

BREATHING TECHNIQUES FOR KIDS

exercises to center kids and help them focus

CREATIVE TECHNIQUES



SQUARE BREATHING

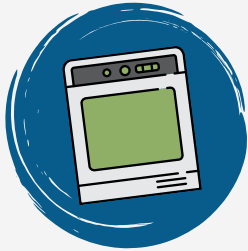
On their desk or table, have kids trace a horizontal line with their fingers for a count of four as they breathe in (the top of the square). Then, trace downward to form the side of the square as they hold the breath for a count of four. Then they trace horizontally again to make the bottom of the square as they exhale. Finally, they trace upward to form the other side of the square as they hold their breath out for a count of four. Repeat.



DRAW YOUR BREATH

Give the children a marker and a sheet of paper. Have them place their marker on the paper. As they inhale and exhale, have them allow their markers to move up and down on the sheet. The end product is a scribble—an image of their breath!

PHYSICAL TECHNIQUES



TUMBLE DRYER

Sitting in cross-legged position, point your index fingers towards each other and position them so your left finger is pointing to the right and your right finger is pointing to the left, overlapping a bit in front of your mouth. Inhale, then blow out as you spin your fingers round each other, making a long exhalation and a satisfying swishy sound.



ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING

For this breathing exercise, kids bring attention to their breath by holding one nostril closed as they breathe in and then holding the other nostril closed as they breathe out.



SHOULDER ROLLS

Sit comfortably. As you breathe in, roll your shoulders up and back. As you breathe out, bring your shoulders down and front, completing the shoulder roll.

PHYSICAL TECHNIQUES



TAKE FIVE

Have kids hold up one hand and place the index finger of their opposite hand on the outside of the bottom knuckle of their pinky finger. As they inhale, have them use their index finger to trace up the outside of the pinky finger. As they exhale, they trace down the other side of the finger. Then inhale up the ring finger, and down the other side of the ring finger. Repeat until they reach the thumb.



TONGUE TUBE

Some people can curl the sides of their tongue up, others can't...it's a genetic thing! If you can, curl up the sides and make your tongue into a tube or straw. Then, with your tube-like tongue sticking out a little bit, inhale and suck the air in over your tongue. Exhale slowly through your nose. This has a wonderful cooling effect and refreshes the throat. If you can't do the curling thing with the sides of your tongue, you can instead get all the same benefits of the refreshing breath by doing a big toothy grin and sucking in the air sharply.

ANIMAL TECHNIQUES



BUMBLEBEE BREATHS

Sitting comfortably with your legs crossed, breathe in through your nose, then with fingers in your ears hum out your exhalation. The lovely comforting resonance of this has a calming effect and, if you close your eyes, you can make it even more peaceful.



DRAGON FIRE

Interlace the fingers underneath the chin. Inhale and lift the elbows up to frame the face. Exhale, lifting the head up making a whispered 'hah' sound towards the sky, like a dragon breathing fire. At the same time, lower the elbows back down to meet at the bottom again by the end of the 'hah' exhale.



ELEPHANT TRUNKS

Have the kids stand up with their feet wide apart with their arms dangling down the center towards the floor. We are pretending our arms are elephant trunks. As they inhale, have them slowly lift their trunk up to the sky. As they exhale, have them float their trunks down to the ground.

IMAGINATIVE TECHNIQUES



HOT AIR BALLOON

Start by cupping your hands around your mouth. Take a deep breath in through your nose and slowly start to blow out through your mouth, growing your hands outwards with your exhale as if you are blowing up an enormous hot air balloon. Once your balloon is as big as it can be (and you've finished your exhale), breathe normally as you sway gently from side to side, admiring your view as you soar through the sky.



BUBBLE BREATH

Sit comfortably and close your eyes. Start by imagining you are holding a bubble wand. Slowly bring the bubble wand up to your lips. Breathe in, and as you breathe out, pretend you are blowing bubbles into the room.



HOT CHOCOLATE

Pretend you are holding a mug of steaming hot cocoa. Take a deep belly breath in through your nose, smelling the yummy hot chocolate smell. As you exhale, pretend to blow on the hot cocoa to cool it down.

IMAGINATIVE TECHNIQUES



RIDE THE WAVE

Have the kids take a deep breath. As they inhale, have them imagine that they're drawing a wave up onto the sand. As they exhale, have them imagine the water receding back into the ocean or lake. Repeat.



SIP THROUGH THE STRAW

Take a deep breath in through your nose, into your belly. Exhale through pursed lips, like you are blowing out through a straw.



BLOW OUT THE CANDLES

Have the children hold up their hands like a high five, pretending our hand is a birthday cake and our fingers are candles. Taking deep belly breaths for each one, have the kids blow out all five "candles" (fingers), one at a time.

