

Activities for focus



Energy flows where attention goes.

Tony Robbins

Hey teachers! Sometimes the after lunch session is a bit rumpy!

Our lovely Ākonga are full of fun, food and frivolity after the freedom of lunchtime and it's occasionally difficult to get them refocused on the tasks we would like them to complete.

Children often need some time in a liminal space when transitioning from one state to another. We can rush these stages a little as we are enthusiastic about what is next.

Here are some exercises and activities that can gradually move our learners from the physical to the fascinated.

Exercise

1 Greeting mindfully at the door

Instead of trying to settle the whole group after lunch, try greeting each student as they file in! Have them line up before entering.

As each person enters the learning space, make eye-contact and ask them how things are:

- How was lunch?
- Did you eat enough?
- Did you have fun?

This may seem quite time-consuming but it can be an investment for focus as settling large groups is harder than checking in with individuals.

It will give you a chance to see what each student needs from you in that moment.

2 Clap circle

Essentially a drama game that fosters team-work and concentration.

Students stand in a circle.

The starter turns to the person to their right, makes eye-contact and sends an energised clap to them.

The next person passes the clap on.

You can introduce a rhyme or into the passing on of energy to replace the clap.

‘We use lunch to yell and run but now it’s time for learning fun’.

There are many variations of this activity but the concepts that need to be learnt into are:

- Eye-contact
- Energy
- Focus
- Only doing what they are instructed to do. (There will definitely be students in your class who will add funny things to the clap!)

3 Mood Mirroring

Students pair up and face each other.

One student will start by moving in a smooth and focused way.

The other student mirrors the movement.

Every so often, the teacher can add a mood.

- Focused.
- Sleepy.
- Frustrated.
- Happy.

The students have to move according to the mood given.

Swap roles.

④ Visualisation

Have students sit in their working spaces. (Lying on the floor can send people off to sleep)

Instruct the following:

- Think about the things you saw at lunch time.
- Were they:
 - Cool?
 - Challenging?
 - Just Okay?
- Breathe in and remember the events of lunch time and then breathe out and let them go for now.
- Breathe in the idea of getting into a learning state of mind.

Get into the next part of the school day.



There are a raft of similar activities out there on the internet. Invest some time in finding some that work for your individual students as your class culture as a whole.

