

2 Hand breathing

Core Mindfulness Practice Poster 3

Pupils practise focusing on their breath and noticing that this can change how they feel.

Intention: Pupils practise focus and awareness of emotional states.



SEL competency: Self-management Learn to ask for help

Duration: 3–5 minutes

Materials: Use Poster 3 for visual support. Use Posters 1 and 2 for visual support for emotions vocabulary

Key words: belly, breath, breathe in/out, calm, chest, finger, hand, nose, stressed, thumb; emotions vocabulary

Instructions:

Prepare

- 1 You may want to pre-teach the key words for this activity. Use pupils' first language when needed.
- 2 Introduce the practice: *We're going to learn a practice that helps us to be calmer. It might be useful when you need help.*
- 3 Say: *Let's explore our breath. Can you feel your breath in your body? Is it in your nose?* Encourage pupils to breathe through their nose if they can. Allow them time to notice where they feel their breath. *Can you feel your breath in your chest? Put your hand on your chest and see if you can feel it there. Can you feel your breath in your belly? Put your hand there and see if you can feel it. Now let's follow the breath in and out.* Allow pupils to try this for a few moments.

Practise

- 4 Now invite pupils to begin the opening routine: *Please sit up with your back straight. Put your feet flat on the floor. Remember you are in your special bubble.*

- 5 See **Poster 3** for visual support. Hold up your right hand, palm facing towards your pupils. Show them how you can follow your in-breath and out-breath by moving your left index finger up and down the fingers on your right hand. Start with the thumb and then move up and down each finger on your right hand in turn. You may need to make your breaths quite loud to demonstrate this to pupils. When you get to the little finger, return back through the fingers to the thumb on the same hand.
- 6 When you have finished, invite pupils to do the same: *Show me your right hand. Show me this finger* (showing your index finger as a model) *on your left hand. When you breathe in, the finger goes up, when you breathe out, the finger goes down.*
- 7 Get pupils to do this mapping of the hand back and forth two or three times. Make sure they follow their breath and that they do this slowly and carefully; it's not a race, but rather a focusing practice.
- 8 Note that it is normal to lose focus. The more pupils practise coming back to their breath, the better they get at training their attention. Support any pupils who lose concentration: *Don't worry. It's normal. Start again at the thumb.*

Reflect

- 9 Ask: *How do you feel now?* (happy, tired, etc.) *Is it different from before?* Use **Posters 1 and 2** for emotions vocabulary.
- 10 Bring the practice to a close. Remind pupils: *When you feel stressed in some way (sad, angry, scared, frustrated, etc.), you can try doing this practice to help feel calm. What do you think? Then if you need help with something, you can ask.*

5 fingers, 5 breaths and a smile.