



“BEAT THE CLOCK”

For Mindfulness and Focus

This activity should not be timed but can be used to bring children back down after physical activity, time outside, or a few rousing rounds of *Beat the Clock* for physical activity. Increase the font size of this text, print, and cut into strips. Give one strip to each student.

Start the game by saying, “Let’s all turn off the outside noise in our minds for a while.” If possible, have soothing music played at a very low volume in the background. Make sure that the students have read and re-read their instructions so that they are very clear on what they are listening for and what they are going to say. You may need to help monitor/model this version a few times. This activity encourages students to pay attention to their surroundings and to focus on their peers’ and their own actions.

When you hear someone say, “Let’s all turn off the outside noise in our minds for a while,” slowly go over and turn off the lights.

When someone turns off the lights, say, “Can everyone please stand up slowly and touch your toes 3 times, stretching way up high in between?” Make sure that you do the stretches, too!

When you see the whole group touch their toes 3 times, go over to the white board/chart paper and draw a circle.

When you see someone draw a circle on the white board/chart paper, stand up and ask, “How are we all feeling today?”

When you hear someone ask, “How are we all feeling today?”, go up to the white board/chart paper and draw a face inside the circle. If people look happy, draw a smiley face. If they don’t look happy, draw a frown. If you can’t tell, draw whichever face that you feel most like.

When you see someone draw a face inside the circle, stand up and say, “Close your eyes for ten seconds and think about how the only person in your life who can bring you peace right now is you.” Then quietly count to ten aloud with your own eyes closed.



When you hear someone count to ten after asking you to shut your eyes, stand up and say, “Everyone please stand up, cross your legs, and hug yourself. Squeeze for 3 seconds and then let go and sit back down.” (Make sure that everyone does this with you.)

When you hear someone ask the whole class to stand up, cross legs, hug themselves and then sit back down, say, “Now that you are seated again, take 3 deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth.” (Make sure that you are doing this, too.)

When you hear someone ask everyone to take 3 deep breaths in through their nose and out their mouth and they have finished, say, “I am going to be present in my mind and body in this class.”

When you hear someone say, “I am going to be present in my mind and body in this class” say, “I am going to focus my attention on one task at a time.”

When you hear someone say, “I am going to focus my attention on one task at a time,” say, “I am not going to allow outside distractions and noises to keep me from being focused on my task.”

When you hear someone say, “I am not going to allow outside distractions and noises to keep me from being focused on my task,” you are going to say, “Please put your head down and close your eyes.”

When you see everyone put their head down and close their eyes, you are going to say, “Concentrate on emptying your mind of all thoughts and worries and just be where you are. I will count to 20 slowly in my head and let you know when that time is up.” (Count to 20 slowly in your head and when done, say, “You may raise your head.”

When you see that people have had their head down for 20 seconds and have been asked to empty their minds of thoughts and worries and then asked to raise their head again, say, “I am picturing my mind empty of all worries. They have floated away.”

When you hear someone say, “I am picturing my mind empty of all worries. They have floated away,” you say, “I will remember that I am in control of my breathing and I will breathe deeply when I start to feel nervous or anxious.”

When you hear someone say, “I will remember that I am in control of my breathing and I will breathe deeply when I start to feel nervous our anxious,” say, “I am ready to begin as my mind is free yet focused.”

When you hear one person say, “I am ready to begin as my mind is free yet focused,” say, “Can everyone please repeat with me – I am ready to begin as my mind is free yet focused.” (Wait for others and then say again, “I am ready to begin as my mind is free yet focused.”)