

Week 2

Mindful Breathing with Flowers

OBJECTIVE: Model and practice deep breathing.

> ASCA Standard:

PREPARE: Bell or chime, flower pictures (see Appendix) or an artificial flower

B-SMS 2.
Demonstrate self-discipline and self-control

Opening: *Hello again lovely learners! Did anyone feel peace in your body since I saw you last? If you did, I'd love to hear about it.*

Call on students who want to share, reminding students that peace is a feeling of calmness both inside our bodies and outside us with each other (no one fighting or arguing).



Mindfulness Practice

Say: *Today we are going to start our class by having a Mindful Moment, just like last week. Who remembers what it means to get into our mindful bodies?*

Review the sequence of getting into our mindful bodies, noticing what's happening right now, listening to the bell until it stops, and then raising one hand. Practice these steps again if needed.

Say: *Okay, now that we remember what to do, let's have another Mindful Moment. Let's all get into our mindful bodies, close or cover our eyes, and notice what's happening right now. You may notice sounds inside the classroom, your breathing, or something else. We will tell what we noticed in a few moments after I ring the bell and we raise a hand. For now, we will continue to be quiet and just notice all that is happening right now....*

After a period of quiet, ring the bell, raise your hand when it stops, and open your eyes.

Ask: *Who would like to share what they noticed?*

Call on all students who raise their hands, and encourage with specific statements such as "that's amazing that you noticed a sound all the way out in the

hallway” and “isn’t it wonderful how much more we can notice when we’re in our mindful bodies than in our regular bodies?”



Lesson

Say: *Today we are going to learn how to do something that is pretty easy. In fact, you already know how to do it and actually are doing it right now. Tap your head if you know how to breathe.*

Everyone can tap their heads, because you’ve been breathing since the day you were born. You don’t even need to think about your usual way of breathing because your body knows how to do it automatically.

But today we’re going to learn about a special way to breathe called belly breathing. The air around us contains a chemical called oxygen. We can’t smell it or see it, but it’s there, and it’s very good for our bodies. When we think about our breathing and do it very deeply, then we are getting oxygen deep into our bodies, from our bellies down to our toes. It feels really good to our bodies to get all this nice oxygen deep down inside. Are you ready to learn how to breathe deeply?

Show the picture of the flower or your artificial/real flower. Hold up one finger.

Say: *This finger is my pretend flower. Watch as I smell my flower very slowly (**bring your finger close to your face as you model this**) and notice how my belly goes out (**point to your extended belly**). Let’s all try that together, and let’s try to make our “sniff” last for four seconds. I’ll count, ready? Let’s all smell our flowers..2, 3, 4. Great job!*

Repeat several times as needed.

Say: *Now that we’ve breathed in all this great air and oxygen, what does our body need to do? Yes, blow it out! Here’s how we do that when we’re belly breathing.*

*Then I will softly blow the petals off my flower (**bring your finger toward your face as you slowly blow**) and notice how my belly goes in now.*

TEACHING TIP: Model blowing as soft, quiet, and controlled. Some kids will want to make loud and noisy blows; just remind them to blow so quietly that others can't hear them.

Invite the children to practice this with you. Try to make the blows last four seconds, just like the sniffs. When everyone seems to understand the exercise, try it together as a group.

Say: *Now that we've got the hang of flowers and petals breathing, let's try it together. We'll smell our flowers and blow our petals three times. One hand will be our flowers, while the other hand can rest on our bellies as we feel them fill up with the air we breathe in, and then go soft again. **Model placing one finger in front of you and your other hand on your belly.** We will also try to make our breaths last for four seconds while I count. Are we ready? Here we go. Smell your flower, 2, 3, 4...and blow your petals, 2, 3, 4. **Repeat for three breaths total.***

Say: *If we already know how to breathe, why do we need to know how to belly breathe?*

Facilitate a discussion on why it's good to know another way to breathe. Mainly because it feels good to our bodies, and helps us have that peaceful feeling discussed last week.



Kindness Pals: Not introduced until Unit 2

Closing

Call on all students to name a time they can practice belly breathing during the week, at home or at school. Some suggestions may be when they are running and need to "catch their breath," before bedtime, or just alone in their rooms. Challenge each student to show another person how to belly breathe, too!

Say: *Try to practice your belly breathing with your flower at least once more this week, and we'll talk about it in our next **Peace of Mind** class. Have a great week!*

Optional Lesson Extensions:

Video - *Belly Breathe* by Sesame Street (widely available online at YouTube or other educational video websites). Have the children watch this short video featuring Elmo, Common, and Colbie Callait and practice belly breathing along

with the characters in the song. *Warning, this is such a catchy tune and adorable video the students will beg for it again and again!*

Exercise – Have students stand up and run in place for 20-30 seconds, then place their hands on their hearts and notice how fast they are beating. Take three belly breaths together and then notice if anything feels different. Most will notice that their heart has slowed down.

Drawing – Give students blank paper folded in half. On one side they draw their flower they are pretending to smell, and on the other side they draw the same flower with some of the petals falling off to indicate blowing.

Book – *Take A Deep Breath* by Sue Graves. Read this book and have the students practice belly breathing along with the children in the story. Discuss how belly breathing helped the children in each scenario. Invite students to think of a time they might be able to use belly breathing to help them, too.

