Brain Building Fun



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ABOUT THE PROJECT/OVERVIEW

Brain Building Fun is about making learning fun. It is based on several ideas and activities that are used in classrooms daily. It is about creating an environment and offering opportunities to optimize learning. A main component is incorporating games and activities that strengthen skills such as sequence, logic and spatial relationships. For example, Blokus is a game of logic and spatial perception in which kids also learn how to be tactical. It's also available to play online at www.blokus.com

Games can be part of a "Fun Friday" reward time or part of centers or class lessons.

Everything from checkers to chess is available for free online also.

It is also about optimizing the learning environment. How does food, color, sounds and smell affect the learning environment?

Brain Building Fun also looks at right and left-brain teaching and learning. As educators we need to be aware of our tendencies and those of our students and what we can do to accommodate all learning styles and help all our students succeed.

A great place to find items is fatbraintoys.com.

Left or Right Brain Dominant TEST

<u>Directions</u>: This is a printable test to take yourself and give to your friends. Print out this page first. Get a blank sheet of lined paper. Every time you read a description or characteristic that applies to you, write down its number on the blank sheet of paper. There is no certain number of characteristics you must choose. After you are done look at the key. Next to every number on your paper, write whether it was an L or an R. Count up the number of L's and R's. Whichever number is higher represents your dominance. If the numbers are close, that means you use both sides of your brain equally.

- 1. I constantly look at a clock or wear a watch.
- 2. I keep a journal or diary of my thoughts.
- 3. I believe there is a either right and wrong way to do everything.
- 4. I find it hard to follow directions precisely.
- 5. The expression "Life is just a bowl of cherries" makes no sense to me.
- 6. I frequently change my plans and find that sticking to a schedule is boring.
- 7. I think it's easier to draw a map than tell someone how to get somewhere.
- 8. To find a lost item, I try to picture it in my head where I last saw it.
- 9. I frequently let my emotions guide me.
- 10. I learn math with ease.
- 11. I'd read the directions before assembling something.
- 12. People tell me I am always late getting places.
- 13. People have told me that I'm psychic.
- 14. I need to set goals for myself to keep me on track.
- 15. When somebody asks me a question, I turn my head to the left.
- 16. If I have a tough decision to make, I write down the pros and the cons.
- 17. I'd probably make a good detective.
- 18. I learn music with ease.
- 19. To solve a problem, I think of similar problems I have solved in the past.
- 20. I use a lot of gestures.
- 21. If someone asks me a question, I turn my head to the right.
- 22. I believe there are two ways to look at almost everything.
- 23. I have the ability to tell if people are lying or guilty of something, just by looking at them.
- 24. I keep a "to do" list.
- 25. I am able to thoroughly explain my opinions in words.
- 26. In a debate, I am objective and look at he facts before forming an opinion.
- 27. I've considered becoming a poet, a politician, an architect, or a dancer.
- 28. I always lose track of time.
- 29. When trying to remember a name I forgot, I'd recite the alphabet until I remembered it. 30. I like to draw.
- 31. When I'm confused, I usually go with my gut instinct.
- 32. I have considered becoming a lawyer, journalist, or doctor.

KEY

1 L 2 L 3 R 4 L 5 R 6 R 7 L 8 R 9 L 10L 11R 12R 13L 14R 15L 16L 17R 18R 19R 20L 21R 22R 23L 24L 25L 26R 27R 28L 29R 30R 31L 32. L

Famous Right Brain People

Thomas Edison Michelangelo Pablo Picasso Rembrandt Walt Disney General George Patton Nelson Rockefeller Hans Christian Anderson Sir Winston Churchill Benjamin Franklin John F. Kennedy Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart John Lennon Louis Pasteur Orville and Wilber Wright Alexander Graham Bell **Thomas Jefferson** George Washington Vincent Van Gogh Agatha Christie Ernest Hemmingway Mark Twain Anna Roosevelt Woodrow Wilson King Gustav IV of Sweden Albert Einstein Marie and Pierre Curie Socrates Galileo F. Scott Fitzgerald Abraham Lincoln Steven Spielberg **Bill Gates**

Leonardo DaVinci was ambidextrous. He could write beautifully forward and backward with both hands! His "balanced **brain**" probably contributed his incredible genius as an artist, scientist, mathematician, engineer, inventor, architect, botanist, musician, writer and more.

Left and Right Brain Traits

Research identifies the left-brain as the Academic Brain because educators generally emphasize its processes in the traditional classroom. On the other hand, research identifies the right brain as the Artistic Brain because it is in charge of creative talents.

Left-brained People

1. Left-brained people more focused on logic and structured activities.

2. People like this love to make lists, perform well in middle management, are highly logical and analytical and usually very reliable.

3. They tend to store information in names and words.

4. They think in order (first, next, etc.) They would rather be told how to do something than have it demonstrated.

5. They thrive in the classroom that involves a lot of listening.

6. They enjoy talking and writing things down.

7. They prefer discussing in-group projects. They like making and following structured rules.

8. They don't like when their routine is interrupted.

Right-brained People

1. The more intuitive and random in processing information and the more apt you are to store information primarily in pictures.

2. When asked to recall an event or a person, the right-brained person will flash instantly on an image.

3. A right-brained person is more likely to remember a face and a left-brained person would remember the name.

4. Although this person has a strong visual memory, he/she tends not to have the ability to perform logical, linguistic tasks.

5. Right-brained people tend to view and respond to the word with pictures and physically; unfortunately the world (especially schools) tends to view and respond with words.

PERSONAL PREFERENCE

LEFT DOMINANCE	RIGHT DOMINANCE
Classical music	Popular music
Being on time	A good time
Careful planning	To visualize the outcome
To consider alternatives	To go with the first idea
Being thoughtful	Being active
Monopoly, scrabble, or chess	Athletics, art, or music

You should try to develop the less preferred side of your brain.

Whole-brained People

1. These people, in some respects, have the best of both worlds.

2. They have the wonderful ability to shift tasks to the hemisphere of the brain that's best equipped to tackle them.

3. When it comes to reading directions or doing a logical exercise, these people are efficient and able to sequence enough to complete the project.

4. They also enjoy creative abilities and can paint, create music, and use their intuition. They make good CEO's because they can solve larger problems and pay attention to detail to apply to a situation.

5. The whole brained individual can see the forest and the trees. But, he/she may lack the organizational strengths of a left brained person and the creative brilliance of a right-brained person.

