

LESSON 4: SELF-CONTROL

Breathing Activity: Lemon-Squeeze Breathing

- 1) Take a deep breath in and hold.
- 2) While you are holding your breath, tightly squeeze your face and hands as if you just had a taste of a sour lemon. Hold for a count of five. As you do this, tell yourself, "I can calm down."
- 3) Exhale and slowly release. As you do this, tell yourself, "I am calm."
- 4) Repeat two more times.
- 5) Put hand on belly, hand on heart. Check in with yourself asking, "Am I calm?" If not, repeat the steps again.

Circle Topic: What do you like to do at home?

- 1) Sit is a circle.
- 2) Remind students to use Body Basics.
- 3) Ask: What do you like to do at home? Have them close their eyes and do calm brain and think about it.
- 4) Pass the talking piece and have students respond to the question: What do you like to do at home?
- 5) Ring the chime to signal that circle has ended.



GRADE

Pre-K

LEARNING TARGETS

I can calm my body and brain down by using Lemon-Squeeze Breathing.

I can explain which activities use high energy and which activities use low energy.

MATERIALS

- [Large Lemon-Squeeze Breathing Card](#)
- Chime
- [Body Basics Cards](#)
- Peaceful Panda or Talking Piece
- Parachute
- Stuffed Animal, Puppet or Ball

Lesson: Self-Control

Background Information

It can be very hard to transition from high energy activities to low energy activities. Giving children the skills to be able to calm themselves down and use self-control is an important life skill. One way that we can calm ourselves in any situation is by using something called Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR). In PMR, you squeeze and release different parts of your body in a systematic way which teaches your body and mind the difference between tense and relaxed. Lemon-Squeeze Breathing is a modified PMR for young children using helpful self-talk. This is an easy way for children to practice calming themselves down.

Introduction: High Energy and Low Energy

- 1) Tell the students about high and low energy. Start with high energy. High energy is when you move your body a lot. Try to use some examples from the circle share. Ask the class: When do you need high energy? (recess, PE, playing with friends, etc) Then tell the students about low energy. Low energy is when your body is calm. Ask the class: When do you need low energy? (coloring, sitting in circle, at the library, etc.)
- 2) Tell the students it can be very challenging to go from a high energy activity like recess to a low energy activity like sitting in circle. To help calm down we can use Lemon-Squeeze Breathing.
- 3) Have students stand up and do a high energy movement, like jumping up and down in place. When you say stop, have the students do Lemon-Squeeze Breathing to calm down. Have students do a low energy movement, like walking calmly in place. Continue with different high energy activities (running in place, dancing, jumping jacks), using a breathing tool to calm down, and then a low energy activity (reading, eating, listening).

Activity: Energy Parachute

- 1) Explain to students that being able to go from high energy to low energy and calm ourselves down takes self-control. We will need self control for the next activity!
- 2) Explain that we are going to play a game that uses both high energy and low energy. To play the game they have to be really good listeners and use lots of self-control.
- 3) Before getting out your parachute explain the basic rules: When you say stop the students must stop moving the parachute. There are not enough handles for everyone but you can hold on to the side of the parachute. No one is to go under or on top of the parachute. (You can try to make being quiet a rule but it is very hard to enforce!)
- 4) Have students stand and hold the parachute with two hands.
- 5) When you say high energy, have students shake the parachute with lots of energy.
- 6) After about 30 seconds have them stop and take a lemon-squeeze breath to calm their energy down.
- 7) Next have them shake the parachute with low energy, like their arms are tired and moving in slow motion. How does the parachute look different? How does low energy feel different from high energy?
- 8) Repeat and use a ball, puppet or stuffed animal on the parachute. Practice calming down from high energy to low energy with Lemon-Squeeze Breathing.
- 9) To retrieve the parachute ask students to throw it into the air on the count of three and when they have released gather it towards you to put away.

Wrap-Up: Summarize the Lesson and Sing *The Friends Song*

Ideas for Classroom Teacher Follow Through

- Practice doing Lemon-Squeeze breathing throughout the school day.
- Before each activity, tell students how much energy they should have.