

Founded and directed by Lisa Flynn, E-RYT, RCYT, Yoga 4 Classrooms® empowers students and educators to create positive, peaceful, productive classrooms that support exceptional learning and a lifetime of health and wellness. It is our mission to transform educational environments through yoga and mindfulness-based wellness training and support.

Yoga 4 Classrooms® offers:

- Professional development workshops for school professionals
- Staff training and classroom residency program for schools
- Trainer intensives for school professionals and yoga teachers
- Discounted product pricing for schools

To learn more, please visit: www.yoga4classrooms.com

Yoga 4 Classrooms® is a ChildLight Yoga® affiliate organization. ChildLight Yoga® and its affiliates provide evidence-based yoga education to children in schools and communities, and to professionals whose work supports the well-being of children. It is our mission to teach strategies that help children and youth develop resilience, positive perceptions, good health habits and mindful awareness. ChildLight Yoga® offers nationally recognized children's yoga training programs as well as extensive community programming. Learn more at www.childlightyoga.com



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Written by Lisa Flynn • Illustrations by James Vaughn • Design by Good Girl Graphics
Contributions by Charlotte Reznick, Ph.D. • Project Management/Contributions by Sharon Trull

teacher tips

Encourage Mindful Awareness Being mindful means paying close attention to what we are doing or saying, without judgement. As your students practice the Y4C activities (and throughout the rest of their day), encourage them to “get into their mindful bodies”, or to “be mindful”.

Be Safe When we are being mindful, we can “hear” what our bodies are telling us, helping us to avoid injuries. Remind your students to listen to their bodies. When something hurts, back off or take a break as needed.

Emphasize the Breath Be sure to emphasize the breathing instructions for the greatest benefit.

Modeling Do and experience the activities along with your students. You may find yourself pleasantly surprised at the results of these activities on your own state of being!

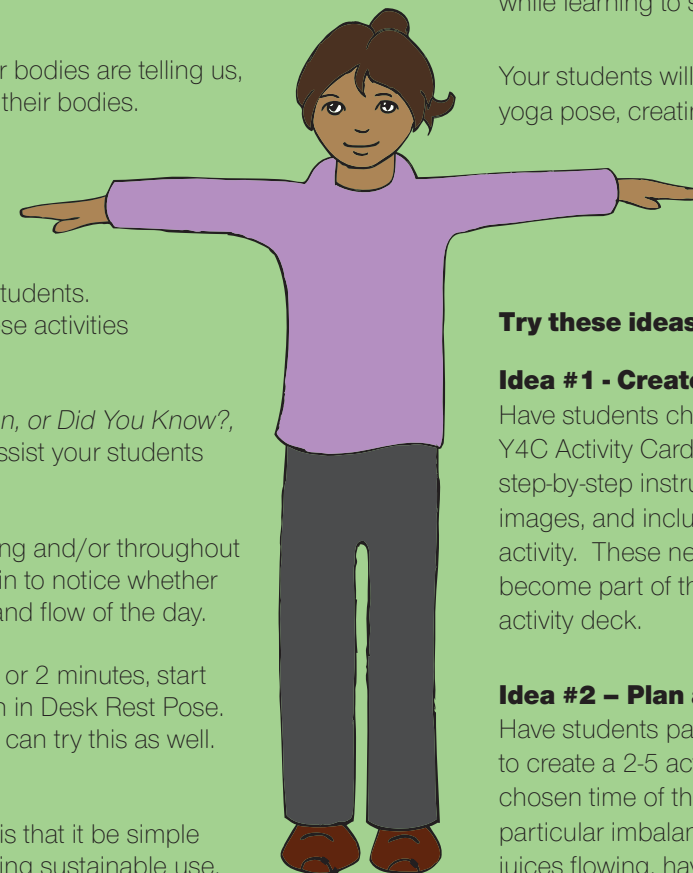
Expansion Ideas Referenced as *Here's an idea!, Discussion, or Did You Know?!*, you are encouraged to utilize the activity expansion ideas to assist your students in integrating the concepts.

Set a Goal Try setting a goal of using Y4C at morning meeting and/or throughout the day, as needed. As you increase use of the activities, begin to notice whether the time spent on Y4C is beneficial to the overall productivity and flow of the day.

Pick a Card Strapped for time? When you have have just 1 or 2 minutes, start with a stretch and a breathing exercise, or a quick visualization in Desk Rest Pose. In a pinch, close your eyes and pull out a card. Your students can try this as well.



Have Fun
The intention of Y4C is that it be simple and fun to use, ensuring sustainable use. You are encouraged to use your own imagination and expand upon the activities, however you see fit for your particular class group and teaching circumstances. There are no hard and fast rules (outside of safety). Have fun with it!



Empowering Your Students

When your class or a particular student is feeling anxious, is overly energetic, etc., begin to challenge your students to choose the most relevant and beneficial activities for the situation at hand. As your students begin to connect the activities to their needs and current states of being, they will be empowered to assist themselves while learning to self-regulate both in and out of the classroom.

