



FORWARD BEND

CALMING & REFOCUSING STRATEGIES

LESSON PLAN

Purpose

Calming and Refocusing activities help students regain calm after exercise or high energy transitions and bring their attention back to their body by focusing on breathing and slow purposeful movement. The use of these strategies can aid in self-regulation, stress reduction, and attention refocus.

Materials

- Forward Bend instructional video: [Elementary](#), [Middle](#), [High](#)

Procedure: *Instruct students to*

- Stand with feet shoulder width apart and feet flat on the floor
- Take a slow deep breath in through your nose
- Exhale slowly through your mouth while bending forward at the waist and touch your knees
- If you are able without causing pain, inhale again and exhale while bending further to touch your shins or toes with your fingertips
- Slowly roll your body up to the standing position
- Take a deep calming breath in and out and repeat the stretch 1 – 2 more times

Modifications: *Students can*

- Sit on a chair and stretch one hand to your ankle while raising the other hand in the air looking toward your raised hand



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CLASSROOM APPLICATION

Recommendations

- Great strategy to use when students have been seated for a long period of time.
- Pair with a 'pre-strategy', such as Rainbow Breathing, and transition naturally into the Forward Bend.
- To avoid students feeling self-conscious bending over in front of one another, have students practice strategy while standing in a semi-circle rather than at their desks.
- To avoid competition among students to see who can stretch the furthest, encourage them to stretch as far as it feels comfortable, for some this may be at the knees, for others the shins or even toes/floor.
- Encourage students to stretch only as far as they feel a gentle 'tug', not pain, then stop. Students may also find it helpful to bend slightly at the knees to ease pressure. Once in the forward bend position, remind students to relax their heads and necks.
- Modify to include crossing one leg over the other before bending.



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