

5 Minute Mental Fitness Boosters: Mind Breaks



Our Mental Fitness-boosting activities can become proactive tools to implement in your classroom to assist with emotional regulation and to shift the energy and learning experience in the classroom.

Our Mental Fitness Boosters provide an opportunity for students to reset, and give their brains and bodies a moment to relax, ready for the next experience in the classroom.

Aim: Regulate heightened emotions in your classroom with these calming exercises.

Use these exercises:

- At natural transition times.
- After physical activity sessions.
- When you need to help students quieten their minds, ready to learn.

These calming exercises aim to soothe emotions and stress, and relax the mind by shifting the energy in the room and calming the emotional centre of our brains. These exercises promote focused attention, aiding in relaxation and fostering positive emotions.

Tune In

Take a moment to step outside the classroom or open a window, and tune in to the soothing sounds of nature. Students can choose to face a window or door, take a few deep breaths, and simply sit quietly for a few minutes, immersing themselves in the sounds they hear. Ask them to listen to the different sounds that they can hear, or to see if they can identify 3 different sounds, focusing on one sound at a time.

Let's build our mental fitness together

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1,2,3, Breathe

Ask students to either lay down or sit in a comfortable position, and if they are comfortable, to close their eyes. Lead students through a breathing exercise: inhale for four seconds, hold for two seconds, and exhale for four seconds. This might require some practice. Repeat the process a couple of times. Afterwards, encourage students to share how they feel before and after the breathing exercise, and discuss when they could use this technique as a way to deal with feelings of stress and worry.

Visualise Me

After asking the students to take a few deep breaths, present them with a vivid visualisation prompt, inviting them to immerse themselves in the world of their imagination. If time permits, allow students to draw or journal their visualisation. Below are 3 scripts to choose from, these should be read at a slow pace, with regular pauses to give time for the students to engage with their imaginations.

The Hot Air Balloon Adventure:

“Close your eyes and imagine you’re floating high above the ground in a colourful hot air balloon. Look down and see the world below you, with tiny houses and trees stretching out as far as you can see. Feel the gentle sway of the balloon as it drifts through the sky. Take a deep breath and feel the fresh air filling your lungs. As you continue to soar, imagine all the wonderful places you could visit on your balloon adventure.”

The Secret Forest:

“Picture yourself walking through a dense forest, with tall trees towering overhead and sunlight filtering through the leaves. Listen to the sounds of birds chirping and leaves rustling in the breeze. As you wander deeper into the forest, you come across a hidden clearing filled with vibrant flowers and a sparkling stream. Take a moment to soak in the beauty of this secret place and feel a sense of calm wash over you.”

Journey to the Beach:

“Imagine you’re on a sandy beach, with the waves gently rolling onto the shore. Feel the warm sand between your toes and the cool ocean breeze on your skin. Take a deep breath and smell the salty air. Now, picture yourself walking towards the water, feeling the waves lapping at your feet. Listen to the soothing sound of the waves as they wash away any worries or stress. Take a moment to enjoy the tranquility of the beach.”

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Bend and Stretch

Follow the script below for a brief bend and stretch session. You can either lead the stretches yourself or invite students to take turns leading the class through a variety of stretches.

Take 3, slow, deep breaths, and let's begin...

- Stand up nice and tall. Reach up high to the sky with both hands, stretching as tall as you can.
- Now bend down and touch your toes, reaching down as far as you can go. Hold it there for a moment, feeling the stretch in your legs.
- Next, stretch our arms out wide like airplane wings and give ourselves a big hug. Feel the stretch in your back!
- Let's twist gently from side to side, stretching out our spine.
- Finally, let's shake out our arms and legs to loosen them up.

Take another 3, slow, deep breaths to end our session.

MAKING MENTAL FITNESS A HABIT

Integrating Mental Fitness Boosters in the classroom can equip students with practical strategies for managing their emotions and adapting to challenges. Regular practice of these activities can help students to recognise and respond to their emotional needs independently, fostering emotional adaptability.

For educators, the responsibility of nurturing students' mental fitness and wellbeing can be both rewarding and demanding, underscoring the importance of self-care for teachers too!

We hope our Mental Fitness Boosters can also serve as a reminder for educators to pause and rejuvenate, too. When you prioritise your mental fitness, you'll enhance your capacity to support your students.

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