Your students will also inevitably have ideas of their own! Whether it is sharing a new yoga pose, creating a story for use as an Imagination Vacation, or suggesting a new Loosen Up activity, students love to be involved in creating and leading the activities. It's a wonderful use of the imagination, and can often serve as an educational tie-in, such as a writing assignment, or math, social studies, art or science project.

Try these ideas:

Idea #1 - Create Your Own Y4C Activity Card

Have students choose a category and create a new Y4C Activity Card. Students should write the step-by-step instructions, draw the related images, and include the benefits of their activity. These new activities can then become part of the rest of the activity deck.

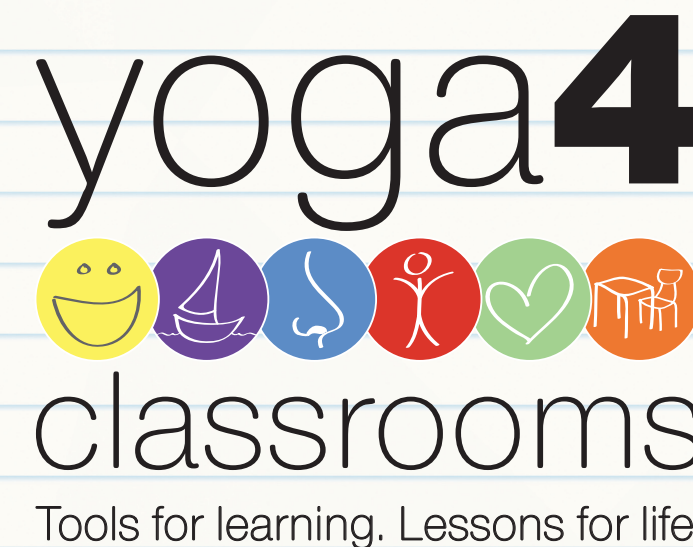
Idea #2 – Plan a Y4C Sequence

Have students pair off or work in groups to create a 2-5 activity sequence for a chosen time of the day, or to address a particular imbalance. To get the creative juices flowing, have groups answer one or more of the following questions:

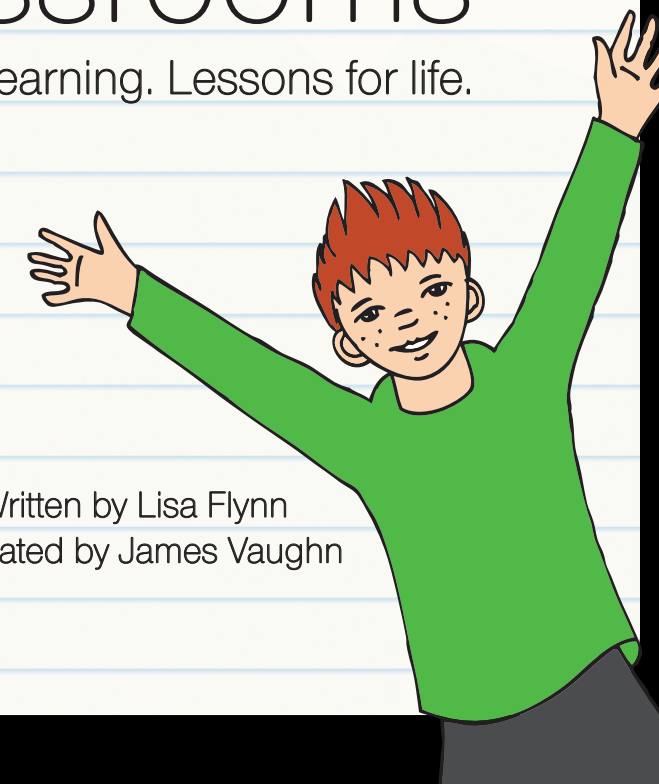
When I'm frustrated, I can help myself to calm down by...and...
When I'm tired, I can give myself a boost of energy by doing...
When I need a break from writing, it can be helpful to...
When my feelings are hurt, I can help myself feel better by...
When I'm having a tough time settling down in my seat, I might...
And so on...



Teacher's Guide



Written by Lisa Flynn
Illustrated by James Vaughn



Tools for learning. Lessons for life.

Science has shown, and educators have experienced first-hand, that when children are anxious, frustrated or stressed, it is nearly impossible for them to learn. It is only from a relaxed, calm and present state of mind and body that our children can be psychologically and physiologically learning-ready.

Yoga 4 Classrooms® is a fun and effective tool for teachers to use with their students for a peaceful and productive classroom. Y4C features 67 yoga and mindfulness-based activity cards which include illustrated instructions, discussion points, sub-activities, and educational tie-ins, for a total of more than 200 beneficial classroom practices. The activities were specially chosen for their suitability for the typical classroom space. That means all activities can be done standing beside or sitting at desks, while bodies and hands remain off the floor, away from dirt and germs. The cards include a mix of yoga postures, brain boosting movements, breath exercises, visualizations, mindfulness activities, creative movement and community-building games. Wellness and character-building discussion points such as the power of positive thinking, nutrition, and being a peacemaker, address the whole child – physical, social and emotional.

