

5 Mindfulness Exercises for Students with ADHD



Learn how to promote greater academic focus and collaborative learning by introducing meditation and yoga to your student or your child. By Elliott Buck, M.Ed

“Mindfulness training integrates the brain and strengthens the important executive functions that support emotional and social intelligence, as well as academic success,” says Daniel J. Siegel, M.D., neurobiologist and author of [The Mindful Brain](#).

Indeed, teachers and parents report that students are ready to process new information and actively learn following meditation and yoga sessions. Here are 5 exercises recommended by experts and parents alike:

1. Set the stage for mindfulness by watching [“Teaching the ABCs of Attention, Balance, and Compassion”](#) by Susan Kaiser Greenland with your class. Assign books about mindfulness, like [Imaginations](#) by Carolyn Clarke for elementary students, or [A Still Quiet Place for Teens](#) by Amy Saltzman, M.D., for middle and high school students.

2. Take a “noticing walk” around the school where students can silently tap into all of their senses. Stop to look at pebbles, or listen to the sound of leaves blowing in the breeze. Then, at the end of the walk, ask each student to share one observation she might have otherwise missed in daily life.

3. Buy a yoga card deck, like [Yoga Pretzels](#) or [Mindful Games](#). Let students take turns picking a pose and practicing it as a class. Challenge them

to learn the Sanskrit name of each pose. Try changing from pose to pose in slow motion. After your students have mastered all of the poses in a deck, ask them to invent a new pose, and give it a name.

4. Practice mindful eating during snack or lunch time. Give a few raisins to each student, asking them to look at each wrinkle and fold, to touch the fruit, and to notice its plumpness. Give the raisin a squeeze. Smell it. Then ask your students to place one raisin in their mouths, and notice how it feels when they chew and swallow. Ask the children to answer three questions: What did you notice about the raisin that you never did before? Did any thoughts not related to raisins pop into your head?

5. Ask students to write their own guided meditation scripts once the class is familiar with meditation practice. Ask them to describe a special place they love in great detail using each of their five senses. Include breathing techniques throughout the meditation, and then close with some form of relaxation. Students should share their first drafts with classmates, then revise, test, and create a final piece. They can then go “on tour” and lead guided meditations for other classes. They can even use [Vocaroo](#) to record the meditation to share with family and friends. Listen to a [sample guided meditation here](#).