The Left-Brain Teacher

Teachers with left-brain strengths generally prefer to teach using lecture and discussion. To incorporate sequence, they put outlines on the board or overhead, and they like to adhere to prepared time schedules. They give problems to the students to solve independently. Teachers with left-brain preferences assign more research and writing than their right-brain peers. A reasonably quiet, structured classroom is preferred. The classroom tends to be clean, with items in their place.

The Left-Brain Student

Left-brain students prefer to work alone. They like to read independently and incorporate research into their papers. They favor a quiet classroom without a lot of distraction.

David scores "strong left" on a brain preference test for children. Though he is not learning disabled, his right hemisphere is significantly weaker than his left. He has great difficulty understanding lessons with a visual-spatial orientation. He is also a perfectionist.

Let's say, for example, that you are introducing a unit on the solar system. Here are some left-brain teaching techniques that will help David and other strong to moderate left-brain students feel engaged during your lesson:

- Write an outline of the lesson on the board. Students with left-brain strengths appreciate sequence.
- Go ahead and lecture! These students love to listen to an expert and take notes.
- Discuss vocabulary words. They have a large vocabulary and are interested in words. Make a crossword puzzle on the Solar System.
- Discuss the big concepts involved in the creation of the universe, how the solar system was formed, and so on. Left-brain students love to think about and discuss abstract concepts.
- Assign individual assignments so students may work alone.
- Ask the students to write a research paper on the solar system that includes both detail and conceptual analysis.
- Keep the room relatively quiet and orderly. Many students with left-brain strengths prefer not to hear other conversations when working on a stimulating project.

The Right-Brain Teacher

Teachers with right-brain strengths generally prefer to use hands-on activities to a lecture format. In concert with the right-brain preference of seeing the whole picture, these teachers incorporate more art, manipulatives, visuals, and music into their lessons. They tend to embrace Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences. They like to assign more group projects and activities, and prefer a busy, active, noisy classroom environment. The classroom of a strong right-brain teacher will typically have materials and books scattered all over.

The Right-Brain Student

Right-brain students prefer to work in groups. They like to do art projects.

A student that scores "strong right" on a brain preference test for children has difficulty processing information that is presented verbally. When the teacher lectures, or talks in compound, complex sentences, he gets anxious and overwhelmed and shuts down. The teacher's words run together, and the meaning becomes garbled. Drawings comfort him; they are something he knows he can do well. Rightbrain activities such as painting and drawing are activities that he can do easily and with pride.

Taking the solar system example, here are some right-brain teaching techniques that will help students with moderate to strong right-brain strengths, get the most out of your lesson:

- During the lecture, either write the main points on the board or pass out a study guide outline that students can fill in as you present orally. These visual clues will help students focus even though you are lecturing.
- Use the overhead, the white board, or the chalkboard frequently. Since the students are apt to miss the points discussed verbally, the visual pointers will help the students "see" and comprehend the points.
- Have some time for group activities during the week of the solar system study. Right-brain students enjoy the company of others.
- Let the students create a project (such as a poster, a mobile, a diorama, or paper mache planets of the solar system) in lieu of writing a paper. Students like Sam often have excellent eye-hand coordination.
- Play music, such as the theme from 2001: A Space Odyssey. Discuss how space might feel to an astronaut. Students with right-brain strengths are intuitive and like to get in touch with their feelings during the day.
- Bring in charts and maps of the universe and let the students find the Milky Way. Maps and graphs make use of the students' strong right-brain visual-spatial skills.

A Teaching Challenge

Students with strong left- or right-brain tendencies much prefer to be taught to their neurological strengths. Although they can learn by different methods, they get most excited and involved when they can learn and do assignments in their area of strength.

The good news is that we can all strengthen the weaker parts of our brains. Researchers tell us that our brains are always searching for new meanings and adding new neural circuits to make connections.

Left brained teachers can add overheads, videos, role-playing, simulations, group work, group assignments, and group projects.

If you are a right-brain teacher, try adding more direct teaching, lecturing more often, or assigning more individual and/or research-oriented projects. If you are a middle-brain teacher, select and incorporate something new from either area.

It is recommended that you give your students a variety of assignments to choose from each week. For example, let's say you plan to assign a book report. Let each student choose from one of the following: write the report using an outline; present the report from an outline; draw and color a major scene from the book; design and create a mobile, poster, or diorama; dance a scene from the book; or create a different ending to the book. It is fascinating to watch students gravitate towards their neurological strengths when given a choice of assignments. Those with moderate to strong right-brain strengths will choose to draw, act, or create. Those with the left-brain preference will write or speak.

• Colored Pencils/Markers/Highlighters

The use of colored pencils in class is a great way to help students learn. By using colorcoding for the various skills such as parts of speech (grammatical classification: nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives) students learn to associate that color with the part of speech (right brain learning). This in turn adds another learning tool that students can use on their own, remembering which color goes with which part adds a visual component to their learning style.

Here is a suggested color-coding scheme that you can use in class. Of course, you can choose any color you wish. To really make this work well, make sure that students are also provided with colored pens, pencils, markers or crayons so that they can actively create their own beautiful compositions.

Nouns - Blue Pronouns - Purple Verbs - Red Adjectives - Green Adverb - Yellow

A great technique to use with young students is to use Green for Go to begin sentences: reinforcing that the first letter should begin with a capital letter. Then the rest of the writing is done in pencil or black and the end mark is made with RED to reinforce ending punctuation.

The color technique can be used for any subject or skill. Color-coding is an organizational skill and can help students learn math facts, main idea and details, vocabulary and more. Students can also highlight for learning reinforcement. For example, in a sentence students could highlight the subject or predicate or the noun or verb and so on.

Sounds and the Learning Environment

According to experts, some types of auditory stimulation can have a positive impact on accelerated learning while other types can have a destructive influence.

Classical Music Auditory Stimulation

Experts in child brain development tell us Baroque (Largo tempo) is the best music to play while using accelerated learning methods because its cadence is the same as the alpha brain wave state. The alpha state is the most receptive, alert state of mind we can be in for learning anything. Other classical music, such as waltzes, have a cadence that is in harmony with the cells in our body. The waltz actually raises our energies and consciousness upward.

These types of auditory stimulation make great accelerated learning music for your learning environment. However, not all classical music is recommended. Vocals, choirs and those with instrumentals that stand out in the piece can be distracting. Generally, arrangements using only stringed instruments are your best choice.

