



Inject a Refresh!

The CTL has made this list of fun relationship-building classroom activities which we are calling “Inject a Refresh!” We recognize that these activities take time away from content. However, bringing this fun energy into your space may help students to relax and de-stress, allowing their brains to be more available for learning. It may also bring you joy to be playful with your students.

1. Create a group playlist

Have students write their favorite music artists or song titles in the Zoom chat, on a separate Google Doc, or explore Google’s Jamboard, using the recommendations to make a playlist for their class period. This brainstorming session can start conversations between students as they share their tastes and suggest music for others. Name the playlist together and it can be assembled using apps like Spotify Premium, Amazon Music, or YouTube. Consider having the playlist on while students are coming into class.

2. Icebreaker ideas

Using the chat in remote classes or Padlet on phones in socially distanced classrooms, ask students these quick icebreaker prompts:

*Do you know how to say thank you or please in another language?
Share your most indulgent snack craving.
What were you inspired by last weekend?
Describe your mood right now using a potato dish.
Share something that you have learned about yourself this semester.
Describe an act of generosity you experienced recently.*

You can then assign students to a “fast chat” (5 minute pair-share) to share their responses. Padlet also allows students to “like” ideas and comment if you prefer to keep everyone in a large group.

[Community Performance Toolbox](#) is a great resource for fun in-person and online group activities.

3. Mindfulness exercises

It is important to recognize the impact of spending the day on-screen. Provide more breaks than you usually do. A few more short breaks give students time to breathe and reassess. You might suggest that they turn on their videos to start class for an icebreaker and then offer them a moment to turn them off as you are presenting content.

You can also do a short breathing activity where everyone traces the corners of their Zoom video box together:

Breathe in, trace up the left side. Hold your breath, trace across the top. Breathe out, trace down the right side. Hold your breath, trace along the bottom.