

Freeze and Think - Levels C & D

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 use movement to help their bodies feel calm and in control.



Students aim to practise simple calming actions to support emotional regulation.

Students aim to stop, think, and choose a peaceful action when prompted.



Success Criteria

I can move my body safely while the music is playing.

I can freeze my body when the music stops and practise a calming action.

I can listen carefully and participate respectfully with others.



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Duration: 10 - 15 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 6 - 26 students

Played in an open indoor or outdoor space

What You Need

Music player or speaker

Upbeat music (instrumental or familiar songs)

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

AAC devices or communication boards as required

Setup

1. Clear a safe movement space, ensuring students have room to move without bumping into others.
2. Explain the purpose of the game using simple language:
 - "We will move our bodies."
 - "When the music stops, we freeze and calm ourselves."
3. Revisit the Mercury theme:
 - "Mercury can feel very hot or very cold."
 - "Our feelings can feel like that too."
 - "We can stop, think, and calm our bodies."
4. Demonstrate each calming action slowly so students can see what to do.
5. Confirm AAC devices are on and open to feelings, actions, or regulation pages.



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Gameplay

Step 1: Teach the Calming Actions

Before starting the music, practise each calming action together, for example:

- Taking one deep breath in and out
- Hugging yourself
- Stretching arms up tall
- Placing hands on your heart

Explain:

"When the music stops, we freeze, then we choose one calm action."

Step 2: Play the Game

1. Start the music and encourage students to move freely and safely.
2. After a short time, stop the music suddenly.
3. When the music stops:
 - Students freeze their bodies.
 - Students complete a calming action (teacher calls one out or students choose).
4. Restart the music and repeat for several rounds.
5. Encourage students to try different calming actions across rounds.

Adults support by modelling actions and giving clear visual or verbal cues.

Debrief / Reflection

Gather students and ask one question at a time:

- "How did your body feel after you stopped and breathed?"
- "Which calm action helped you the most?"
- "When could you use this at school?"

Reinforce the message:

"When we stop and calm our bodies, we can think more clearly."



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Winning the Game

There are no winners or losers.

The goal is to enjoy movement and practise calming strategies that help during big energy or strong feelings.

Sensory-Specific Learner Variation

Purpose: To support regulation needs and safe participation.

Adjustments include:

- Use slower music or shorter movement bursts for students who become overstimulated.
- Offer heavy work calming actions (pressing hands together, wall push).
- Allow students to observe first and join when ready.
- Use predictable timing for music stops to reduce anxiety.
- Provide a quiet break space if students need to regulate before rejoining.

AAC-Specific Supports

1. Prepare AAC in Advance

- Pages with: stop, breathe, calm, hug, stretch, feel better

2. Model AAC Use

- Teacher selects symbols while demonstrating actions

3. Supported Participation

- Students may indicate their chosen calming action using AAC or pointing
- Eye gaze or gesture is accepted

4. AAC Reflection

- Ask: "What helps you feel calm?"
- Students respond using AAC, gesture, or facial expression



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Accessibility and Inclusion Notes

- All movements and calming actions can be completed seated or standing.
- Encourage upper-body movements for students who prefer or require them.
- Ensure clear pathways and adequate spacing for wheelchair users.
- Allow students to sway, tap, or move hands instead of full-body dancing.
- Celebrate effort, participation, and calm choices equally.

Teacher Notes

“Freeze and Think – Levels C & D” supports self-regulation, listening skills, movement control, and mindful decision-making. It works well as a warm-up, transition activity, or post-break reset. Repeated use helps students build a reliable habit of stopping, calming, and choosing thoughtful actions, reinforcing the Mercury theme of balance and calm response.