Syncopated Beats

In contrast, music that carries a syncopated beat (such as rock music) is the worst type of music for accelerated learning. The cadence of this auditory stimulation has actually been proven to rewire the brain toward more violent, destructive, primitive and animallike behaviors. In a controlled experiment with mice, one alarmed physicist found that all the mice he exposed to syncopated beats actually developed permanent brain damage. Stories you may have heard about classical music making you smarter is an incomplete assessment. Classical music like that recommended above can help move the brain into a state where the student can learn faster and retain more, but music in and of itself does not make people smart. In addition, if other negative factors are present in the learning environment such as anger, TV, bad smells, etc., even the right types of auditory stimulation wouldn't necessarily help the student become relaxed enough for accelerated learning methods to be effective or lasting.

Ambient Music and Meditation

Playing the right kind of music at a low volume while studying or using accelerated learning methods is a great way to "fill the air with harmony". The right types of music like that mentioned above are also great to use during meditation. Meditation in nature settings are also an excellent way to get the mind prepared for accelerated learning exercises.

Sounds of Nature

Another great stimulus is sounds of nature. The ocean, forest, etc. can be a great tool for putting you or your children in a relaxed state of mind and open the pathways for learning. There are great CDs, for example, that use a combination of sounds of ocean waves gently crashing on the beach accompanied the by music of composers such as Mozart.

Positive Affirmations

In addition, positive affirmations are also a great way to raise up our mind, attitude and self-esteem. They make a fantastic adjunct to learning, especially for children. The definition of "affirmation" is: *The declaration that something is true or a positive*.

Touch fill your accelerated learning environment with objects that invoke positive touch stimulation.

So look around the place where your children study or where you study. Cozy couches, big fat pillows or big stuffed chairs are great. Soft, round objects, rather than sharp ones can help keep the mind at ease. Hard, sharp plastic toys can be distracting. Things in our environment that can make us think about pain can even block the potential effectiveness of accelerated learning methods.

The use of music in the classroom can make the entire learning process more enjoyable and can stimulate "right" brain learning. Six years ago researchers reported that people scored better on a standard IQ test after listening to Mozart. Other tests soon followed: Rats raised on Mozart run through mazes faster and more accurately. People with Alzheimer's disease function more normally if they listen to Mozart and the music even reduces the severity of epileptic seizures.

Just think of all the times **you** have used music to help you study for tests, think clearly about something, relax from daily stress, etc.

The most important point to remember when using music to accompany learning is that it should be an aid to learning and not a distraction. Let me give an example, if your class is doing a grammar exercise and you want to use some music in the background to help students concentrate, choose music which employs regular periods (repeated phrases and patterns) - something like Hayden or Mozart, maybe Bach. Choosing abrasive, disharmonic music will distract students while their brains try to make sense of the disharmony. Choosing something melodic, which employs musical patterns, will not distract. Not only will this type of music not distract, the regular patterns of the music also help to underline the repetitive nature of grammar.

Here are some suggestions for appropriate music for different activities:

- Grammar Mozart, Haydn, Bach, Handel, Vivaldi
- Imagination exercises (descriptive writing, speaking) Ravel, Debussy, Satie
- Current Events, News in the World Rap (for inner cities and their problems), Ethnic Music from the discussed countries (you would be surprised at how many people quickly associate the type of music with a part of the world)
- Making Future Plans Fun upbeat jazz ("Take Five" by Dave Brubeck)
- Discussing "Serious" issues the "serious" Germans: Beethoven, Brahms even Mahler if you are adventurous!

To begin a learning session, use lively, cheerful music:

Divertimentis, Mozart Thus Sprake Zarathrustra (2001 Theme) Blue Danube, Strauss Fantasia, Disney Suites for Orchestra, Bach Toy Symphonies, Haydn Musical Joke, Mozart Desert Vision and Natural States, Lanz and Speer Bolero, Ravel Well-Tempered Clavier, Prelude in D Major, Bach Hungarian Dances, Brahms Movie Soundtracks: Chariots of Fire Superman ET, Rocky Lawrence of Arabia Born Free Dr. Zhivago Oh What a Beautiful Morning, Oklahoma

To create a relaxed atmosphere or for visualization activities :

Silk Road, Kitaro All recordings of Daniel Kobialka Sea Peace, Georgia Kelly All four of the "Seasos" recordings, George Winston All recordings, Steven Halpern Trois Gymnopedies, Eric Satie Barefoot Ballet, John Klemmer Classical guitar Classical piano music To signal a break or transition from one activity to another:

Hooked on Classics, Philadelphia Harmonics 1812 Overture, Tchaikowsky William Tell Overture, Rossini Peanuts Theme, Giraldi or Benoit Rawhide Theme

To accompany community building activities (i.e., get to know each other activities):

Disney soundtracks Hap Palmer songs Hokey Pokey Million Bottles of Beer Camp songs--i.e., She'll be Coming Around the Mountain

As background music (using low volume):

Divertimento for Strings, K. 136, Mozart Four Seasons, Vivaldi Water Music, Handel Brandenberg Concertos, Bach

For brainstorming and creative problem solving:

Piano Concerto #5, Bethoven Swan Lake, Tchaikovsky Etudes, Chopin Claire de Lune, Debussy Piano Concerto # 26 & 27, Mozart

To celebrate:

Three Dog Night Celebrate , Madonna We will Rock You We are the Champions, Queen Grand March from Aida, Verdi The Creation and the Seasons, Hayden Celebration, Kool and the Gang Hallelujah Chorus from the Messiah Handel Fanfare for the Common Man, Aarron Copeland Rocky Theme, Bill Conti To end a session:

What a Wonderful World, Louis Armstrong Theme from Happy Days Happy Trails, Roy Rogers

These suggestions are a compilation of suggestions from *Rhythms of Learning* (Brewer & Campbell), *Joyful Fluency* (Dhority & Jensen), and *Super Teaching* (Jensen)

Music for Concentration, Advanced Brain Technologies (Available from the Brain Store) Music to De-Stress, Advanced Brain Technologies Music for Productivity, Advanced Brain Technologies (Music to Relax) Music for the Mozart Effect, Spring Hill Music Music for Accelerated Learning, Steven Halpern, Open Channel Sound Co. Mozart Morning Meditation, Phillips Classics Productions Mozart on the Menu, Phillips Classics Productions Mozart for Your Mind, Phillips Classics Productions Music for the Spirit, Domo Records Classical Music for your Active Lifestyle, Delta Music, Inc.

