Answers to Exercise 2.2

Incorporating Physical Movement

1. Mr. Rush’s language arts class has been reading poetry. In order to help the students begin to think about the abstract concepts in the poems and to lift the energy level in the room, he asks his students to stand. “I’m going to call out a word, and I want you to do something with your body that you think represents its meaning.” When he begins by calling out the word beauty, his students are a bit hesitant, but as the exercise continues they begin to have more fun with it and create many different poses.

This classroom scenario depicts the use of movement that furthers understanding. Specifically, it depicts the use of physical representations. Each pose the students strike represents the term Mr. Rush calls out; students are thinking abstractly through conveying abstract movements with their bodies.

2. Students in Mr. Ulrick’s first class of the day are often still tired and lethargic. In order to energize them a bit, he often asks them to stand in the beginning of class and do some simple exercises that are designed to wake up both sides of the brain.

This classroom scenario depicts the use of movement to lift energy. Specifically, Mr. Ulrick is employing stretch breaks. Because Mr. Ulrick’s students are still tired and not at their best in the morning, he wants to energize them so he leads them through some stretches.

3. Ms. Rollin’s choir class has been looking at potential songs for an end-of-year performance. She has put together four possible programs students can choose from. She gives them the song list for each of the four programs at the end of class one day, giving each program a number 1–4. She asks them to think overnight about which program they like best and why. Before class the next day, she places four posters, each with a number (1–4) in different places around the room. When class begins she asks them to stand under the number that represents the program they have chosen. She then asks students under each number to explain why they like that program the best. However, simply liking or disliking the songs in each program is not sufficient. She asks each of them to provide technical justifications, using vocabulary and concepts they have learned throughout the year to articulate their opinions. She finds that while they have not had many in-depth discussions about music in the past, many of her students are able to speak technically and articulately and even have strong opinions. Finally, she gives them a chance to change their votes after having heard the opinions of some classmates.

This classroom scenario depicts the use of movement that furthers understanding. Specifically, Ms. Rollin is asking her students to vote with their feet. By asking them to articulate their opinions using technical vocabulary and
concepts, she is able to elicit a discussion in which students apply what they have learned, thus deepening their understanding of music.

4. Mr. Holmes is having a review session for an upcoming social studies test on different governmental systems in place throughout the world. He tells his students to gather the notes they have on each of the different systems and the countries in which they are employed. He calls out two names randomly and those students pair up. When everyone is paired he says, “You have five minutes to share your notes with one another. You can glean new information that might be on the test this way, and you can clear up any mistakes you may have in your notes.” After the five minutes are up, he calls out names in random pairs again and students repeat the process with a new partner.

This classroom scenario depicts the use of movement that furthers understanding. Specifically, students are using give one, get one to move around the room, find their assigned partner, and then share classroom notes.