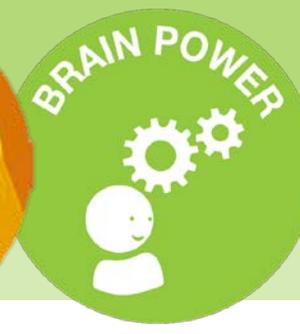


HOT POTATO

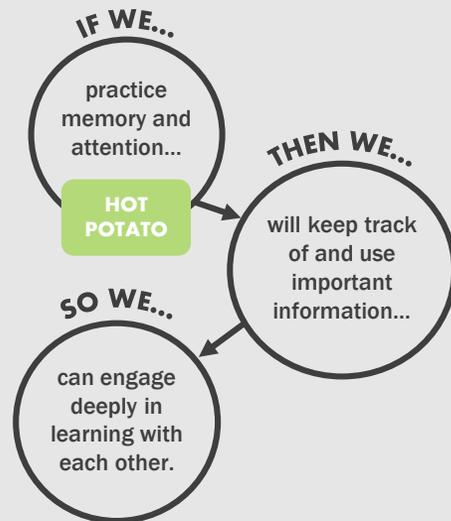
WHAT IS IT? A game to build executive function skills.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT? Practicing memory and attention.



ALL GRADES

WHY DO THIS?



MATERIALS

 A "hot potato" (e.g., ball or eraser).

THE BIG IDEA

This game is about remembering what you're supposed to do while doing a different motion (passing around the hot potato as quickly as possible).

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Say **THE BIG IDEA**.
2. Find an object that can be passed easily from hand to hand to use as your "hot potato" (e.g., ball or eraser), and cue up some music for the game.
3. Gather students standing (or sitting) in a circle.
4. Say, "I have a hot potato (*show the object*) that we're going to keep passing around as long as the music is playing."
5. Tell students that when the music stops, everyone will do this dance move: _____ (e.g., jump, turn around in a circle, touch your head, etc.). The person who is holding the hot potato will do a different dance move: _____. Practice the two moves.
6. Demonstrate and have kids repeat.
7. Start the music and play multiple rounds.

» **MUST DO:** Must require students to remember an assigned movement/dance move.

↻ **CAN ADAPT:** Change the object and/or the dance moves.



AFTER THE ACTIVITY, DEBRIEF:

- How did it feel to play this game? Did anyone feel nervous about ending up with the potato or worried they might forget the move? Everyone feels nervous sometimes!
- What are things we can do to remember next time? (*E.g., when I'm nervous, take a deep breath to calm down and stay focused on what we should be doing when the music stops; give each other hints to support each other when someone forgets; say the two actions to myself to distract myself from the nerves.*)

TIPS FOR SUCCESS



For emergent bilingual learners, use music featuring their home languages.

As an added challenge, ask each child sitting on either side of the person with the hot potato to do a third dance move.

ADAPTATIONS

- Kids can take turns deciding the dance moves for each round.
- To make things more challenging: increase the number of “hot potatoes” or increase the number and/or complexity of motions. For example:
 - When the music stops, turn around to the right one time, walk to the window, look out the window to the left, and tell me one thing you see.
- To integrate this game with academic content for older students, ask a math/science/grammar question before you start the music. Students should not answer the question right away, but keep the question and answer in their mind as they play the game (pass around the hot potato as quickly as possible); student have to remember and say the answer when the music stops. For example:
 - When the music stops, name a parallelogram.
 - When the music stops, answer: what is 12×7 ?
 - When the music stops, say three different verbs (or other part of speech).
 - When the music stops, name a mammal/reptile/etc.