

## Recharge

**Goals:**

- *Students will learn five relaxation techniques*
- *Students will learn ways to cope with stress*

**Audience:** 4<sup>th</sup> grade

**Optional Activities:**

- Classroom Yoga Break: Balance Poses

**Materials:**

- *Rise and Shine Yoga* handout

**Common Core Standards Taught:**

- English Language Arts: Speaking and Listening: 4.1
  - Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
  - Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.

**Lesson:**

Leader: Sleep is one way to help our bodies recharge. However, sometimes during the middle of the day, our bodies may feel worn down or stressed. Since we can't stop and take a nap just anywhere, we need other tools that will help our bodies rest or re-boot. These tools are often referred to as stress management tools.

Leader: Raise your hand if you have ever felt stressed. Stress is a normal part of life- EVERYBODY experiences stress. Can you think of events that might cause you to feel stress?

Leader: What's important to remember about stress is that we all experience stress in different ways. What might be stressful for you, may not be stressful for someone else. For example, a big spelling test might be very stressful for one student, while another student is not worried at all.

Leader: If we experience a lot of stress and don't learn how to deal (or cope) with it, it can negatively impact our health. Some people may

experience the following symptoms: headaches, stomachaches, mood swings, difficulties concentrating and/or sleeping.

Leader: Today we are going to review some stress management techniques. These techniques can be used whenever you are feeling stressed. They also can be used right before you go to bed to help relax your mind and body.

#### Technique #1- Deep breathing

When we feel stressed, sometimes we forget to breathe. Deep breathing can help relax the body by ensuring that the brain and body get plenty of oxygen. Let's practice. Take a nice deep breath in through your nose and blow out through your mouth. Repeat 10 times.

This technique can work well for people who get anxious when taking tests or speaking in public.

#### Technique #2- Quiet time

Throughout the day, we are surrounded by many different noises and distractions. Think about all the technology at our fingertips (computers, I-pods, televisions etc). Sometimes we just need to unplug. Let's practice 'quiet time'. Put your head down, close your eyes, and be very still. We will try this for one minute. This is a great technique to use right before bedtime.

#### Technique #3- Visualize

Sometimes when we feel stressed, we think about all the negative or bad things that could happen to us. When this happens, try thinking of your 'happy' place. A happy place is a memory that makes you feel good. It might be a special vacation spot, celebrating a holiday, or spending time with your family and friends.

Let's practice. Close your eyes and think of your favorite place on earth. What are you doing? Who are you with? How do you feel? Anytime you start to feel overwhelmed with negative thoughts, stop for a moment and think of this happy place.

#### Technique #4- Talk it out

Talk to someone you trust about what has you worried. Sometimes just talking about your problem can make you feel better. For example, if you are worried about a spelling test, maybe talk to mom or dad about how you feel. Together, you can work on strategies to help reduce your stress. Maybe instead of waiting until the last minute to study, you begin to study 15 minutes every day so you don't have to cram the night before.

#### Technique #5- Stretch

Stress can cause muscle aches and cramps. Stretching is one way to help relax muscles. Today we are going to practice yoga- which is a great way to stretch and relax the body (refer to Rise and Shine Yoga handout).

Remember that everyone is different when it comes to managing stress. The techniques we practiced today are just a few of the many ways that you can manage stress. Some people like to paint, listen to music, or go for a walk.

If you are experiencing a lot of stress, it is important to talk to someone that you trust and let them know how you are feeling. Remember that EVERYONE experiences stress, so you are not alone.