



USE WITH:

Individual students, small group, or whole class



GRADE LEVEL:

Upper elementary, middle school, or high school



CONTEXT:

Remote friendly

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Strengthen Focus with Mindfulness

Help students focus using mindfulness techniques.

Created by [SERP Institute](#)

Description:

Students will use different mindfulness techniques to minimize distraction and enhance their focus.

Prep time needed:

5 minutes

Est. time to complete:

2 minutes

Steps:

1. Visit the [Focus 5 website](#) and download the exercise cards.
2. Review the mindfulness exercises and decide if you'd like to introduce them sequentially (the earlier exercises are simpler) or in a different order. Each exercise takes less than 5 minutes.
3. When getting ready to lead your class in an exercise, try to eliminate distractions. Let your students know that the exercises can help increase their focus, well-being, and success in school.
4. Invite students to close their eyes, or to find a soft gaze.
5. Read each step of the exercise you've chosen, pausing after each prompt to give students time to complete the step. As students become more comfortable with the exercises, you can allow more time between steps for silence and deep breathing.

Tips for Educators:

- Watch [this video](#) to get more familiar with the benefits of these practices.
- As you introduce the cards and exercises, use inclusive language to ensure all students can participate. Example: “stand or sit,” “move your arms or another part of your body in sync with your breath.”
- Emphasize that these practices can be done in a variety of positions. Once the activities are familiar, you could have students sit cross-legged on the floor or in another position that is accessible to them. Note that Exercise 3, "Mind and Motion," is a standing activity.
- Some of these experiences may be new and even overwhelming to students. Provide the option of breathing in and out of their noses with a soft gaze towards the ground as an option for those students who may benefit from an alternative.
- For the "Train of Thought" exercise, preface that letting thoughts go in the moment is not the same as letting them go entirely. Share that this is about learning to place attention where they want to and when they want to. Allowing thoughts to go, and returning to the breath, does not mean that those thoughts are unimportant or inconsequential. In fact, "taking a break" from some thoughts can be useful and can allow them to return to those thoughts with more energy and zest.
- Once the exercises are familiar, consider allowing students to choose which one they'd like to do. You can also invite students to lead the exercises for the class.
- It may make sense to introduce the exercises one at a time, both to let students adjust to the practice and to use time efficiently and minimize disruption.
- Consider making these exercises a daily practice.
- A bell or chime can help to quiet down the class and signal the start and end of the mindfulness exercises.

Inspired by:

1. Zoogman, S., Goldberg, S. B., Hoyt, W. T., & Miller, L. (2014). Mindfulness interventions with youth: A meta-analysis. *Mindfulness*, 6(2), 290-302.

Related Materials:

Focus 5: Download Cards
<https://www.serpininstitute.org/focus-5/download-cards>