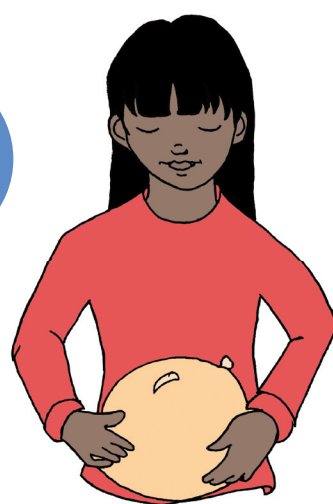
Yoga 4 Classrooms® helps children develop the self-awareness to realize how they feel and what they need; teaches them strategies to slow down, unwind and manage their emotions; guides them through movements that optimize their strength, flexibility and balance; demonstrates healthy habits; and reminds them to love and forgive themselves. Y4C provides students with tools for learning and lessons for life.

Medical Disclaimer: Although every effort has been made to ensure the activities presented in this card deck are safe, please practice only the activities that you deem physically and psychologically comfortable and appropriate for you, your students and your classroom. The author, contributors and distributors of this product disclaim any liability in connection with the activities and advice herein.



Let's Breathe

Conscious breathing is a powerful tool for self-regulation. These Let's Breathe activities help us to calm and center, or empower and energize.



"One of our 3rd grade boys was frustrated yesterday – he used his breathing strategy, slowed down, and then was able to share about his frustration and return to the activity. Being aware of his body/tension and knowing what to do – what a relief for him! Y4C has been a such a gift for him and for all of us!" – V.S., School Principal



At Your Desk

These seated stretches and postures help provide physical relief from long periods of sitting, improve focus, and keep the systems of the body functioning efficiently. At Your Desk breaks will leave students and teachers feeling refreshed and ready to focus on classroom instruction and activities.



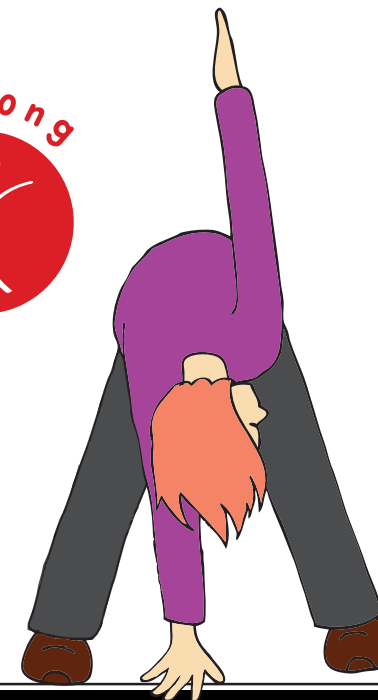
"We can easily fit them in right at our seats making these tools accessible and doable!" – L.P., Grade 5 Teacher



Stand Strong

Stand Strong activities provide simple, structured opportunities for students and teachers to stand up and stretch, balance and strengthen.

"One of my students took a Warrior stance and exclaimed, 'I am strong!' right before beginning a math test. Each child began to stand one by one to take the pose. Yoga has taught my students life-long lessons of empowerment." – J. B., Grade 3 Teacher



Y4C features 67 yoga and mindfulness-based activity cards, divided into 6 categories: Let's Breathe, At Your Desk, Stand Strong, Loosen Up, Imagination Vacation, and Be Well

Loosen Up

Whether used before a test, as a physical break from a long assignment, or to help improve mood, Loosen Up activities can dispel stress through energetic release, or introspection and focus. Community-builders cultivate students who are leaders and problem-solvers, have good self-esteem, cooperate and collaborate, feel a sense of responsibility for their classroom and each other, and are more likely to be happy and relaxed.



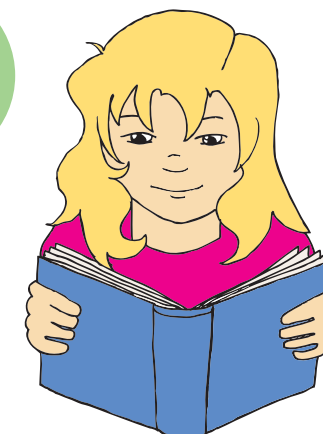
"Y4C promotes a positive and safe classroom environment." – C. B., Grade 2 Teacher



Be Well

Movement, healthy food, clean water, plenty of rest – all of these are necessary to good health. So are relaxation, positive attitude, good self-esteem, mutually supportive relationships, spiritual growth, and joy. The Be Well activity cards offer a framework for beginning child-friendly discussions related to topics supporting the health and wellness of the whole child. Use them as themes of the week, areas of study, or on their own as morning meeting topics.

