. Manage

BREATH BALL

[Breath Ball: How to relieve stress through breathing.](#)

DESK YOGA

[7 Great Yoga Stretches You Can Do at Your Desk \(verywellfit.com\)](#)

4. Energise

COUNT OFF (SIMILAR TO POPCORN)

- Assemble your group within hearing range of one another.
- Group aims to count from one to twenty, with three conditions:
 - Each person is entitled to only call one number at a time;
 - Any time two or more people call out a number at the same time, the count returns to zero; and
 - No pattern, sequence or directions may be given to indicate whose turn is next.
- Start by calling "ONE" yourself, inviting your group to respond.

5. Learn

STANDING CLOCK

Students stand behind their chairs. Students then demonstrate the prescribed time on their human clock, with the left hand representing the hour hand and the right hand representing the minute hand, for example "show me 12 o'clock on your clock", "what would your clock look like in 1 and a half hours' time?".