Tips

*While music can promote brain activity that enhances learning, it is important to value the unique learners in our classrooms when we use music. For some, it may be distracting or interfere with learning for some students. We need to be sensitive to the needs of all of the students in our classes.

*Music should be used judiciously. Brewer and Campbell (1991) recommend that music be played no more than 30% of the instructional period.

Higher Test Scores

The reduction in school music programs is not only damaging from an aesthetic standpoint, it also flies in the face of research that suggests kids who study music perform better on tests. Numerous studies reveal that kids who participate in music programs show improved spatial-temporal skills, enhanced academic performance, and better social skills. According to a 2001 College Entrance Examination Board study, students with coursework or experience in music performance scored 57 points higher on the verbal section of the SAT and 41 points higher on the math; those who participated in music appreciation scored 63 and 44 points higher, respectively, than those students with no arts participation. A 1999 study from the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies showed that gains from music were just as great or greater for students of low socioeconomic status as for privileged students.

BRAIN GYM

These simple exercises are based on the copyrighted work of Paul E. Dennison, Ph.D., and Gail E. Dennison. Brain Gym is a registered trademark of <u>Brain Gym International</u> Brain Gym in "Smart Moves," is a best selling book written by Carla Hannaford, Ph.D.

Dr. Hannaford states that our bodies are very much a part of all our learning, and learning is not an isolated "brain" function. Every nerve and cell is a network contributing to our intelligence and our learning capability. Many educators have found this work quite helpful in improving overall concentration in class. Introduced here, you will find four basic "Brain Gym" exercises that implement the ideas developed in "Smart Moves" and can be used quickly in any classroom.

Below is a series of movements called PACE. They are surprisingly simple, but very effective! Everyone has a unique PACE and these activities will help both teacher and student become positive, active, clear and energetic for learning. For colorful, fun PACE and Brain Gym supplies contact the Edu-Kinesthetics on-line bookstore at <u>Braingym.com</u>.

Drink Water

As Carla Hannaford says, "Water comprises more of the brain (with estimates of 90%) than of any other organ of the body." Having students drink some water before and during class can help "grease the wheel". Drinking water is very important before any stressful situation - tests! - as we tend to perspire under stress, and de-hydration can effect our concentration negatively.

"Brain Buttons"

This exercise helps improve blood flow to the brain to "switch on" the entire brain before a lesson begins. The increased blood flow helps improve concentration skills required for reading, writing, etc.

Position one hand so that there is as wide a space as possible between the thumb and index finger. Place your index and thumb into the slight indentations below the collarbone on each side of the sternum. Press lightly in a pulsing manner. At the same time put the other hand over the navel area of the stomach. Gently press on these points for about 2 minutes.

"Cross Crawl"

This exercise helps coordinate right and left-brain by exercising the information flow between the two hemispheres. It is useful for spelling, writing, listening, reading and comprehension. Stand or sit. Put the right hand across the body to the left knee as you raise it, and then do the same thing for the left hand on the right knee just as if you were marching. Do this either sitting or standing for about 2 minutes.

"Hook Ups"

This works well for nerves before a test or special event such as making a speech. Any situation which will cause nervousness calls for a few "hook ups" to calm the mind and improve concentration. Stand or sit. Cross the right leg over the left at the ankles. Take your right wrist and cross it over the left wrist and link up the fingers so that the right wrist is on top. Bend the elbows out and gently turn the fingers in towards the body until they rest on the sternum (breast bone) in the center of the chest. Stay in this position. Keep the ankles crossed and the wrists crossed and then belly breathe evenly in this position for a few minutes. You will be noticeably calmer after that time.

Brain Food

(1) Oily fish such as wild salmon, mackerel and tuna are all packed with DHA (docosahexanoic acid)), which is one of the best forms of Omega-3. 2 Nuts, especially almonds, are a great source of fats, vitamins (B, E, magnesium) and minerals and, apparently, excellent for the brain's grey matter.

(2) Berries like blueberries and strawberries contain antioxidants and help with coordination, memory and cognition.

(3) Veggies containing antioxidants like C and E, such as bell peppers and broccoli.

(4) Yogurt contains tyrosine, which is known to give you a little pick up and increase mental awareness. It's recommended to try Greek yogurt to avoid the extra sugar found in the flavored sorts. You can always add a child's favorite fruit for some extra flavor.

(5) Beans are an excellent source of B vitamins and fiber.

(6) Flax seeds and oil are a fantastic source of Omega-3s. The seeds would need some getting used to but the oil can be mixed in with muffins, cookies, smoothies and other treats. It does have a strong flavor, however; so don't add as much of it to baking as you would other oils.

(7) "Smart" oils like walnut, flax seed, olive and avocado are all excellent sources of Omega-3. Cook with them, make salad dressings or dips with them.

(8) Eggs contain a nutrient called choline. To get a bit technical, choline is needed to create acetylcholine, which is good for memory. Add Omega-3 rich eggs to muffins, pancakes and baking treats.

<u>Color in the Learning Environment</u>

Colors can also play an important role in learning. Pastel colors are more soothing and relaxing than strong bright ones. Below is a chart showing what some experts say are the "positive expressions of color".

Blue: Power, will, faith, protection, direction, courage, obedience to the direction of the higher Self.

Yellow, Gold: Illumination, wisdom, self-knowledge and Self-knowledge, understanding, cosmic consciousness, and open-mindedness.

Pink, Rose: Love, compassion, beauty, selflessness, sensitivity, appreciation, comfort, creativity, charity, and generosity.

White: Purity, hope, joy, self-discipline, integration, perfection, wholeness, nurturing.

Emerald Green: Truth, vision, holding the highest vision of oneself and others, healing, wholeness, abundance, clarity, constancy, focus, music, science. Purple & Gold: Peace, brotherhood, selfless service, right desire, balance,

and harmlessness.

Violet: Freedom, mercy forgiveness, justice, transcendence, alchemy, transmutation, diplomacy, intuition, prophecy, revelation.

You may have noticed that some of these colors tie directly into the <u>right brain senses</u>. If you paint the room your children study in one of these colors, it can help them - at a conscious and/or subconscious level - enter a state of mind best suited for accelerated learning.

