

# BRAIN GAMES

## HOLIDAY HEROES



Welcome to Holiday Heroes!  
 This week it's time for some **brain games!**  
 Discover five fun activities below...  
 How many can you complete over the winter break?

**Collect your credits!**  
 You can claim 1 credit for each activity you do. Log the activity on Aspire to unlock your credit!  
[www.cus-aspire.com](http://www.cus-aspire.com)  
 (You can only log each activity once.)

### 1. INFORMATION RELAY

Write some silly actions on a few pieces of paper e.g. wiggle your toes, shout out, or wave an arm. Write down as many as you like. Fold them and put them in a bowl. Make a human chain with space between each person. Player 1 picks a message and starts a chain to deliver the message from person to person all the way to the end. The person at the end of the line does the action. Can you work out who is playing the brain, who are nerve cells and who is the action?

*You will need: 3+ players, pen, paper, bowl*

### 2. ILLOGICAL ILLUSION

Amaze with a disappearing matchstick!  
**1)** Securely tape the match to your thumb nail, so when your thumb faces downward the red match tip is on top. Make sure you can't see the tape and match when you hold your hand out palm up. **2)** Make a fist so it looks like you're holding the match upright. **3)** Add some magical words and gestures. **4)** Voilà! Open your hand to show the audience your palm. The match appears to have disappeared into thin air!

*You will need: Sticky tape, match, an audience, practising time*

### 3. BRAINY BREATHS

Try some lion breaths! Sit comfortably. Take a breath in for 3 seconds and then a breath out for 5 seconds, forcefully, making a loud 'ha' sound at the end of your exhale. Relax your face as you breath in and repeat 3 times. How does it feel?

*You will need: Just a comfy, quiet space*

### 4. MEMORY LOOP

For 2 or more players. Player 1 starts by saying 'I'm going camping and I'm going to bring...' and then says one thing. Player 2 repeats, saying player 1's element and adding a new one. Keep going with all players. Play continues until someone forgets an element or repeats one that's been said. How long can you keep the loop going?

*You will need: 2+ players*

FIND MORE **FREE** ACTIVITIES AT:  
[www.childrensuniversity.scot](http://www.childrensuniversity.scot)

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### 5. LEFT OR RIGHT?

Work out if you use mostly your right side, left side or both! Set aside some time and try these activities with each side of your body. **1.** Write your name. **2.** Kick a ball. **3.** Listen to a quiet sound or through a door. Keep a note. Do you use your right side, left side or both?

*You will need: pencil, paper*



# FACT FILE

## FACT 1: BRAINY BREATHS

Ever heard the phrase **flight, fight or freeze**? This is one way our **nervous system** tries to keep us safe from danger, by getting our body ready to fight off danger, run away (flee) or freeze still. But our brains don't always get it right. We might feel nervous about a big test or public performance, but sometimes our brain might think it's a sabre-tooth tiger trying to eat us for lunch!

Breathing exercises like Brainy Breaths can help you feel calmer when this happens. This is because when we breathe out for a little longer than we breathe in, our body sends a message to our brain saying "actually, everything's okay right now".

## FACT 2: ILLOGICAL ILLUSION

It's always fun to watch a magician amaze with spectacular illusions. The real trick is about where the audience's **attention** is focused.

Did you enjoy performing the match trick? The most important part is how you use your voice, arms and non-match hand. Make the audience's attention shift away from where the trick is happening, and you'll be a top magician in no time!

## FACT 3: INFORMATION RELAY

Activity 3 is all about how your brain works with your nervous system to send messages. Did you work it out?

Player 1 is the brain choosing an action.

The players passing the message along are nerve cells in the body.

The player who does the action is what happens after the nerve message gets all the way to the end.

The real messengers in your body are billions of tiny nerve cells. They send millions of messages per second for you to move, talk, feel and react!

## FACT 4: MEMORY LOOP

Your memory is amazing! Like a muscle, it's important to do activities that help you practise remembering information. The more you do it, the stronger your memory gets.

Some other things we can do that help improve our memory: playing active outdoor games, eating a healthy balanced diet, getting plenty of sleep and trying some meditation.

## FACT 5: LEFT OR RIGHT?

90% of people in the world are right-handed, 9-10% are left-handed and less than 1% are ambidextrous (use both hands equally) Which category do you fall into? Does it match with the results of your left or right experiments?

Fun fact: the left side of your brain controls the right side of your body, and vice versa! Weird, right?