



## CLASS 3 | BEAT THE CLOCK!

*Introduces the value of timed workouts to cognitive skills using readily available games and activities.*

### TBH FOCUS

**MIND SHARPEN SKILLS**

### SKILLS WORKED

**P A C ST N VE VI M PS**

### SBBT

**TEAM UP**

### YOU WILL NEED

- A medium-sized soft ball (optional)
- Stopwatch or timer
- 2 White boards or flip charts and markers, for each team
- Paper and pens, enough for everyone. Remind distance learners to have these ready ahead of class
- *Now Do It!* worksheets and *TBH Takeaway* handouts, enough for each student. Distribute to distance learners ahead of class
- Video conferencing technology if modifying for virtual delivery



## WELCOME TO CLASS!

- Welcome any new students using the *Welcome to the TBH Course* introduction.
- Introduce today's class.

Today's topic is "Beat the Clock!" Our TBH Focus is the "Sharpen Skills" action point. Research shows that testing our thinking skills against the clock can help us better maintain them as we age. We're going to learn more about the science and have a friendly team competition to work on those very skills together!

We will be working on the following thinking skills today:

**P** Perception **A** Attention **C** Coordination **ST** Speedy Thinking  
**N** Nimbleness **VE** Verbal Skills **VI** Visual Skills **M** Memory **PS** Problem Solving



## TBH LET'S GET IT STARTED!

**5 MINUTES**

- Lead this upbeat, seated warm-up to build focus, energy, and get everyone ready to learn.
- Encourage class to count along and support one another.
- See the [TBH Let's Get It Started! playlist](#) for suggested music to set the pace of your workout.
- See the course introduction for a fully scripted version of this workout.
- Mute distance learners to avoid noisy distractions.



## TBH LET'S GET IT STARTED!

CONTINUED

We are going to begin with *TBH Let's Get It Started!* Being physically active is great for our brains. This quick warmup is a great way to get focused, build energy and get us ready to learn. We'll do this right at our seats at the beginning of every class. Just watch what I do and follow along!

### FEET GET STARTED!

- ▶ Tap toes on both feet, up and down. 10 repetitions. Count together 1 to 10.
- ▶ Alternate toe taps. 10 repetitions. Count backward together 10 to 1.

### LEGS GET STARTED!

- ▶ Stamp feet on the ground, alternating feet. Make "noise" with group.
- ▶ Gently kick legs out from the knee, alternating legs. 10 repetitions. Count together from A to J.
- ▶ March in place, alternating legs. 10 repetitions. If your class is physically able to march in place safely while standing, you may choose that option. Count backwards from 20 by 2's (20, 18, 16...)

### ARMS GET STARTED!

- ▶ Gently shake arms, open and close hands.
- ▶ Circle wrists a few times in clockwise and counterclockwise.
- ▶ Hold arms straight out in front, shoulder level, palms facing down. Slowly lower both hands to thighs and then raise them back to shoulder level. 5 repetitions. Count by 2's (2, 4, 6, 8, 10).
- ▶ Shrug shoulders up and down, with hands on knees. 5 repetitions. Count backwards from 5 to 1.

### VOICES GET STARTED!

- ▶ Say "OHHHHHHHHHHH." Have group say sound with you. Hold for a few seconds.
- ▶ Say "EHHHHHHHHHHH." Have group say sound with you. Hold for a few seconds.
- ▶ Say "AHHHHHHHHHHH." Have group say sound with you. Hold for a few seconds.
- ▶ Say "OH – EH – AH." Hold each sound for a few seconds. 3 repetitions.
- ▶ Say "The lips, the teeth, the tip of the tongue." Repeat this famous acting voice exercise with the class, focusing on articulation and participation. 3 repetitions.

### BREATH GETS STARTED!

- ▶ Slow focus to bring awareness to sitting still in chair.
- ▶ Take a deep breath in through the nose.
- ▶ Exhale out through the mouth.
- ▶ Give selves big hug, wrapping arms across waist and squeezing gently, as able.
- ▶ Thank selves and send some "TBH love" to our brains!