•The colors not recommended for wide-spread use (such as on our walls) are: Reds (hatred, terror), black (human and spiritual pride), grays, brown (decay), lime or muddy green (envy, jealousy), bright orange hues (imperil, extreme fear) and hot pink (lust). Consciously or subconsciously, these colors can pull your energies downward into negative thought patterns and are not recommended for your accelerated learning environment.

Our Smell Sense and How Scent Stimulation Affects Accelerated Learning

Our smell sense affects our brain chemistry and changes our moods in powerful ways. Certain types of scent stimulation like food can disrupt the accelerated learning functions of our brain. Chemical smells from air fresheners, perfume, and even some essential oils can also be distracting and block learning.

Smells Form Powerful Memories

Studies have been done on the effects of smells on our brain chemistry and its tie to our moods and emotions. It's a fascinating subject.

The Science Behind Sense of Smell and Scent Stimulation

When we breathe in an aroma, the particles that make up the aroma are detected by the part of our brain that govern our sense of smell and emotions. Often, this has an instantaneous effect on our moods and emotions. Some experts tell us inhalation is the most direct route between the outside world and our brains. So, in short, your accelerated learning environment should be free of all smells that distract our focus and concentration but use ones that can enhance our learning experience in a positive, memorable way. Some essential oils can be beneficial.

The Best Essential Oils for Learning

Below is a list of oils that have been known to enhance the brain's learning capabilities. This information comes from: Essential Science Publishing, *Essential Oils Desk Reference*.

Frankincense. This oil stimulates the limbic system of the brain as well as the hypothalamus, pineal and pituitary glands. It has also been used to relieve depression.

Rosemary. This helps clarify the mind and emotions.

Peppermint. This is used to awaken the mind and heighten the senses. It is one of the best oils to boost energy, creativity and learning skills.

Vetiver. This oil provides grounding, stress-relieving and calming action for the mind. It is also used to relieve depression and helps children with ADD and ADHD to focus and learn.

To use these oils, inhale a drop or two from cupped hands or use a diffuser to spread the fragrance through your room or house. If used topically, put a drop on the back of the neck at the base of the skull. This is the most effective place to apply oils for clear thinking and learning.

• Our Perfect Memory

Many of us wish we had perfect memory. Experts in brain development tell us our brain is like a camera and, through right brain function, we are continually recording everything we see, hear, smell, taste and touch - as images. It's the right brain's massmemory, automatic processing capability that allows our brain to file, organize and store all these memory images instantly. Pretty neat!

But, the fact that our memory has this capacity doesn't mean we can bring any memory we choose to our outer awareness at will. That's because, our left-brain processes conscious memories and our right brain processes subconscious memories. And, according to science, the lion's share of our memory is stored at subconscious levels, which is not so easily moved to our left brain's conscious awareness unless we have the right pathways developed between these two hemispheres (in others words, a super-highway for perfect memory!)

The Rise of the Synapses

We need to learn a few unique accelerated learning methods, which can strengthen the pathways between the right (subconscious) brain to the left (conscious) brain. The connections that make it happen are called "synapses." And, the more synapses we have and the stronger those connections are, the more conscious memory we can produce and the faster we can bring those memories forward as useful information. We've heard that musical greats like Wagner were almost tormented by the music they heard flowing through their minds to such a degree that they could scarcely write it down fast enough! Have you ever had a brilliant idea come to you so fast that you couldn't write down in time? We all get a flash of genius from time to time - great ideas that come to our awareness then seem to fade back into the mist. Creating more connections between the conscious left brain and massive perfect memory capacity of the right brain can make these flashes of genius more dynamic and useful in our daily lives - especially when it comes to cognitive learning With very young children, creating these connections isn't a problem. Between the ages of about 0-6, it's estimated that children have about 10 guadrillion synapses. This number declines with age simply due to lack of use (what we don't use, we lose). Estimates vary but, as adults, we may have anywhere from 1 - 5 guadrillion synapses (roughly half those of a child). How our brain connections were wired when young depended on how we were or weren't stimulated in our early years.

Building a Perfect Memory Super-Highway

So, if your memory isn't what it used to be, take **h**eart. Recent research found that our brain never stops growing and learning. In fact, at any age we can develop a super-highway of pathways between our right brain left brain functions giving us greater insight, creativity, concentration and memory, faster thought processes and a lot more. Thankfully, we have great right and left brain accelerated learning methods for young children (they work for adults too!) And, they're designed just for this right brain left brain super-highway perfect memory construction.

What is Photographic Memory?

The right brain is referred to as the "image brain". It stores everything as images. To our right brain, all thoughts, feelings, etc. are images. When we start developing right brain function more and more, we'll find many memories appearing in our mind as images that our left-brain can interpret and put into an understandable logical sequence for our outer conscious mind to understand. This is really what perfect memory, or photographic memory is.

The Role Our Environment Plays in Brain Development

As you may have guessed, training young children in ways that strengthens the right left brain pathways is very easy because they have many quadrillions of synapses to work with and few "logical" left brain functions getting in the way. Maria Montessori, one of the greatest educators of our time, said children have an "absorbent mind"; they literally soak in, like a sponge, everything around them. She even wrote an entire book on this topic.

So, what we allow our young children to be exposed to at home and in the world plays a large role in how many pathways are formed between the right brain's vast potential and the left brain's logic-based functions, which is how accelerated learning can take place. More importantly, all sense stimulations, both bad and good, are stored in the subconscious and play a role in how brain connections are made. Remember, the right brain learns best in a relaxed, harmonious environment. So, let's ask ourselves these questions: Is our home environment loving and free from discordant sounds, visual, tactile, aromatic stimulation? Do we know what types of stimulation can have negative effects on children? How about placing our young children in front of violent movies as opposed to, say, pure unaltered beautiful scenes of nature? Which of those would be more calming and conducive to learning and building strong positive memory links between the right and left-brain? Which types of stimulation are best for growing brain pathways and which closes them down?

In Conclusion...

So, in concluding this section on Perfect Memory: It's most important to start young children with proper types of right and left brain stimulation and if you're not so young, use the accelerated learning methods to build that super-highway to perfect memory.

http://www.acceleratedlearningmethods.com/sensory-stimulation.html http://www.ehow.com/way_5232492_brain-games-highschool.htmlhttp://kids.aol.com/games/brain-games http://www.brainpop.com/ http://brainconnection.positscience.com/teasers/ http://kids.lovetoknow.com/wiki/Printable_Brain_Teasers_for_Kids http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/metaphor.html

Reptangles - Turtles that SNAP! 2010 Parents' Choice Award -Recommended! 2010 Creative Child Preferred Choice Award!

