



Greater Good in Education
SCIENCE-BASED PRACTICES FOR KINDER, HAPPIER SCHOOLS

THE OOOH AAAH SONG

"Breathing in, I calm my body. Breathing out, I smile. Dwelling in the present moment. The only moment."

— Thich Nhat Hanh

OVERVIEW

Students practice identifying their emotions and use a mindful breathing song to help regulate their emotions.

PLANNING FOR IT

WHEN YOU MIGHT USE THIS PRACTICE

- At the start of the day
- During transitions
- After recess
- When students might need a reminder of the importance of managing emotions

TIME REQUIRED

- ≤15 minutes (2-3x/week)

LEVEL

- PreK/Lower Elementary

MATERIALS

- Equipment to watch [Oooh Aaah Song](#)
- Pencil/Pen
- This [PDF](#)

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will:

- Become familiar with various emotion terms
- Identify which emotions they are experiencing

- Use breathing techniques to regulate their emotions

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

- [Making Practices Culturally Responsive](#)
- [Adapting Practices for Students with Special Needs](#)
- [Making Classrooms and Schools Trauma-Informed and Healing-Centered](#)

SEL COMPETENCIES

- Self-Awareness
- Social Awareness

MINDFULNESS COMPONENTS

- Focused attention
- Open Awareness
- Non-Judgment

HOW TO DO IT

REFLECTION BEFORE THE PRACTICE

Identify any emotions you are experiencing right now. Take at least one minute to just breathe. Breathe in, breathe out. Consider how you feel afterwards. Has the intensity of your emotion(s) decreased?

INSTRUCTIONS

- Load the video before students come into the class and check that the sound is working.
- Ask students to remain at their desks or have them go to the front of the room.
- Before you get started, review the emotion words in this [PDF](#) with students. Play the following video: [Oooh Aaah Song](#). Follow along with your students to reinforce these skills and model active participation!

REFLECTION AFTER THE PRACTICE

- What sort of emotions do your students report feeling? Do you notice any trends for individual students or among students? How might you further support students who consistently report experiencing negative emotions?
- Have you noticed a difference in your students' ability to regulate their own emotions over time?

THE RESEARCH BEHIND THE PRACTICE

EVIDENCE THAT IT WORKS

In a [study](#), undergraduate students who completed a 15-minute focused breathing exercise reported fewer negative emotions in response to a series of slides that displayed negative images when compared with students who didn't complete the exercise. These results suggest that focused breathing exercises can help students' improve their ability to regulate their emotions. Furthermore, a [review](#) of research on the benefits of mindfulness-based school interventions suggests that mindfulness is beneficial for children and adolescents.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Stress, anger, and anxiety can impair not only our health—but our judgment and attention skills. One way to navigate these difficult feelings is through the practice of “mindfulness,” the ability to pay careful attention to what one's thinking, feeling, and sensing in the present moment without judging those thoughts and feelings as good or bad. Countless [studies](#) link mindfulness to better health, lower anxiety, and greater resilience to stress.

One basic method for teaching students mindfulness is through mindful breathing—focused attention on the in-and-out pattern of breath. After setting aside time to practice mindful breathing, students may find it easier to focus their attention on their breath in their daily life—an important skill to help them deal with stress, anxiety, and negative emotions. Mindful breathing can help students learn to cool themselves down when their tempers flare, and it can sharpen their skills of concentration, so they may make the most out of their time at school.

SOURCE

[Move This World Early Elementary SEL Curriculum](#)