

Attainment's Whole Brain workouts



MARGE ENGELMAN

Whole Brain Workouts

By Marge Engelman

Edited by Elizabeth Ragsdale and Tom Kinney

Graphic design by Elizabeth Ragsdale

Photography by Beverly Potts

ISBN: 1-57861-589-5

An Attainment Publication

©2006 Attainment Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Printed in the United States of America.



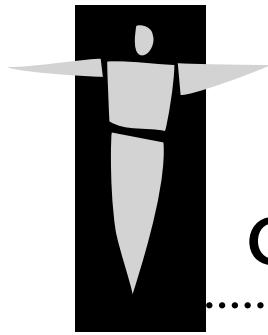
Attainment Company, Inc.

PO Box 930160

Verona, WI 53593-0160

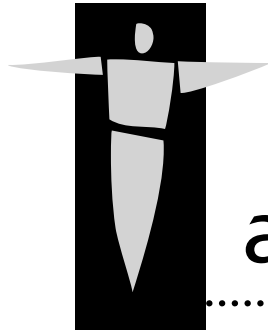
1-800-327-4269

www.AttainmentCompany.com



contents

	About the author	5
	Preface	7
	Acknowledgments	9
1	Getting Started	11
2	Whole Brain Workouts	21
3	Laughter Is Good for the Brain	31
4	Sharpen Your Memory	47
5	Free Your Creativity and Imagination	57
6	Word, Words, Words	77
7	Power Up Your Mind with Puzzles and Numbers	95
8	Strengthen Your Sense of Smell and Taste	105
9	Have Fun with Visual Arts and Illusions	111
10	Build Your Spatial Abilities	123
11	Remember When	131
12	Games Make Brains	145
13	Television and Computers: Help or Hindrance	151
	Appendix A: Answers	157
	Appendix B: Resources	175



about the author

Marge Engelman has been studying and teaching in the field of “learning in the older years” for over 30 years. Her original research focused on encouraging the creative impulse in aging women.

She has a BA in Sociology, MA in Religious Education, MS in Environmental Design, and PhD in Adult Education. She has developed and taught “Aerobics of the Mind” and “Creativity in Aging” to groups in retirement centers, senior centers and adult daycare centers, and in workshops for leaders of these centers. She has lectured throughout Wisconsin and at national meetings on topics related to learning in the later years. She has taught in the Graduate School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She was a Governor’s delegate from the state of Wisconsin to the White House Conference on Aging in 1995.

Marge is 78 years old and keeps her own mind active by auditing classes at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, designing innovative textile projects, growing gourds and developing them into works of art, and writing this book.

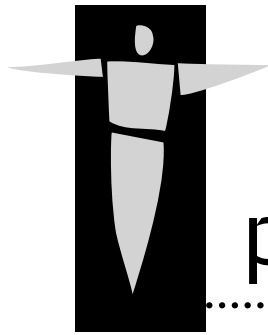
Comments, questions and reactions to the text are welcomed:

Marge Engelman

738 Seneca Place

Madison, WI 53711

email: engelman@wisc.edu



preface

The workouts in this book are for healthy older adults. The 125 exercises aim to apply what researchers are learning about the brain.

It's now accepted knowledge that stimulation of the brain through many kinds of mental exercise produces a thicker cortex, more neurons and dendrites, and stronger synapses. It's believed that the more mentally fit a brain, the longer it may be able to thrive and resist decline. How we use our brains has a great deal to do with how we age!

The workouts can be used by individuals in everyday life. If you live alone, you may want to do some of the exercises and then compare notes via phone or email with another person who's doing them.

You may want to do these exercises with your spouse, adult children or other relatives and friends. Some are appropriate to do with your grandchildren.

Activity directors will find many of the activities ideal for adult groups in senior centers, retirement homes, churches and other social settings.

Caregivers, whether in the home or in more formal settings, will find the workouts helpful to use with those in their care.

A new profession—mental fitness coaching—is peeking around the corner. Persons doing this coaching will find these exercises invaluable.

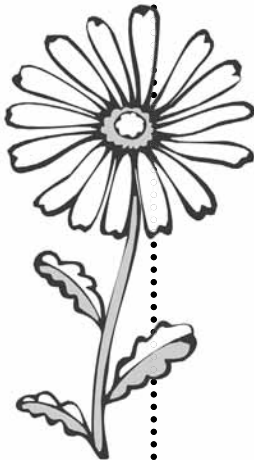
9

Like puns?

