

The First Five Minutes...Starting Class With a Bang!

1. Do Nows – A “do now” is a posted activity (I use a wipe off board) to begin/complete as soon as the student enters the gym/classroom. Examples might be...Walk/Jog/Run 3 laps...Grab a basketball and shoot 20 shots...Pick out 3 scarves and begin juggling...Find a partner and wheelbarrow across the floor, switch and return (do this 3x)...Begin jumping rope and work on the listed tricks from yesterday’s class...Dribble/Juggle the soccer ball...Grab a tennis ball/Frisbee/football and have a catch...etc.
2. Walk and Talk – Find a partner and walk around the basketball court while discussing one, or both, of the two listed topics/questions. Examples might be...What was your favorite vacation? Who is your favorite teacher? What is your biggest fear/phobia? Who would you like to meet? What’s for lunch?
3. Paper/Pencil Preview/Review – Students enter and write down responses to the posted question/topic. These are either preview (what do you know about...?) or review topics from the day before. Examples might be...What are three rules of Ultimate? What are the five components of fitness? Who invented Lacrosse, and where did it begin? What are 3 key points to good rope jumping? Why do we need water? What are 3 good arm exercises?
4. Question of the Day – Simply ask a question of the day and have every student respond (or have the option to respond). My students do not like to miss the QOTD...ever! Do this while sitting, or walking, or as a break from a high intensity activity, or just answer with a partner/small group.
5. Greetings/Handshakes – After teaching students how to execute a proper handshake, have them enter the gym/classroom and greet everyone with a respectful and proper “handshake and a smile”.
6. This or That – Students choose between two options that they are presented with, and move to the side that they like the best. We have a list of over one hundred this or that questions. Examples...Italian Food or Chinese Food, Soup or Salad, Mountains or the Shore (beach), Comedy or Thriller Movie, Visit France or England, Tennis or Golf. No fence straddling in the middle! No qualifiers...just answer the question!
7. Bucket Fitness – Students enter, choose a bucket, and pull out a slip of paper with a quick fitness assignment on it. Once the student completes the assignment, they drop the paper in the “completed bin” and go on to a new bucket. Fitness assignment examples...Do 36 squats...High 5, 15 different people...Hold a one minute wall seat...Bear Crawl across the gym 3x...Do 10 good form push-ups.
8. Quick Start – Students know from the prior class that the activity will be set up and ready to go...so get to it and begin as soon as you enter (Tennis, 4-Square, Climbing Wall, Soccer Wall Ball, Jump Rope).
9. Dance – As students enter, play music that leads them into a line dance...and begin/join in right away!
10. Find the Assignment – Have students enter and look for the assignment (hidden somewhere), and without “spilling the beans” (letting others know where the assignment is located)...begin the activity.
11. Three Quarters – Set up games with enough equipment for $\frac{3}{4}$'s of the class...if you get there on time you play...if you are slow getting to class there will not be enough spots for you...so there will be an alternate activity (not nearly as dynamic/fun). I only do this a couple of times during the year to encourage students to get to class in a timely manner! This also “encourages” their teachers to be on time! This activity will only last 3 to 5 minutes. Note... I have had students give up their spots for a late friend...very cool!
12. Tournament Play/Ladder Challenges – As students come in, they may challenge anyone to the game being played, but they must decide if it is an equal challenge, and both players must agree to the match.

13. Heart Rate Monitors/Pedometers – If you have heart rate monitors...students enter, put on their strap/watch and do something to raise their heart rate by (as an example) 26 beats per minute. If it is a pedometer...students clear the device, put it on, and walk/jog/run the posted number of steps as a warm-up.
14. Walk Assignment – The class is given a goal of walking across their state, or the country, or a specific trail (Appalachian Trail). When they enter the gym they begin walking with the goal of moving their group along the posted map. This can be a great school wide or individual challenge!
15. Class Set-Up – Post the needs for class and the gym set-up with equipment, and have the students do the work getting ready for their class period.
16. Silent Class – Usually done once a year...the entire period is “talkless”, and most of the activities are posted/written down, or pre arranged from the class before.
17. Worksheet Assignments – Students enter, pick up a worksheet with activities listed on them, and get to the activity right away. This can be done as an individual, or with a partner, or as a class.
18. Group Up – Students are given a grouping directive, and must work it out as a class so that everyone is included and all of the directions are followed. Example...4 people to the group; co-ed; 4 different heights of people in the group...or 3 people sitting back to back, all wearing the same colors. The group size should lead into the first activity!
19. Exercise of the Day – Post the exercise of the day...show one student how to do it, and have him/her be the “teacher” for that exercise. That student is responsible for remembering that exercise for the rest of the year, and is the “go to” person when multiple exercises are listed later.
20. Stress Buster – When students have stressful testing, have them enter, lie down, and do their relaxation/breathing exercises. Lights off...calming music...mats out...no talking...no snoring.
21. Cross Brain Activities – After teaching cross brain activities...use them as often as possible to start class. These will help clear the mind...de-stress...wake-up...re-focus...and ready students for class.
22. Class Assignment – Give the students a bucket full of secret assignments and have them pick one out and complete it as a class. Examples might be...create a statue depicting something you are learning about in Social Studies...figure out a way to get everyone in the air at the same time...everyone make a basket...run in a straight line.
23. “I See” – The teacher says, “I See”. Students respond with, “What do you see”. The teacher says, “I see...groups of 3 people running together or...4 people doing the Hokey Pokey or...partners skipping”.
24. Zoo – For younger students...have them enter and become a moving, noise making animal. Try it with every student having to choose a different animal!
25. Secret (or Spot to Spot) Exercises – Place exercises under poly spots around the gym, and have students move from spot to spot using different locomotor movements. When the music plays the students switch to a new spot and begin a new exercise. This should be an instant activity...enter the gym and go!
26. “What Did You Eat Today?” – Students walk around and ask as many people as possible what they had to eat today. This activity raises nutrition awareness, like not eating breakfast, good/bad choices at lunch, over eating, junk food, my plate choices, etc.