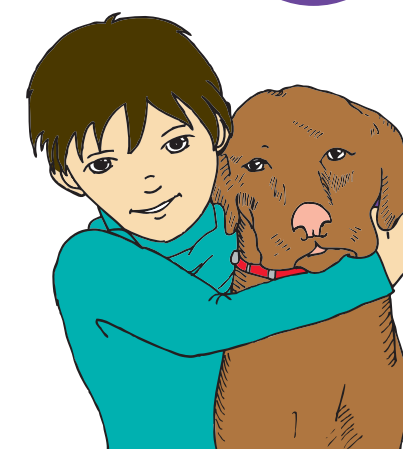
"What a difference this program has made in my children's lives! They still remember to take a deep breath when they are having challenges, they enjoy doing poses before bed, and they are still talking about concepts like being a peacemaker and eating healthfully. Yoga 4 Classrooms® should be part of every school curriculum." – D. S., Parent of Grade 1 and Grade 4 Students



Imagination Vacation

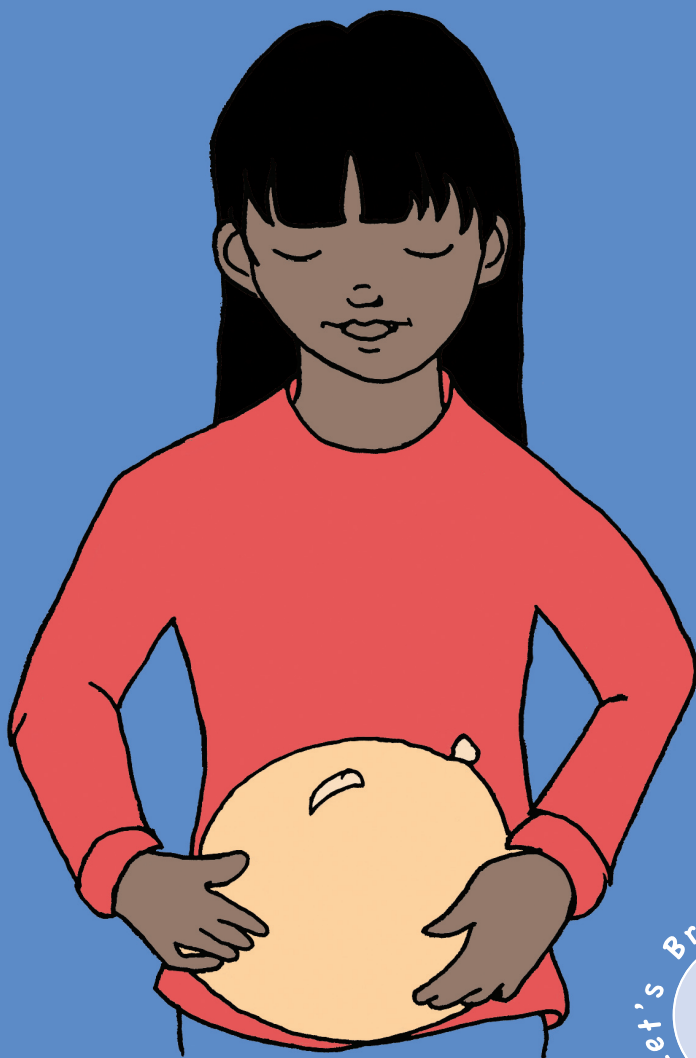
Imagination Vacations represent modified, child-friendly approaches to meditation. Through guided visualization, students learn to use their imaginations to connect to their own inner wisdom. Through mindfulness practices, students learn to bring their awareness to the present moment, the necessary state for learning. Students are empowered as their sense of self is improved, and the connection between their mind and body is enhanced.

"Imagination Vacations make me so relaxed and calm." – K.W., Grade 2 Student




Balloon Breath

Calm. Focus. Clarity.



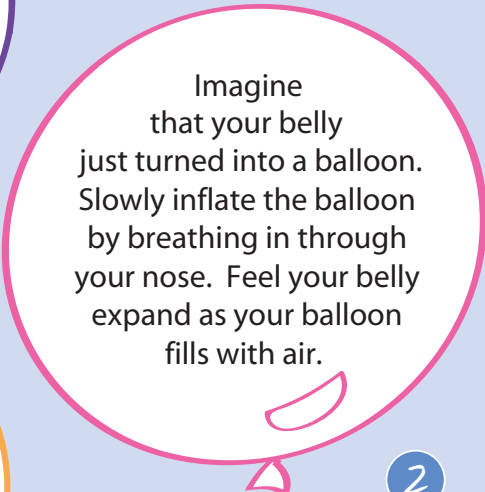
Let's Breathe





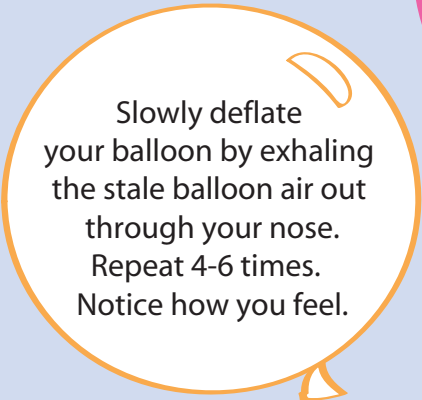
Begin in
Standing or Sitting
Mountain with a tall,
straight spine. Close your
eyes and place your
hands gently on
your lower belly.

1



Imagine
that your belly
just turned into a balloon.
Slowly inflate the balloon
by breathing in through
your nose. Feel your belly
expand as your balloon
fills with air.