Flip, slide, turn, connect, combine and build with Fat Brain's newest construction toy! These clever and colorful turtles can snap and slide together in over 100 incredible ways! Each set of 24 Reptangles comes with a full-color bonus activity book that features more than 80 puzzles to encourage young minds to explore the world of geometry, design and construction.

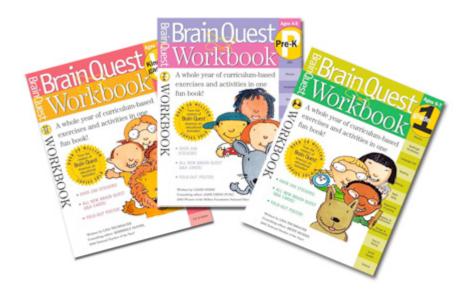
Build simple to complex polyhedra by repeating the same connection over and over. These colorful turtles will engage for hours! Ages 6 and up. **\$24.95**





Ball of Whacks by Creative Whack

- A Kinetic, Magnetic Toy; 30 Piece Rhombic Triacontahedron
- The Ball Of Whacks 30 design blocks, using magnetism to adhere
- Endless possibilities for creative & logical connections
- Connects right & left sides of the brain for a thinking/creative experience
- Encourages hand & eye interactions, message delivery to & from the brain
- Gain confidence in creativity involving forms rewarding results in seconds
- Ideal for creative types, intelligent people, aficionados of Lego toys, entrepreneurs, average Joes
- Create the symmetries of all five platonic solids
- A perfect coffee table toy, TV watching accompaniment, travel toy
- Informational workbook includes ideas for enhancing the creative process
- Contains 180 rare earth magnets
- Warning: Keep away from pacemakers \$29.95



Echoing Brain Quest's lively design and unique silhouette, each workbook is a bright, kidfriendly invitation to delve into schoolwork with pleasure. The books are jam-packed with hundreds of curriculum-based activities, exercises, games, and challenges in every subject, but with a special emphasis on the core competencies of math and language skills. They're clear, they're interactive, colorful, and varied. Information is layered throughout the text. Kids will write, draw, solve, connect, add hands to the clocks' faces, and color in the fractional shapes.

Six titles comprise the series, Pre-k through Grade 4; each is a substantial 320-page, full-color book. In addition, each title comes with a pull-out poster, more than 200 stickers, and 100 all-new Brain Quest questions and answers. Even the posters are keyed into the curriculum—in second grade, children study the U.S. states, so the Grade 2 poster will be of the U.S.A., with all capitals, state flags, and state facts. **\$11.95**



Bananagrams has been chosen as a winner in the <u>2009 Fat Brain Toy Awards</u> which means that visitors to Fat Brain Toys have chosen it as the best-of-the-best in specialty toys, games, and gifts.

The anagram game that will drive you BANANAS!

This award-winning word game needs no pencil, paper, or bulky board. It is fast and fun. One hand can be played in as little as 5 minutes. Play at home, in restaurants, campgrounds, etc. Great for travel!

Contains:

- Cloth banana shaped pouch
- 144 letter tiles



The Original American Handmade Toy boxed with Instruction Booklet including history, shapes to create & magic tricks.

To play with Jacob's Ladder, simply hold the top block by its edges and let the rest of the identical blocks swing downward until the "ladder" is fully open. Then, holding the top block by its edges, turn it 180? in a left rotation, until the top and second blocks are parallel and touching. When the held block hits the hanging block, a series of blocks will begin cascading down. Then repeat the motion 180? to the right. Each time you move the block 180 degrees a cascade of apparently moving blocks will flip to the bottom. **\$7.95**



A family favorite for over 40 years! Throw the dice to build straights, full houses, five of a kind-YAHTZEE! Includes 5 dice, plastic dice cup, scorecards, 10 plastic bonus chips, Instructions (English & Spanish). For 1 or more players, ages 8 & up. **\$8.39**



Develops logic and spatial perception while kids learn to be tactical

Players take turns placing pieces on their board, each starting from their corner. Each new piece must touch at least one other piece of the same color, but only at the corners! The goal is to get rid of all your pieces. The game ends when all players are blocked from laying down any more of their pieces. Includes one game board with 400 squares, 84 game pieces in four bright translucent colors, and an instruction guide. \$28.95



The Flip to Win Hangman is perfect of home or life on the go. The innovative flipping pieces won't get lost. Includes one game board with erasable whiteboard, self-storing marker and eraser.

<u>\$11.95</u>

WEBSITES:

http://www.funbrain.com/

PEARSON EDUCATION

GAME DESCRIPTIONS:

<u>Change Maker</u>: This game simulates operating a cash register. Players are told how much something costs and how much money they received. They then decide how many quarters, dimes, and pennies they should give back in the change.

<u>Cookie Dough</u>: In this number writing game, players either write out a word or numeric representation of a given number.

Double Fun Match: This memory and knowledge game has the same rules as Fun Match, but instead of looking for identical symbols, players look for equalities.

- SCIENCE: Elements and their symbols
- TIME: Clock faces and digital time
- WORLD AFFAIRS: European flags and their countries
- MATH: Fractions and decimals

Fresh Baked Fractions: Students click on the fraction that is not equivalent to the others.

<u>Fun Match</u>: In this game, players turn over cards two at a time. When the revealed symbols are the same, the cards are removed. The game is over when all the cards are gone.

<u>Grammar Gorillas</u>: Players are shown a sentence and asked to click on the noun, verb, etc. This game builds knowledge of parts of speech and word usage.

<u>Guess the Color</u>: Learn how to mix colors of light in this game. The player is shown a color and must match it by choosing the correct mix of red, green, and blue light.

<u>Guess the Number</u>: The player guesses a number, and then is told whether it is higher or lower than a secret number. The player must keep guessing until the secret number is discovered. This game can also be played with negative numbers.

<u>Guess the Number Plus</u>: The player needs to solve a simple algebra equation to guess a number. The player must keep guessing until the secret number is discovered. This game can also be played with just addition and subtraction, or with all operations.

Line Jumper: In this number line game, students click on various points on the number line. It is excellent for teaching addition, subtraction, and negative numbers.

