



J-Factor (or joy factor) is a technique that honors joy in the classroom in the spirit of learning. Joy is not the remedy to ensure students are working hard, but rather a means of getting through the hard work. This practice effectively impacts the classroom climate, helping build a positive classroom culture and environment, supporting a high-achieving classroom. The key is for teachers to find their own, genuine way to ensure students find joy in the work of learning. “ The finest teachers offer up the work with generous servings of energy, passion, enthusiasm, fun, and humor” (Lemov, 2010).

- Think about your lesson/daily routine and consider the areas where students are less engaged, have more frequent behavior challenges, have trouble completing tasks, or have become bored with the current routine.
- Determine which of the five suggested categories of J-Factor activities (Lemov, 2010) you will use in your classroom (see variations below for examples of each):
  - Fun and Games- Draw on kids’ love for challenge, competition, and play.
  - Us (and Them)- Develop a sense of community by implementing class traditions, rituals, or student nicknames. Children want to belong to a vibrant and recognizable community.
  - Drama, song, and dance- Use music, dramatic play, and movement to raise spirits and establish community identity.
  - Humor- Use laughter to build an environment of happy and fulfilled students-and teachers-but remember laughter should never be at the expense of a student.
  - Suspense and surprise- Introduce new content by making it a mystery and/or surprise. The unexpected can be powerful and the brain loves novelty!
- Teach students how and when to turn it on and off by setting expectations prior to more energetic and active parts of the lesson.
- Provide each student the opportunity to participate.



## ALERTS

Some teachers may shy away from this strategy because “joy” is often correlated with being “loud” and “chaotic”. This technique can be tailored and is still applicable for quiet and structured activities.



## QUICK TIPS

The J-Factor can be designed to motivate individual students, small groups, or large groups. Try mixing it up!