2



Slowly deflate
your balloon by exhaling
the stale balloon air out
through your nose.
Repeat 4-6 times.
Notice how you feel.

3



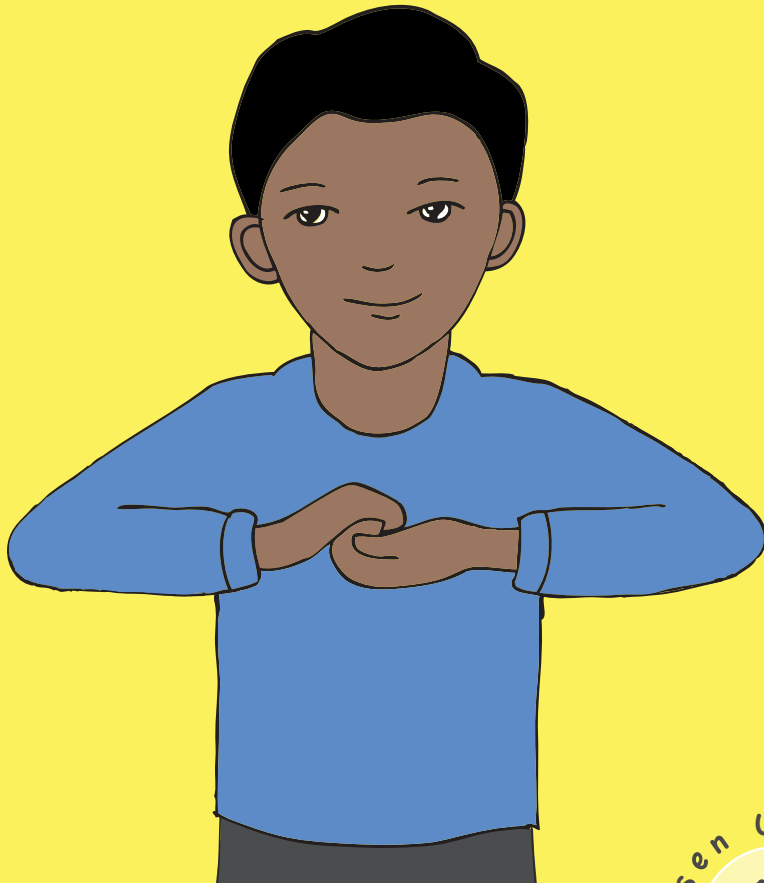
did you
know?

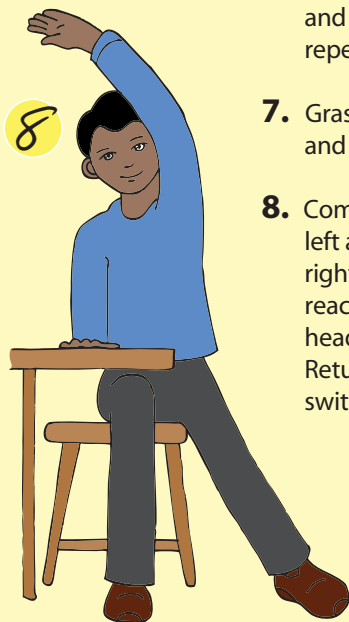
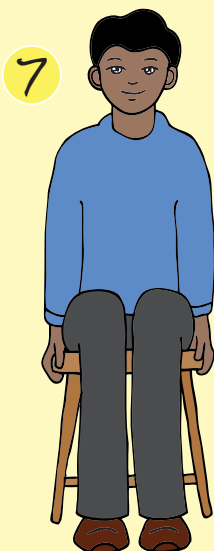
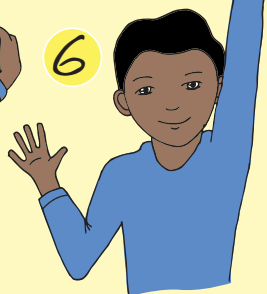
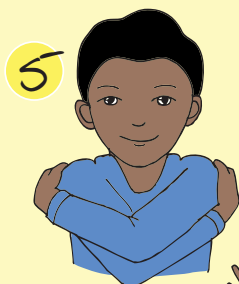
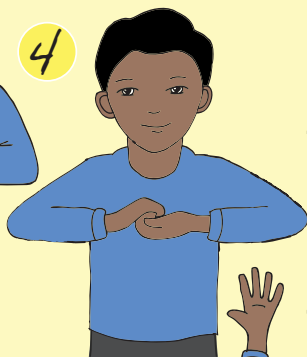
Normally, we use just 25% of our lung capacity when breathing. Shallow breathing deprives us of the oxygen we need to function at our best. Balloon Breathing calms our bodies, while an increased supply of oxygen helps us to think more clearly and feel great.

