



ARTS INTEGRATION AT HOME

CROSS THE ROOM IF...

Through these arts integration activities we want to offer a few simple, creative, educational, and arts-based ways to spice up your distance learning. The directions for the activity are shared in two ways - for caregivers/teachers and for kids who can read so they can do the activity independently. Have fun, and feel free to share what you do with us.

Tips for how to utilize these strategies:

- Use this strategy today, or print it out for a later date.
- Feel free to use a strategy more than once. Repetition will help students become familiar with the directions and then be able to take more ownership of sharing what they know through the activity.
- Play them for fun - you don't have to stick to talking about school information.

CROSS THE ROOM IF...

Cross the Room If... (also known as Stand Up If) is a tried and true warm-up game. It's typically used as a way to get to know each other as a new group gathers. But for classroom and distance learning, it is a great way to share opinions and thoughts and spark deeper discussion. Depending on how you choose to engage, it can be a way to get to know your kid's perspective even better. This activity requires a little bit of preparation, in the form of writing statements around the decided topic or focus.

I learned ***Cross the Room If...*** from a variety of theater educators. You can see a longer description of the activity in the link below from the [Drama-Based Instruction](#) website created by Drama for Schools at The University of Texas at Austin.

Cross the Room/Stand Up If: <https://dbp.theatredance.utexas.edu/teaching-strategies/cross-room-stand-if>

These activities are curated by Sarah Coleman, Portland Ovations' Director of Engagement/School Programs. Sarah is a theatre educator, an arts integration specialist, and a former classroom teacher who has taught students in grades K - college as well as led professional development workshops for teachers around the country for over 15 years.





ARTS INTEGRATION AT HOME

CROSS THE ROOM IF...

DIRECTIONS FOR CAREGIVERS/TEACHERS

Before you play, you need to write up a few statements that you can use during the activity. Decide with your student what topic they want to focus on. You can approach this in two ways - by creating statements that get them to share their opinion about a topic or by writing statements that invite them to take on a role within the topic. Here are examples of these two options.

Opinion: If they choose a book they are reading, like *The Hate U Give*, you might write a statement such as, “cross the room if all your friends look like you,” followed by “cross the room if you have ever been friends with someone who is very different from you.” Another example of an opinion-seeking statement is, “cross the room if you prefer to read fiction over nonfiction.

In Role: This means that the student plays as someone other than themselves - like a number or a shape or a historical character. You can write the name of the object or person they might be on a post-it note to remember. “Cross the room if you have four 90 degree angles.” “Cross the room if you were an activist during the Civil Rights Movement.”
[Tip: Create a few statements for each role they play.]

Once you are ready to play, stand across from each other so there are about five feet or so between each side. Anyone can read the statement but it’s helpful to have the same person read the statements and facilitate the conversation. Read the statement, and if they agree with it they cross to the other side. Then, as appropriate, pause after reading a statement to reflect on it. You might ask, “how are you very different from your friends?” “Why do you prefer nonfiction?” “What activist work did you do?” Each of these questions invites students to share more of their opinion or what they know about a topic. Cross the room and discuss

Follow up Questions

1. What did it feel like to answer a question with your body as opposed to your voice?
2. What discussions did the activity help you to have?

Follow up questions allow kids to practice [reflection and metacognition](#) (thinking about one’s thinking) both of which are key parts of effective learning.





ARTS INTEGRATION AT HOME

CROSS THE ROOM IF...

DIRECTIONS FOR KIDS

How to do this activity

1. Before you play, you need to write up a few statements that you can use during the activity.
2. Decide what topic you want to focus on.
3. Decide if you want to write statements that ask you to share your opinion about a topic or statements that ask you to tell what you know about a topic.

Opinion: If you choose a book like *The Hate U Give*, you might write a statement such as, “cross the room if all your friends look like you,” followed by “cross the room if you have ever been friends with someone who is very different from you.” Another example of an opinion-seeking statement is, “cross the room if you prefer to read fiction over nonfiction.”

In Role: This means that you pretend to be something else (like a number or a shape or a famous person) when you answer the statements. If you were pretending to be shapes, you might write a statement like, “cross the room if you have four 90 degree angles.” Or, if you were pretending to be a historical figure, you might write a statement like, “cross the room if you were an activist during the Civil Rights Movement.”

4. Once you are ready to play, stand across from each other so there are about five feet or so between each side.
5. Decide who will read the statements.
6. Read the statement, and if you agree with it cross to the other side. Then, as appropriate, pause after the statement to talk more about it. Why did you answer the way you did?

Then What?

Make statements for others in your family to get to know them better. Then lead them in a game of Cross the Room If!

Follow up Questions

1. What did it feel like to answer questions with your body as opposed to your voice?

2. What discussions did the activity help you to have?

