



Objective: To help children become aware of their breath and bodies, and understand the calming effect of deep breathing.

Teacher: Before introducing this activity, talk with the children about the concepts of breathing and breath, so they have background knowledge.

Materials:
Hoberman
Ball

Breathing Ball

BREATHING TO CALM OUR BODIES

Today we are going to think more about our breath and how we can use our breath to calm ourselves.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CALM?

What does it mean to be calm?

When we are calm, our bodies relax.

When our bodies relax, we feel strong and powerful.

When we are calm, we are better at noticing what is happening inside our bodies and outside, around us.

When we are calm, we have Inner Power.

Help the children notice their lungs expanding when they breathe in, and contracting when they breathe out.

MODEL

This is a Breathing Ball.

This ball helps us calm our bodies so we can find our Inner Power.

When I breathe in, the ball gets bigger (*inhale through your nose and expand the ball*).

When I breathe out, the ball gets smaller (*exhale through your mouth and contract the ball*).

Breathing helps our bodies feel calm and relaxed.

NOW, IT'S YOUR TURN

Now you try.

S-l-o-w-l-y breathe in (*expand the ball*).

Hold your breath for 3 seconds. 1 – 2 – 3.

Now s-l-o-w-l-y breathe out (*contract the ball*).

Let's do it again (*repeat*).

Does your body feel more relaxed?

Are you starting to feel your Inner Power?

Help the children
notice and be aware
of how their bodies
feel.

REPEAT

Repeat this breathing pattern as many times as possible without losing the children's interest.

You can ask various questions during the repetitions:

- My body is feeling different. Is your body feeling different?
- How do these breaths make you feel?
- How does your body feel?
- Is your body feeling relaxed?
- Are you feeling calmer?
- Do you feel your Inner Power?
- When would breathing like this help you? (at school, bedtime, when angry, etc.)
- Can you try these long, slow breaths next time you...?

TIPS

- Using **hand motions** (opening and closing the ball) can also be an effective **nonverbal signal** to help children take deep breaths and calm themselves.
- This activity can be used in a large group, small group, or with individual children.
- If a child is upset, try using the Breathing Ball to help him/her breathe in and out. You can simultaneously breathe in and out together.
- **Teachers - notice how your body feels as you do the activity.** This activity can be a tool to help you, as well, to achieve calm when you need it.