Based on *The Power of Your Child's Imagination* by Charlotte Reznick, Ph.D.
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Posture Prep

**Good posture. Writing prep.
Motor break. Positive attitude.**





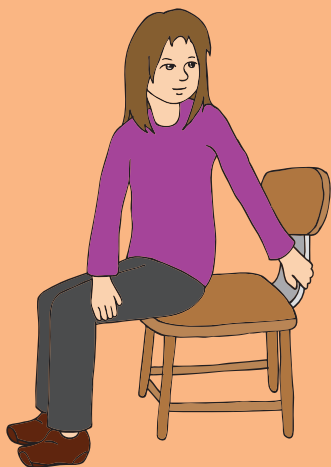
1. *Optional:* Begin by standing beside your desk. Jump up and down in place for 10 seconds.
2. Come to Sitting Mountain.
3. Hold your palms together in front of your chest and push them together 10 times.
4. Turn your right palm over left, grasp your fingers together and pull out 10 times. Switch direction of palms and repeat.
5. Give yourself a hug, wrapping your arms and hands snug around your body. Hug and squeeze tightly, 10 times.
6. Reach up high with your right hand. Make 10 small circles in one direction and then the other. Switch sides and repeat.
7. Grasp both sides of your chair seat and pull up 10 times.
8. Come to Sitting Mountain. Rest your left arm on your desk. Extend your right leg out to the side while reaching your right arm up over your head to the left. Count to 10. Return to Sitting Mountain before switching sides to stretch to the right.



Corkscrew

Energize. Release. Cleanse.
New perspective.





1. Begin in Sitting Mountain.
2. Rest your left hand on the outside of your right thigh, your right hand anchored in or on the back of your seat. Inhale and sit up tall. Exhale and turn your upper body to gaze out over your right shoulder. Be sure to keep your posture upright and hold for 3-5 breaths.
3. Exhale to release the twist and return to Sitting Mountain. Switch sides.



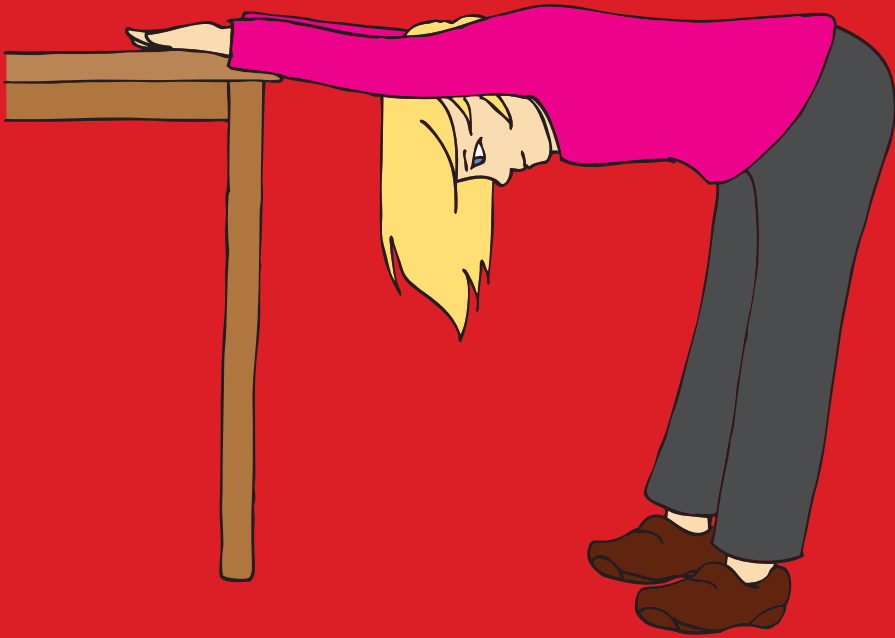
- **Pretzel Twist.** For more of a challenge, try crossing your right leg over your left leg while practicing Corkscrew as instructed above. You might also try wrapping your right arm behind your back to grasp the inside of your left elbow with your fingers. Remember to switch sides.

- **Sitting Chair Twist.** Begin in Sitting Mountain, hands pressed together in front of the heart. Inhale up tall. Exhale and bend forward to cross your left elbow over your right thigh, as you gaze to the right. Hold Sitting Chair Twist for 3-5 breaths before returning to Sitting Mountain. Switch sides.



Desk Puppy

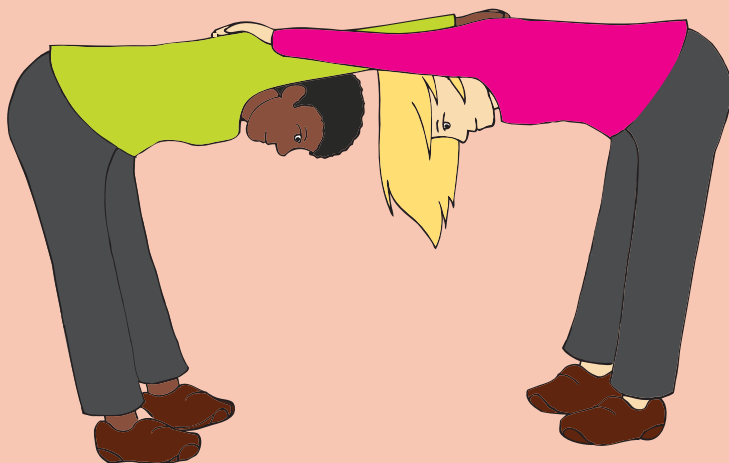
**Stretch. Release. Refresh.
Posture preparation.**



1. Stand behind your desk with your chair pushed in. Place the palms of your hands on the middle of your desk.
2. Take a step back and bend forward so that your head comes down between your arms.
3. Check your alignment. Your arms and legs should be straight. Your back is flat with your hips pressing backward. Your heels are on the floor.
4. Let your head hang and relax between your arms. Feel the stretch in your shoulders, arms, hamstrings and calves. Breathe and release into the stretch a little more with each exhale. Ahh.
5. When you are finished, step forward and slowly roll your spine back up to standing. Shake out your limbs as needed.

