

Freeze and Think - Levels A & B

STAY ACTIVE

To support students to connect movement with mindfulness by playing a structured freeze dance game with a calming focus. When the music pauses, students practise cool-down actions to help their bodies and minds settle, linking to Mercury in the Playful Astronauts journey, where balance is needed to manage extremes.



Learning Intentions

Students aim to experience moving and stopping their bodies in a safe, supported way.

Students aim to respond to simple calming actions with adult guidance.

Students aim to participate in a predictable movement routine with others.



Success Criteria

I can move my body or part of my body when the music plays.

I can stop or pause my movement when the music stops with support.

I can copy or experience a calming action shown by an adult.

I can stay with the group for part or all of the activity.



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Duration: 8 - 12 minutes

Objective

To support students to connect movement with mindfulness by playing a structured freeze dance game with a calming focus. When the music pauses, students practise cool-down actions to help their bodies and minds settle, linking to Mercury in the Playful Astronauts journey, where balance is needed to manage extremes.

Players

Whole class or small groups

Suitable for 3 - 16 students

Played seated, standing, or in wheelchairs

What You Need

Music player or speaker

Music with a steady, predictable beat

Optional: large visual cards showing calming actions (breathe, hug self, hands on heart, stretch)

AAC devices, switches, or communication boards as required

Setup

Clear a safe movement space with clear boundaries.

Students may sit, stand, or remain in wheelchairs.

Introduce the activity using simple, consistent language:

“We will be moving our bodies.”

“When the music stops, we stop.”

“Then we will try and calm our bodies.”

Briefly connect to the Mercury theme in simple terms:

“Mercury can feel very hot or very cold.”

“Our feelings can feel like that too.”

“We can stop, think, and calm our bodies.”

“Stopping helps us feel calm.”

Demonstrate each calming action slowly so students can watch and copy.

Ensure AAC devices are switched on and open to basic action or regulation words.



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Gameplay

Step 1: Adult Modelling of Calm Actions

Before starting the music, practise the calming actions together.

Model one action at a time, for example:

- One slow breath in and out (eyes closed or open)
- Hands on heart - gentle breathing
- Hugging self
- Gentle arm stretch

Say while modelling:

"This is calming me down and making my body feel good."

Activate or point to a matching AAC symbol if available.

Repeat actions so students experience the movement without pressure.

Step 2: Move and Freeze

Start the music and model simple movements such as:

- Swaying bodies
- Tapping hands on thighs
- Rolling shoulders
- Swinging arms

Encourage students to move in their own way.

After a short time, stop the music.

When the music stops:

Students pause or slow their movement.

The adult immediately models one calming action.

Students copy, watch, or experience the action with support.

The adult narrates:

"Stop."

"Now try and be calm with me."

Restart the music and repeat for several short rounds.

Use the same calming action for multiple rounds if helpful.

Step 3: Repeat and Regulate

Continue for several cycles, keeping transitions predictable.

End the activity with one final calming action together.

Stop early if students show signs of fatigue or dysregulation.



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Debrief / Reflection

Keep reflection brief and concrete.

Ask one question at a time with wait time:

“Did stopping help you feel calm?”

“Can we try and be calm again?”

Accept responses through eye gaze, gestures, AAC, facial expression, or movement.

Reinforce the key message:

“Stopping helps our bodies feel better.”

Winning the Game

There are no winners or losers.

Success is shown through participation, shared attention, and experiencing calm.

Sensory-Specific Learner Variation

- Purpose: To support regulation, predictability, and sensory comfort.
- Adjustments may include:
 - Using slower music with a steady rhythm.
 - Keeping movement bursts very short.
 - Using the same calming action every time.
 - Offering strong proprioceptive calming actions (press hands together).
 - Allowing observation-only participation before joining in.

AAC-Specific Supports

Prepare AAC in Advance

Ensure access to symbols such as: stop, calm, breathe, finished, again.

Use single-message switches if appropriate.

Model AAC Consistently

Adults activate AAC every time they stop the music or model calm.

Supported Participation

Students may:

- Activate a switch for “stop” or “calm”
- Use eye gaze or pointing
- Copy an adult’s gesture

AAC Reflection

Ask:

“Calm?”

Students respond using AAC, gesture, or yes/no signals.



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Accessibility and Inclusion Notes

All movements and calm actions can be done seated or standing.

Upper-body-only movement is always appropriate.

Ensure clear pathways and adequate space for wheelchair users.

Allow students to move fingers, hands, or heads instead of full-body movement.

Celebrate all attempts equally.

Teacher Notes

“Freeze and Think – Levels A & B” supports early self-regulation, joint attention, listening to cues, and movement control. The activity is not about independent self-control, but about experiencing stopping and calming with trusted adult support. Repeated use builds familiarity with pause–calm routines and reinforces the Mercury theme of balance in a concrete, body-based way.

