

3 Mindful Breathing Activities for Classroom Transitions

As we move back into our classrooms, it's a good time to return to the basics of mindful breathing and explore ways to keep the practice interesting. Here are three activities to create short moments of mindfulness for your students, especially in transitions between activities. Children can love these playful moments of quiet.

1. SLOW DOWN, LOOK AROUND

Ask your students to stand without making a sound. (This can be a fun game in and of itself.)

Invite them:

"Close your eyes or look down at your hands as you feel yourself standing. Take three mindful breaths." (Leave some silence for them to enjoy.) "Feel your feet on the floor, feel the anchor of your breath. Now lift your eyes and slowly scan the room without speaking. Now we're ready to move on..."

2. ANCHOR HAND

Students who don't like to close their eyes can still feel successful with this activity. Have them use their hands as an object of focus, seeing and feeling the touch of one finger on their outstretched hand. This is great while waiting in a line, waiting for materials to be passed out. Get suggestions from your students for when it might be helpful for them.

Invite your students:

"Hold up the hand you don't write with (the non-dominant hand), spread your fingers out wide. Use the index finger of the hand you use to write with, and tune in to the tempo of your breath. Now trace each outspread finger in time with a full cycle of breath. Feel your tracing finger move up as you inhale, keep looking as your finger moves down the other side, and you exhale. When you get to the end of your hand, your thumb or little finger, just reverse and keep on breathing and looking."

3. SPHERE BREATHING

Students love this when they're backstage before going on to perform, or on the bench waiting for their turn in kickball.

Invite them:

"Pretend you're holding a large balloon in both hands, with relaxed elbows. When you inhale, gently pull your fingers apart so there's plenty of space between your fingers. Feel that long cool inhale. As you exhale, slowly bring your fingers back to gently touch. After a few cycles of breath, close your eyes and notice if you can bring your fingers back precisely. This fun game can be challenging: each time might feel different. Stay curious!"

Learn more about the research-backed Mindful Schools K-12 Curriculum in the [Mindful Educator Essentials](#) course.