



Open-Sky
School

Category

MINDFULNESS



Activity

5-Senses Meditation Among the Trees

MATERIALS
NONE

DURATION
15-20 MINUTES

Activity Summary

The goal of this activity is to apply mindfulness techniques outdoors in nature. Students are invited to take awareness of their senses, paying particular attention to each one, one at a time.

Preparation

- Choose a space in nature with trees.
- Invite students to sit close enough to and facing a tree so that they can touch its bark.
- Students should be close enough to you to hear the instructions.
- Students will remain comfortably seated for a significant portion of the activity.
- Tell students that throughout the guided meditation, you will be asking questions which they can think about and answer quietly to themselves.



Steps

Read aloud the meditation script below to your students, pausing between each line so that students have time to think about the questions you ask.

Say:

- A.**
1. Sit comfortably by a tree, leaving enough space between you and another student.
 2. Close your eyes. If you're not comfortable closing your eyes, you can look at the ground.
 3. Take a few deep breaths.
 4. Pay attention to your breathing, to your lungs inflating as you inhale and deflating as you exhale.
 5. Become aware of the smells surrounding you.
 6. Pay attention to your thoughts as you turn your focus to the smells around you.

- B.**
1. Keep your eyes closed or keep looking at the ground.
 2. Pay attention to the sounds you hear.
 3. Turn your attention to where the sounds are coming from, those that are near you and those that seem farther away.
 4. Try to listen to one sound at a time.
 5. Can you hear all the sounds together?
 6. Bring your attention back to yourself.
 7. Listen to the sounds of your belly and your breathing as you move.

- C.**
1. Keep your eyes closed or keep looking at the ground.
 2. Now focus on the taste in your mouth.
 3. You may not taste anything.
 4. Now breathe with your mouth open.

- D.**
1. Open your eyes. You can blink if it's too bright.
 2. Look around you.
 3. Direct your attention to the tree in front of you.
 4. Look at the whole tree.

E. *During this part of the activity, if necessary, form small groups so that students can have enough space to touch the bark of the trees. The other students will sit in silence.*

1. Get up slowly, in silence.
2. Go touch the bark of the tree. Try not to bump into the person next to you.
3. Close your eyes and touch the bark of the tree.

Questions

- Can you smell different scents?
- Can you smell grass, earth, water or snow? (depending on the season)
- Do you smell just one scent, or can you distinguish more than one?
- Do you like what you smell?

- What distant sounds do you hear? A passing plane, traffic?
- Do you hear sounds near you? Sounds that indicate the presence of animals, birds chirping, rustling leaves?
- Is it easier to pay attention to one sound or all sounds at once?
- When you pay attention to the sounds of your body, do you still hear the sounds outside?

- What do you taste? For example, the taste of toothpaste, or your last meal?
- Does the taste you perceive in your mouth change if you breathe with your mouth open?

- How are the branches arranged?
- What does the texture of the bark look like?
- How does the light reflect off the bark?

- What is the texture of the tree's bark: smooth, soft, hard, rough, twisted, bumpy, misshapen, gnarled?
- Did you expect such a texture after looking at it or are you surprised by what you perceive when you touch it?
- If you touch the bark with your eyes closed, is it different or similar to what you perceive when you touch the bark with your eyes open?

RETURN TO GROUP

1. Was it easier to observe with a particular sense: sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch?
2. How did your body feel during the activity?
3. Did you feel any particular emotions during the activity?
4. What did you think about during the activity?
5. Do you like this type of activity?

REINVESTMENT:

You can do this kind of activity, paying particular attention to perceptions of only one sense, in the hallway on your way back from recess. Be careful, however, to keep your eyes open!
Do this type of activity again on your own, at the park near you, in your yard, in your room.