<u>Math Baseball</u>: Score runs by answering math questions. Addition, subtraction, multiplication, division. Four different levels of difficulty make it appropriate for all grade levels. Math Baseball also introduces basic algebra.

<u>MathCar Racing</u>: Utilizing one's mathematical and logistical skills, this game pits student against computer to win a car race. Each player gains points by choosing which math expressions within a table will gain him/her the most points, while leading his opponent to score less or lose points. Three levels of difficulty covers addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

Number Cracker: Players are given a series of numbers with one number missing. They must find the missing number by solving a mathematical pattern. Four different levels of difficulty covers addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and algebra concepts. Oddball: Not every one is the same. Players click on the picture that is different from the others in the group. For pre-school and early elementary.

<u>One False Move</u>: This haunted house adventure game teaches players how to order numbers from lowest to highest, and vice versa.

<u>Order Me Around</u>: In this game, players need to put things in the correct order. Examples include ordering geographic regions from west to east, historical events from earliest to most recent in time, etc.

<u>Paint by Idioms</u>: Students learn many different idioms by identifying them, their meanings, and their usage in sentences.

<u>**Piano Player</u>**: Learn how to read music. The most basic level teaches the octave and notes on the keyboard. The hardest level is for practicing all notes on the bass and treble clefs.</u>

<u>Plural Girls</u>: Players are given a word in singular form. They must click on the correct plural form. Harder level requires players to correctly spell out the plural form. <u>Power Football</u>: Students score field goals with decimals. Addition, subtraction,

multiplication, and division are covered as well as algebra concepts.

<u>Proton Don</u>: The player is shown the periodic table and the name of an element. They must click on that element's periodic table symbol. The harder level requires players to type the name of the element whose symbol is highlighted on the periodic table.

<u>Scramble-Saurus</u>: Use your brain power and the given clue to unscramble the letters to form a word.

<u>Shape Surveyor</u>: This game shows students rectangles of various dimensions. They calculate the perimeter or the area of the shapes.

<u>Sign the Alphabet</u>: Learn the alphabet using American Sign Language.

<u>Space Hopper</u>: In this astronomy game, players are shown the image of a constellation along with its mythological or scientific background. They must identify the correct name of the constellation. This game includes a tutorial mode.

<u>Spell Check</u>: Four words are shown. Players click on the one spelled incorrectly.

<u>Spellaroo</u>: Players are given a sentence with a misspelled word. They are to click on that word.

<u>Stay Afloat</u>: This hangman-style game categorizes the words by subjects. The player clicks on a letter and if the letter is in the word, it is shown to the player. After seven wrong guesses, the boat sinks. Players are also given clues to help guess the secret word. Word categories include animals, rainforest, geography, cells, climate, geology, musical instruments, World War II, and composers.

<u>2Bee or Nottoobee</u>: In this game, players learn the usage of auxiliary verbs am/is/are and was/were. Players are shown a sentence with a missing verb. They must click on the correct verb to complete the sentence.

<u>Translator Alligator</u>: The player is shown an English word, and they must either click on or type in the foreign language translation. The game can also be played with the foreign language word being displayed, and the player has to click on or type in the English translation.

<u>Wacky Tales</u>: Write your own short story by filling in nouns, verbs, etc. Users practice using parts of speech.

What's the Word?: Students click on the word that best describes the picture. For preschool and early elementary.

<u>Where Is THAT</u>?: A geography game where players are shown a continent with a nation or state highlighted. The easiest level is multiple choice and the hardest level requires that you type in the capital (spelled correctly). This game is challenging for everyone from late elementary students to United Nations employees.

<u>Who Is THAT</u>: In this biography game, players are given facts about U.S. Presidents or famous scientists and mathematicians. There is a multiple-choice level as well as a harder level where the players must spell the name correctly.

Word Turtle: This is a seek and find word puzzle where you enter the words that are hidden. This puzzle promotes pattern recognition, spelling, and vocabulary. It can also be used to teach themes. For instance, you can create a puzzle having to do with rainforest vocabulary words.

<u>Writer's Block</u>: This is a board where users can express themselves in writing based on a given weekly topic.

GAMES BY SUBJECT AREAS:

LANGUAGE ARTS

- Cookie Dough (spelling)
- Grammar Gorilla (parts of speech)
- Order Me Around (words)
- Paint by Idioms (vocabulary, reading)
- **<u>Plural Girls</u>** (spelling)
- <u>Scramble-Saurus</u> (spelling, vocabulary)
- <u>Spell Check</u> (spelling)
- <u>Spellaroo</u> (spelling)
- Stay Afloat (vocabulary)
- **<u>2Bee or Nottoobee</u>** (parts of speech)
- **Translator Alligator** (Spanish vocabulary)
- Wacky Tales (parts of speech)
- What's the Word? (vocabulary, reading)
- Word Turtle (vocabulary, themes)
- Writer's Block (reading, writing

MATH

- Change Maker (money)
- Cookie Dough (numbers)
- Double Fun Match (fractions, clocks)
- Guess the Number (less than & greater than, negative numbers)
- Guess the Number Plus (algebra, less than & greater than, negative numbers)
- Line Jumper (addition, subtraction, negative numbers)
- Math Baseball (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, algebra)
- MathCar Racing (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division)
- Number Cracker (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, algebra)
- One False Move (numbers)
- **Power Football** (decimals)
- Shape Surveyor (geometry)
- Who is THAT? (mathematicians)

SCIENCE

- **Double Fun Match** (elements)
- Guess the Color (colors of light)
- Order Me Around (astronomy, chemistry, history)
- <u>Proton Don</u> (elements, periodic table)
- Scramble-Saurus (computers, chemistry, physics, animals, food science)
- <u>Space Hopper</u> (astronomy, mythology)
- **<u>Stay Afloat</u>** (cells, geology, rainforest, climate, animals)
- Who is THAT? (scientists)

SOCIAL STUDIES

- **Double Fun Match** (flags)
- Order Me Around (geography, history)
- <u>Scramble-Saurus</u> (geography)
- Where Is THAT? (geography)
- Who is THAT? (U.S. Presidents)

MUSIC

- **<u>Piano Player</u>** (reading music)
- Scramble-Saurus (instruments, composers)
- Stay Afloat (instruments, composers, recording)

LOGIC:

- **Double Fun Match** (relationships)
- Fun Match
- MathCar Racing (strategy)
- Oddball (groups)
- Word Turtle (patterns)

MISC.