**Great job, everyone! We are started up and ready to go!**



### BRAIN PLAY | WORD HOT POTATO

5 MINUTES

- Lead this quick cognitive warm up to build attention, processing speed, nimbleness and other cognitive skills, as well as group connection.
- Have students call out words that begin with the last letter of the word stated by the person who goes before them. Begin with the word “BRAIN.” The first student will come up with a word beginning with the letter “N.” The next student will come up with a word beginning with the last letter of that word, and so on, until time runs out.
- Keep time for the activity by snapping your fingers or clapping your hands for a paced beat. Option to have the class join you in setting the beat.
- Option to increase the difficulty by having students pass a medium-sized soft ball to each other when it is their turn at “Word Hot Potato.”
- Include distance learners by calling their name on their turn.

**Now let’s do our “Brain Play.” These fast-paced warm-ups at the start of every class are an important way we can keep our thinking focused, fast and nimble. Today’s Brain Play is called “Word Hot Potato.” I’m going to say a word. The next person will take the last letter of my word and say a word that begins with that letter. Then the next person will go, again taking the last letter of that word and saying a new word that begins with that letter. Everyone understand the directions?**

**Great! Let’s get started! I’m going to set the pace to make sure we work fast! Let’s go. BRAIN. Let’s all congratulate each other. What a great job playing word hot potato!**



### LEARN THE TBH SCIENCE

5 MINUTES

- Present the science behind this class.
- Allow for brief discussion of the science with your students.

**Today’s topic is “Beat the Clock!” There’s nothing like racing against the clock to get us to speed up our processing skills. Did you know that when time is of the essence and we have to hurry to get something done, there’s a brain bonus? Research shows that “thinking fast” helps us sharpen and maintain intellectual skills—especially attention, speed, executive control, and memory, all of which tend to decline as we get older.**

**Do you have some things you do that force you to work against the clock and think fast?**

**One of the best -- and most fun! -- ways to flex our mental muscles is to play games or work puzzles that are timed. These can be board games, console-based games using devices like the Nintendo Wii, or app-based games that we can download and play on our smartphones or tablets. That means we can fit in a brain workout whenever we find ourselves with a little time to spare—in line at the grocery store or even in the doctor’s waiting room!**



## NOW DO IT!

15 MINUTES

- Lead your class in the workout to personalize their learning of the science. Option to distribute class worksheets.
- Break your class into two teams.
- Play two rounds of each “Beat the Clock” game, or more as time allows.
- Award points to the winning team for each game. The team with the most points “wins.”
- When repeating this class, be sure to use different prompts.
- For virtual delivery, assign distance learners to a team. Ask them to write down their answers at home. Or, do the workout “All Together.” Have everyone work independently during the allowed time. Adjust scripting accordingly.

**Now we are going to break into two teams for a bit of friendly “Beat the Clock!” competition. Each team will work together to see who can win against the clock and finish first! We have a few games to play. I’ll keep score. Let’s get started!**

### “BEAT THE CLOCK” GAMES

**WORD SCRAMBLE** How many words can each team find using the prompt word letters?

*Each team picks a “scribe.” They will write the prompt word at the top of the team white board/flip chart. Each team has 3 minutes to work together and come up with as many words as they can using the letters in the prompt word. When time is up, one team will call out the words on their list. Both teams will cross out any words in common (for example, if both teams have the word “rope” on their list, both teams will cross it out). The team with the most words remaining wins. Prompt words: **NEUROPLASTICITY CALCULATOR METAMORPHOSIS CEREBELLUM***

Distance learners will add to their teams’ list at the end of the round or share their answers with the group if doing the workout “all together.”