Each sentence below makes sense (or at least nonsense) if you insert one of these flower names:

heather	crocus	mimosa	poppy
hyacinth	zinnia	daisy	jonquil
lilac	wisteria	dahlia	

For example: If you insert ASTER in "I _____ to go out for a drive," it makes sense, right?



- Riding the merry-go-round makes me _____.
- He can _____ a trooper.
- It doesn't bother _____ the time.
- He keeps pushing me _____ and you.
- I'll bet you a _____ you're wrong.
- Do you think he's planning to _____?
- I know where my Mommy is but I can't find my _____.
- It's just a bad case of _____.
- Everything is _____ war started again.

10. That pile of _____ only rust if you leave it there.

11. So long, I'll be _____.

10

Humorous captions

Write three humorous captions for the image below.



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

35 Two cartoons

Have you ever wondered how people who draw cartoons come up with such clever words? Here's your chance to use your imagination.

What is the woman saying to the dog as she runs from the bathtub? Write down four possibilities.



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

What are the men saying as they gaze at the flower?
Think of four possibilities.



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

36 Be a composer

Think of a tune you know well and write new words to it.
For example:

Are you sleeping, are you sleeping, brother John, brother
John? Morning bells are ringing, morning bells are
ringing, ding, ding, dong, ding, ding, dong.

New words could be:

Are you hungry, are you hungry, sister Kay, sister Kay?
Dinner bells are gonging, dinner bells are gonging, gong,
gong, ging, gong, gong, ging. *[It's okay to make up new
words.]*

Try new words to this one:

I've been working on the railroad all the live-long day.
I've been working on the railroad just to pass the time
of day. Can't you hear the whistle blowin', rise up so early
in the morn.

This exercise challenges your creativity. Let your mind
spin off and see what comes out. It doesn't have to make
good sense.

37 Bumper stickers

People display bumper stickers to express their thoughts and feelings about everything from pets to politics. For example, you've probably seen stickers similar to these:

- I'D RATHER BE SKIING
- HONK IF YOU LIKE GARDENING

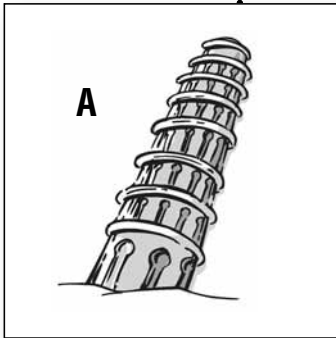
Select four from the following list and create a custom bumper sticker for each of them. Write them down so you can share them with others.

Bumper Stickers

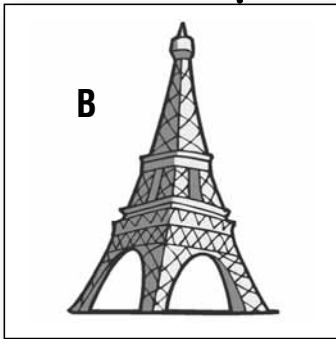
1. A favorite football or baseball player
2. A grandmother
3. A gardener
4. A birder
5. Peace
6. Your hometown
7. Your favorite restaurant
8. A lover of cars

38 What in the world do you know?

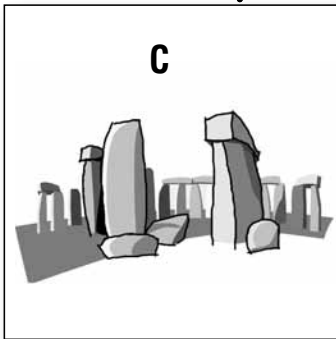
Write the answers to the questions below about each picture. (See Appendix A for answers.)



1. Is this structure more than 300 years old? _____
2. In what country is it located? _____
3. Is the country larger than Mexico? _____
4. Is this place north or south of the equator? _____
5. On what continent is it located? _____



1. Is this structure more than 300 years old? _____
2. In what country is it located? _____
3. Is the country larger than Mexico? _____
4. Is this place north or south of the equator? _____
5. On what continent is it located? _____



1. Is this structure more than 300 years old? _____
2. In what country is it located? _____
3. Is the country larger than Mexico? _____
4. Is this place north or south of the equator? _____
5. On what continent is it located? _____

68. Tangrams

Here are some ideas of shapes to create.