- **Brain Bowl** (current events)
- Guess the Color (colors of light)
- Sign the Alphabet (sign language)
- Writer's Block (reading, writing)

GRADE LEVEL INDEX

PRESCHOOL

- <u>Cookie Dough</u> (0-10 level)
- Math Baseball (easy level)
- Oddball
- What's the Word?
- Word Turtle (small puzzle)
- Writer's Block

ELEMENTARY GRADES K-3

- Change Maker (easy level)
- Cookie Dough (0-100 level)
- **Double Fun Match** (clocks)
- Fun Match (small puzzle)
- Guess the Number (1-100 level)
- Line Jumper (easiest levels)
- <u>Math Baseball</u> (easy level)
- Oddball
- One False Move (easy level)
- **<u>Piano Player</u>** (1st level)
- <u>Scramble-Saurus</u>
- Shape Surveyor (easier levels)
- **Spellaroo** (beginner level)
- Stay Afloat
- What's the Word?
- <u>Word Turtle</u> (small puzzle)
- Writer's Block

ELEMENTARY GRADES 4-6

- <u>Change Maker</u>
- Cookie Dough (0-1000 and 0-10,000 levels)
- Double Fun Match (fractions)
- Grammar Gorillas
- Guess the Color (easy level)
- Guess the Number (-1000 through 1000 level)
- Guess the Number Plus (easy levels)
- Line Jumper (hardest levels)
- Math Baseball
- MathCar Racing
- Number Cracker (easy level)
- One False Move (medium/hard levels)
- Order Me Around (easy/scholars level)
- Paint by Idioms (easy level)
- **Piano Player** (middle levels)
- <u>Plural Girls</u>
- **Power Football** (easier levels)
- <u>Scramble-Saurus</u>
- Shape Surveyor (harder levels)
- Sign the Alphabet
- **Space Hopper** (easy level)
- Spell Check
- <u>Spellaroo</u> (intermediate level)

- <u>Stay Afloat</u>
- <u>2Bee or Nottoobee</u>
- Translator Alligator
- Wacky Tales
- Where Is THAT? (easy level)
- Word Turtle

MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADES 6-9

- <u>Change Maker</u>
- **Double Fun Match** (fractions, elements)
- Grammar Gorillas (hard level)
- Guess the Color (medium level)
- Guess the Number Plus (harder levels)
- Math Baseball (algebra style, hard level)
- MathCar Racing
- Number Cracker (medium and hard levels)
- Order Me Around (medium/professors level)
- <u>Paint by Idioms</u> (medium level)
- **<u>Piano Player</u>** (harder levels)
- **<u>Plural Girls</u>** (tough levels)
- **<u>Power Football</u>** (harder levels)
- **<u>Proton Don</u>** (common elements)
- <u>Scramble-Saurus</u>
- <u>Space Hopper</u> (easy level)
- Spell Check (hard level)
- Translator Alligator
- Where Is THAT? (harder levels)
- Who Is THAT? (U.S. Presidents)

HIGH SCHOOL GRADES 9-12

- · Double Fun Match (flags, elements)
- · Guess the Color (hard level)
- Math Baseball (Super Brain)
- Number Cracker (hardest levels)
- · Order Me Around (hard/super brains level)
- **<u>Paint by Idioms</u>** (hardest levels)
- **<u>Proton Don</u>** (all elements)
- <u>Scramble-Saurus</u>
- <u>Space Hopper</u> (hard level)
- <u>Translator Alligator</u>
- Where Is THAT? (harder levels)
- <u>Who Is THAT?</u> (mathematicians)

MORE WEBSITES

Brain Training Games

Fit Brains offers a collection of fun, scientifically-based Brain Games that provide a balanced workout across the 5 Major Brain

• Areas: Memory, Concentration, Language, Visual & Spatial, and Executive Functions.

http://brainfitnessforkids.com/

<u>http://www.scilearn.com/our-approach/brain-fitness-in-education/brain-science-video/</u>

http://www.factmonster.com/us.html

http://lightupyourbrain.com/games.html

Brain teasers, word puzzles and action games like these teach language skills, math skills, problem solving, color and shape matching, and fine motor skills such as touch-andfeel adjustment, an enhanced sense of timing, and and hand-eye coordination development.

http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/chgames.html

Neuroscience for Kids has been created for all students and teachers who would like to learn about the nervous system. Discover the exciting world of the brain, spinal cord, neurons and the senses. Use the experiments, activities and games to help you learn about the nervous system. There are plenty of links to other web sites for you to explore.

The different brain games available include board games, video games and various online games. These games allow children to test their mathematical skills, increase their vocabulary, sharpen their memory and also help in developing critical thinking abilities. Brain games are important in the development of children. These games help kids to think in a logical manner and also help develop various analytical skills. Chess is the best brain game that is recommended for children. Kids can even play this game online with a computer as the opponent. The <u>Sudoku puzzles</u> also prove to be nice <u>brain exercises</u> for kids.

http://www.gamesforthebrain.com/

Checkers, Chess, Word Games and more

http://www.thekidzpage.com/freekidsgames/strategygames.htm

Logic and mind-challenging online children's games for free! Dozens of fun strategy and brain games to play online. Includes many Sudoku and Tangrams

http://www.memory-improvement-tips.com/brain-games-for-kids.html

Bejewled Checkers Yahtzee Tetris Sudoku Spelling Bee and MORE

Includes: Lightning Librarian: This is a fast-paced game that trains short-term memory.

Help Lydia the Librarian find books for the kids!

Bring books to the kids before they get upset. Drop unwanted books in the Return slot. The trick is to remember which shelves the different types of books are on.

http://www.brainquest.com/kids

Welcome to 2-Minute Brain Quest.

http://www.braingle.com/ http://www.nick.com/games/the-brainsurge-guiz.html

<u>http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/braingames/braingames.htm</u> <u>http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/content/animals/kidscorner/gamesforkids.htm</u>

http://www.neok12.com/games.htm

http://www.miniclip.com/games/en/brain-training.php

http://amby.com/go_ghoti/on-line.html

http://www.gizdic.com/freegames/smart.htm

http://www.smart-kit.com/

http://www.classbrain.com/index_kids.htm

http://www.pitara.com/games/

http://www.oyunlar1.com/braingames.asp

FOR YOU: http://www.braincurls.com/

NOTES