



# Alternatives to Withholding Recess



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## Alternatives to With Holding Recess

Given the value of recess in a student's physical and social development, and the need for periodic breaks from classroom instruction, using recess as punishment is inappropriate. Listed below are some alternatives to withholding recess.

### **ZERO-COST ALTERNATIVES**

1. Sit by friends
2. Watch a video
3. Read outdoors
4. Teach the class
5. Have extra art time
6. Extra music and reading time
7. Homework coupon
8. Coupon for prizes and privileges
9. Enjoy class outdoors
10. Play a computer game
11. Read to a younger class
12. Get a no homework pass
13. Make deliveries to the office
14. Listen to music while working
15. Play a favorite game or puzzle
16. Earn play money for privileges
17. Walk with a teacher during lunch
18. Be a helper in another classroom
19. Eat lunch with a teacher or principal
20. Dance to favorite music in the classroom
21. Get "free choice" time at the end of the day
22. Listen with a headset to a book on audiotape
23. Have a teacher perform special skills (i.e. sing)
24. Have a teacher read a special book to the class
25. Recognition with morning announcements
26. Chat break at the end of class
27. Taking care of the class pet
28. Extra recess
29. Small playground equipment to check out
30. Leading the class to lunch, recess, library or other adventure
31. Music concert at school
32. Walk break from class
33. Have lunch or breakfast in the classroom
34. Private lunch in classroom with a friend
35. Show-and-tell
36. Play favorite game
37. Teacher performs special skill: cartwheel, guitar playing
38. First to line up.

39. Teacher's helper.

## **LOW-COST ALTERNATIVES**

- 40. Select a paperback book
- 41. Enter a drawing for donated prizes
- 42. Take a trip to the treasure box
- 43. Get stickers, pencils, and other school supplies
- 44. Receive a video store or movie theater coupon
- 45. Get a set of flash cards printed from a computer
- 46. Receive a "mystery pack" (notepad, folder, sports cards, etc.)
- 47. Certificate/trophy/ribbon/plaque
- 48. Gift certificate to local food merchants
- 49. Free pass to sporting event or play
- 50. Pencil toppers
- 51. Stickers
- 52. Pencils
- 53. Stars or smiley faces
- 54. GAME DAY: Students earn letters to spell game day...after the letters have been earned, we play reading or phonics-type board games. Kids love "Game Day!"
- 55. FRIDAY FREE TIME: Students have thirty minutes at the beginning of the week and they can earn or lose free time according to their behavior.  
Use a timer and turn it on (they can hear it) if they are too loud working, lining up, etc. Add time when their behavior is good. Adding time is the most effective. You will save time by not waiting for them to settle down so their free time is really reclaiming time that would have been lost.

## **DISCIPLINE ALTERNATIVES**

- 56. Write a letter of apology to the person who has been wronged and Discuss with teaching the importance of apologies
- 57. Write a letter to parents/guardians explaining why behavior is inappropriate or disruptive and stating what student will try to do to change behavior
- 58. Take away privilege of choice for class or individual activity when choice is built into activity
- 59. Do make up work during free choice time
- 60. Have students sit away from the group to do class work and have them "earn" their way back into the group activities
- 61. Have student work with teacher to develop a plan for behavior change tied to incremental privileges
- 62. Create a behavior charts with students that identifies a target behavior and agreed upon reinforcements and rewards for chronic behavior issue



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