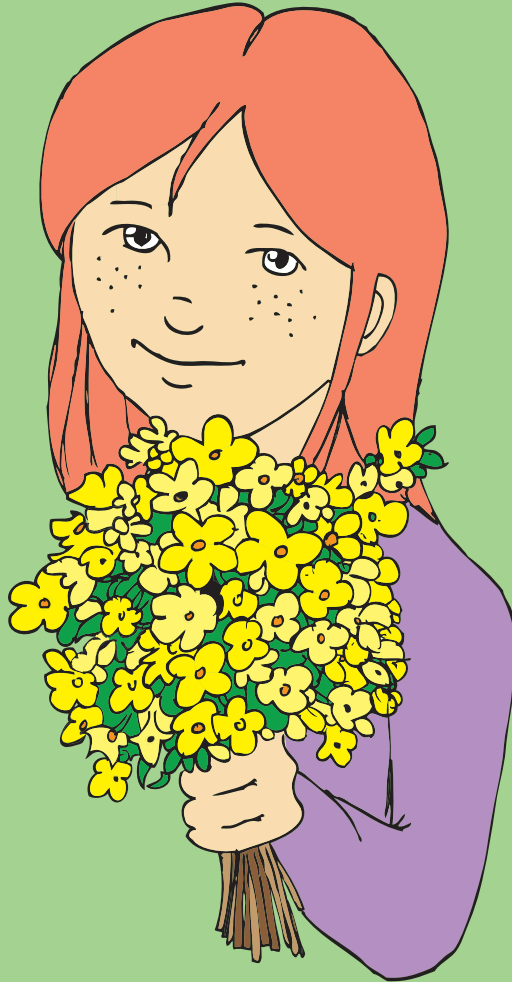


- **Puppy Friends.** This is the partner version of Desk Puppy. Stand facing your partner and place your hands on each other's shoulders. Continue from Step 2 above.



Be a Good Citizen

Make positive contributions to
home, school, community and earth.



What qualities do you think make someone a good citizen? Is it honesty and generosity? Duty and respect? Kindness and caring? Yes! We can all be good citizens when we actively seek out ways to make a positive difference in the lives of those around us, and in the world in which we live. And when we help out, give to others, or get involved in a good cause, it's a gift for us, as well. Review the following "How to's" encouraging group or partner discussions by asking, "Why?," and "How?," and "Can you think of others?"

How to be a Good Family Citizen. Show respect for elders such as parents, guardians and grandparents. Help with household responsibilities such as emptying the dishwasher, feeding pets, and folding laundry. Keep your room clean. Use good manners. Cheer on your siblings at their activities and sporting events. Take care of sick family members. Give lots of hugs. Tell your family members how much you love and appreciate them.

How to be a Good School Citizen. Be on time. Be respectful. Be a good listener. Be patient. Be gracious, accepting help and also offering it when needed. Keep your desk, locker or cubby area tidy. Help with classroom chores. Be a good friend.

How to be a Good Community Citizen. Support the local businesses in your town. Be kind to your neighbors – you might bring in the mail, shovel their steps or bake them muffins. Understand and assist with community projects. Plant something for others to enjoy now and in the future – a tree, garden, bed of flowers. Give back. Express gratitude for your local police, fire, and town employees for serving you well.

How to be a Good Country Citizen. Have pride in your country. Understand the issues, research the candidates running for government office, and vote at elections (when you're old enough). Express gratitude to those who serve in the military.

Being a Good World Citizen. Visit the website www.kidsforsavingearth.org for lots of discussion points, songs, simple ideas and handouts related to taking care of our earth.

