

ART FOR WELLBEING IN THE CLASSROOM

PERSONAL BALANCE – BREATHING MEDITATION

Good for	<p>Focusing a group Group cohesion Getting to know each other Feeling relaxed and freeing up mind and body Using the imagination Building individual, partner, and group sensitivity Linking to nature, home, and place</p> <p>Whole class / group of 10-15 people</p>
Length	10-15 mins
Resources	<p>Hall / Outdoors (set boundaries – 20m), in PE lessons If space is limited groups can sit on chairs in concentric circles, facing inwards Music (forest music) Mats to lie on Sketchbooks, paper, pencils Peacock feathers / juggling beanbags</p>
Actions	<p>The leader sets up the room – the group can sit on the floor or on chairs in a circle. If engaging a class you can arrange inner and outer circles.</p> <p>Invite the group to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lie down in a circle on mats, feet towards the centre of the circle. We will check in with ourselves and how we feel today, close your eyes.</i> • <i>Forest Music - Imagine you are lying on the forest floor, there is a gentle breeze, and you can hear sounds of the breeze through the trees. Notice how your body feels today. Are you feeling, tired, relaxed, nervous, fidgety, or calm?</i> • <i>Close your eyes. Focus on your breathing. Breathe in slowly and notice your tummy slowly filling with air, and gently breathe out. Breathe in gently for the count of 4, hold for 4 counts, breathe out slowly, count of five.</i> • <i>Notice where your body might hold some tension, or perhaps you may have had an accident; sprained your ankle. Focus on that area and do the breathing exercise again (1min)</i> • <i>Notice the sounds in the room (1min)</i> • <i>Notice the sounds you can hear outside (1min)</i>



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- Notice the sounds in your body, focus on your breathing. When you listen to your body you might hear a ringing in your ear. If you are thinking about something, about school, home, something you have been doing today, a worry, just notice it, observe it, then go back to focusing on your breath, breathing in and out slowly and listening to the sounds around you.
- Imagine your bellybutton is the centre of your body. Continue to breathe slowly in and out focussing on your bellybutton going up and down. This is your centre of your body. When a thought comes into your head notice it, then concentrate and focus back to your breathing, again, focus on your belly button, your centre. Breathe into your centre, into your tummy and feel your chest filling your lungs and tummy and breathe gently out. (20/30sec)
- Take a deep breath in and hold 123 – breath out 123. Repeat once more
- Slowly open your eyes and come back into the room.

We use breathing exercises in meditation to help calm the mind and body.

Turn to your partner and share your experience with your partner what did you hear?
 What did you notice? Were you able to focus and concentrate on your breathing?
 How did it make you feel?

Draw an image of a tree in a forest. Draw you in the forest. Write some words to describe your experiences and what you have learnt about yourself from the last exercise.

- Share in a group and write 1- 3 words in your sketch book of common experiences

Tips	A quiet focused place is needed. Play pass the clap game first (Section 1 Activity 2) to gain focus, or a name game (Section 1). Set an intention to listen carefully.
Variation	For fun and play you can use objects. Try balancing feathers on hands / juggling beanbags on heads. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance a feather on your fingertip. Focus on the top. Move your hand to under the top of the feather. (2min) Notice how you control the feather and your movements. Direct yourself around the room. Avoid bumping into each other. (1-2min)

