# PowerLink Switch Ideas

*All the devices mentioned below are electronic and plug into a PowerLink which is set to provide different functions (timed [minutes or seconds], latch or on/off, direct selection [operates while switch is held], or multiple switch activation)*

## Reading/Writing/Language

* Create interactive shared reading opportunities with setting, character, events simulations
  + Strega Nona bubbling pasta pot (timed or direct)
  + Repeat line switches (timed)
  + Animate animal characters (timed)
  + Mirror ball to animate settings with snowfall or stars (use caution may cause seizures) (timed)
  + Activate lights to represent daytime vs. nighttime (latch/on/off)
  + Activate sound recordings for a books’ setting (timed, direct or errorless)
  + Train lights and whistle
  + Activate an artificial fish tank for underwater animations and sounds
  + Fog machine to add a mysterious effect
  + Turn on a fake fire/fireplace to sit around for story telling
  + Turn on backlighting or flicker backlighting (direct—great for switch tappers) to create a mood for a storytelling
* Page turner
* Tape player to access switch operated audiobook (timed-switch training)
* Turn on/off a microphone for a speech
* Turn on/off a lamp in a reading area
* Spotlight a character or narrator while reading aloud (latch)
* Use a spinner to decide who selects the next book to read or to select a book, genre, fiction or nonfiction, etc.
* Turn on a lighted mirror for phonological awareness activities when working on mouth shapes and producing sounds in words

## Math

* Animated frog or other jumping animal for counting jumps
* Race multiple switch activated animals, cars, etc. to measure distances
* Activate a measuring/pouring cup
* Spinner for data analysis and probability
* Operate electric tally counting machines for voting or counting and comparing data

## Science

* Activate a rock tumbler to see/take pictures of erosion (timed minutes)
* Simulate weather events (lightning—both visual and sound, rain—water pic or misting fan, fan—wind, etc.)
* Water plants or simulate precipitation with a water pic
* Use any electric device to model open (device off) and closed (device on) circuits
* Operate a popcorn machine as a lesson in energy, water evaporation, and heat/pressure
* Operate a fan to race sailboats or to demonstrate wind as energy
* Use a blacklight and ceiling star machine to simulate space or planetarium while learning or reading about the topic
* Adapt materials for a science lab [lighted microscope, centrifuge, measuring scale, heating element/hot plate, incubator, automatic/magnetic stirrer, or burner, electronic balance, etc.]
* Sound meter to measure volume of sounds in the environment
* Seismograph to measure waves/vibrations

## Social Studies/Geography/History/Government

* Activate a train to model transportation (latch or timed)
* Spotlight a “historical figure” while they are giving a speech (latch)
* Explore tools from different time periods [disco lights, mirror ball, tape player, old radios or clocks, record player, overhead projector, electric typewriter, sewing machine, old kitchen appliances, e.g., flip toaster, etc.]
* Operate an electronic timeclock or card stamp or punch with a partner (direct)
* Operate a money/coin counting machine (direct)
* Turn on/off a simulated ATM machine (latch)
* Play the sounds of a courtroom [gavel, judge, bailiff, jury] (latch, direct or timed)
* Operate electric tally counting machines for voting or counting and comparing data
* Operate an LED map of the United States, other continent or world (latch or timed)

## General

* Connect to an interactive bulletin board with lights, music, sounds or animation
* Operate a blender, mixer, juicer, food processor, coffee grinder, ice grinder, ice cream machine or other electronic kitchen tool to provide a service to others in the building or community, to gain independence with a task or participate in a class activity
* Operate a sander, electric drill or screwdriver (timed and partner assisted)
* Electric pencil sharpener—switch adapt to staple papers for classmates as a job (direct)
* Electric stapler—switch adapt to staple papers for classmates as a job (direct)
* Operate a small water fountain or sound machine-to provide soothing sound or to model setting or scene in a book
* Operate a hair dryer to simulate wind or dry something (direct, latch or timed)
* Paper shredder—switch adapt to shred papers for school building as a job (direct, timed) and possibly donate to an animal shelter or humane society
* Power up a sweeper as a partner assisted job (latch)
* Operate an electric can opener to help prepare foods (latch or direct)
* Turn light on/off to indicate a room or space is occupied or unoccupied (latch)
* Operate self-care devices or provide a service [body massage-neck, back, feet, hands, full body mat, nail dryer, hairdryer or footbath] (latch or timed)
* Turn on/off seasonal lights in a room when entering and leaving
* Play games like red light/green light, red rover or musical chairs

## Music/Art

* Pottery wheel (timed minutes)
* Paint spinner (timed seconds)
* Turn on/off radio tuned to a station aligned with book, location, era/historical time-period or genre of music, etc.
* Musical chairs (latch or timed)
* Dry paintings with a fan (latch or timed)
* Operate a scent machine for a calming or energizing effect, or as a simulation linked to an area of study (latch or timed minutes) [“imagine we are walking through a pine forest”… or “She stepped through the door at the end of a long day and smelled clean laundry and lemon scented dusting spray. She had forgotten that housekeeping had visited that day.”]
* Turn on/off a Light Brite to create a dot picture, graph or plot points with partner and color and quadrant choice visual supports