**SING DOWN!** How many songs can each team name (or sing!) that include the prompt word?

*Each team takes a turn naming or singing a song that includes the prompt word below in the lyrics. For example, if the prompt word is “rain,” they would name or sing songs such as “Don’t Rain on My Parade” or “Rain, Rain Go Away.” Songs cannot be repeated. Each team has 30 seconds to come up with their “song.” The last team to successfully come up with a song wins the round. Play several rounds using the prompt words below, one at a time, as time allows. The team winning the most rounds wins the game. Prompt Words: **LOVE HAPPY SUN FRIEND(S)***

Encourage distance learners to call out answers during their turn. If doing “All Together,” have everyone call out answers for a shared group experience.

**Awesome job, both teams! Our brains were definitely the big winners today!**



## TBH TAKEAWAY

10 MINUTES

- Share this brief wrap-up to end the workout.
- Distribute or email handouts to each student.
- Ask students to share one thing they will “take away” from today’s class.



Playing against clock is great for our brains. Research has found that timed workouts help us maintain the very intellectual skills that typically decline with age, especially attention, quick and nimble thinking, and memory.

Here is a handout that lists lots of options for ways you can keep training your brain against the clock!

What's your favorite take away from today's class? How will you put what we learned together into practice?



## TBH TAKE A BREATH

5 MINUTES

- Lead this signature relaxation and affirmation exercise to close class.
- See the [TBH Take a Breath playlist](#) for suggested music to set the pace of your workout.
- See the course introduction for a fully scripted version of this workout.
- Mute distance learners to avoid noisy distractions.

Let's wrap up with "TBH Take a Breath." Being mindful of our breath and sharing some positive thoughts is a wonderful way to acknowledge what we've learned together before we go back to our day. Research also shows that these kinds of exercises help us focus better and even learn more effectively.

- ▶ *Have students get comfortable, resting both feet flat on the floor, hands resting in their laps.*
- ▶ *Have students close their eyes and keep them gently closed.*
- ▶ *Ask students to focus their attention on their breathing, noticing the rate and rhythm of their breath. Allow them to focus on their natural breathing for a few moments.*
- ▶ *Instruct students to begin rhythmic breathing. Ask them to inhale slowly and deeply through their nostrils, breathing gently into their chest and belly. Then ask them to exhale slowly through their lips, slowing the rate and rhythm of their breath.*
- ▶ *Have students continue rhythmic breathing, instructing them to continue to focus on gently and slowly inhaling and exhaling, allowing their attention to simply "ride" the wave of their breath. Allow them to focus on rhythmic breathing for several moments.*
- ▶ *Offer the following positive affirmation statements below in a calm, slow voice. Invite students to simply listen, repeat the phrase silently to themselves, or to think about what each statement means to them.*

**My brain is nimble.  
I am grateful for thinking clearly.  
I am grateful for thinking quickly.  
I am grateful for my brain.**

- ▶ *Pause for several moments.*
- ▶ *End the exercise by inviting your students to bring their awareness back to the room, gently opening their eyes and becoming more aware of the room and of each other.*
- ▶ *Invite them to end practice with gratitude for taking a moment for themselves, for the chance to learn together and to connect with each other.*



### COMING UP NEXT!

2 MINUTES

- Thank students for attending the class.
- Invite students to join you for the next TBH class.

**I am so glad we had this time to learn together today. It was so nice to try something new and play against the clock with our brains!**

**I look forward to seeing you for our next TBH Brain Workout class. Be sure to bring a friend!**



### CLASS RESOURCES

#### NOW DO IT! WORKSHEETS

Use these optional worksheets to run your class.

***Beat the Clock Worksheet.*** Exercises to maintain and improve balance.

#### TBH TAKEAWAY HANDOUTS

Distribute these optional handouts to extend the learning experience.

***TBH Beat the Clock! Suggested Games.*** (Total Brain Health) This handout lists commercial timed games students can play on their own or with family or friends.

***Think Fast! Why Working Against the Clock Works for Your Brain.*** A Total Brain Health White Paper.