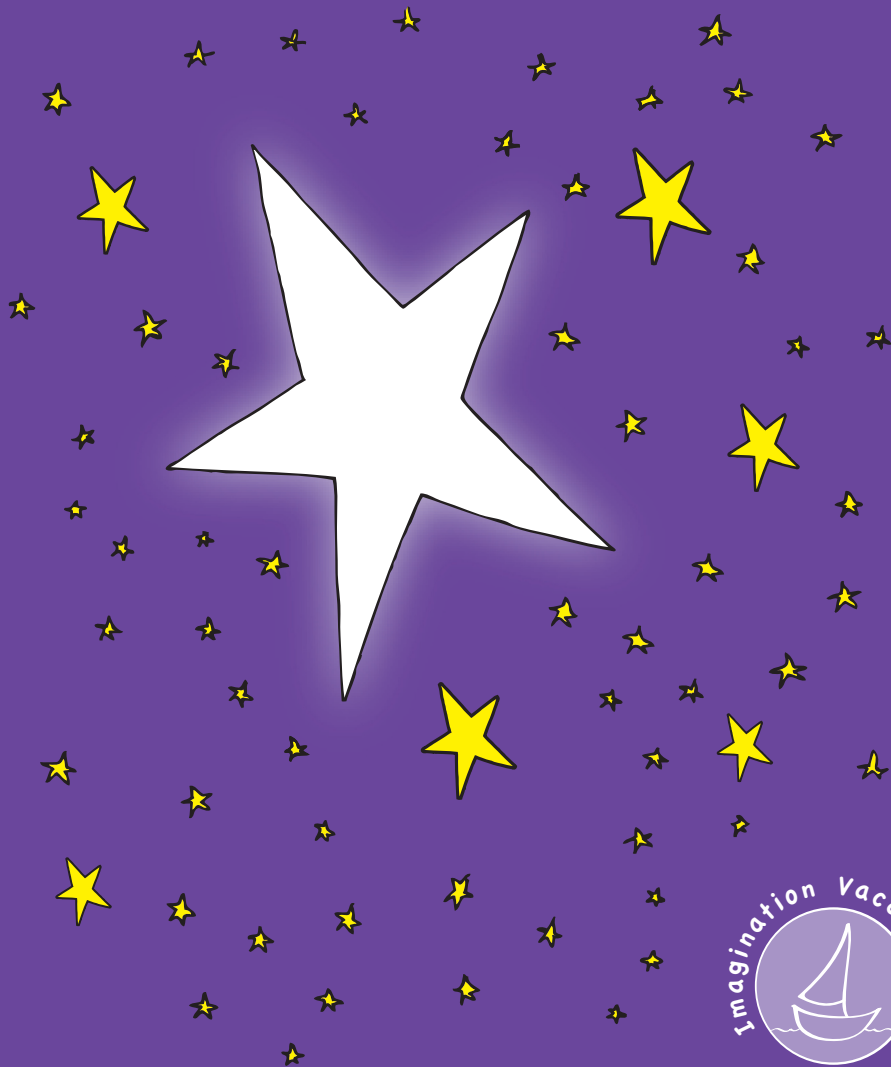


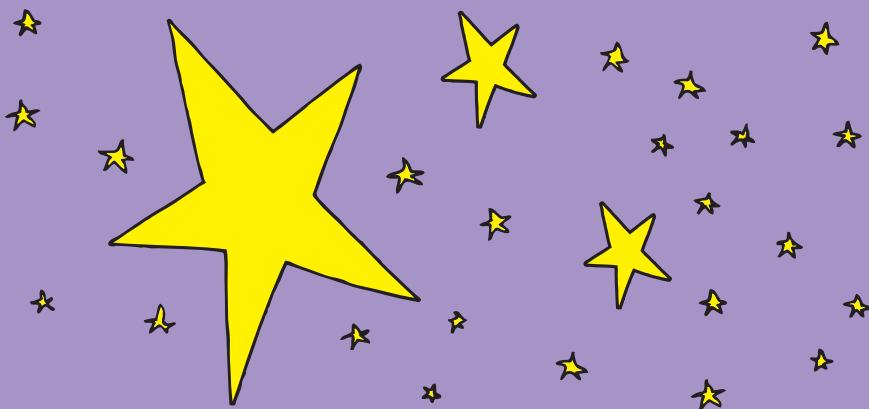
- Before you speak or react, ask yourself, "Am I being helpful or harmful?"
- Check out www.thegreatkindnesschallenge.org
- Read and discuss Have You Filled Your Bucket Today? by Carol McCloud
- As a class, choose a local cause that matters to you. Organize a simple fundraiser and share responsibilities.



Big White Star

Relaxation. Body awareness.
Connection. Community.





Begin in Desk Rest or Sitting Mountain with eyes closed. Bring your awareness to your breath. (Guide students to Balloon Breathing or Count Down to Calm.)

Imagine there is a big, beautiful star above your head. It is glowing bright and shimmery, sending light out in every direction. The light is shining in your favorite color....maybe it's purple, or blue, or even silver. Imagine what your very own star looks like now...

Notice now that one of the biggest rays of light is streaming right down toward the top of your head. You feel the cozy, warm light touch the top of your head and it feels so nice. The light comes into your head and now your face, relaxing all of your face muscles. Now, the light is traveling into your neck...shoulders...and arms. Feel the light as it moves down into your hands and fingers. The beautiful warm light now travels down from your chest...into your belly...then down through your legs...and finally into your feet and toes, relaxing them and filling them with light.

Notice the light come into your heart now. With each inhale, feel your heart getting bigger and bigger...brighter and brighter, filling up with love and warmth for all of the people you love, for all of the people and animals in the world, for all of your classmates and teachers, and especially for yourself. See the rays of light radiating out from your heart out into the world around you. Let's stay in this place for a little while, noticing how it feels to be filled with such love and light.

When you are ready, take a long, slow deep breath in through your nose. Exhale, "Haaa" through your mouth. Very, very slowly sit up now. Breathe in and out deeply once again, before gently opening your eyes. Notice how you feel.