

Yoga and relaxation

Important – please read

This lesson has been adapted for teachers providing online classes. These notes are specifically for online lessons, and the accompanying PowerPoint has been designed to support the lesson activities.

There is also guidance and advice for what teachers need to know and do before the lesson and at the beginning of the lesson. Please read the lesson instructions carefully before using them. They are for guidance only, designed to be used with the most common online platforms. You may need to adapt the lesson to the online platform you are working with.

Topic

Yoga poses and guided relaxation

Aims

- To raise learners' awareness of yoga
- To build learners' vocabulary for body parts and actions
- To practise using imperatives
- To develop listening and speaking skills
- To encourage imagination

Age group and level

Primary (8–12 years)
CEFR level A2 and above

Time

60–90 minutes approximately

Materials

The teacher will need:

- the accompanying PowerPoint
- the instructions sheet
- the Tree pose and Warrior pose pictures
- YouTube video for the Tree pose <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SfLrMwxcw1g> (optional)
- YouTube video for the Warrior pose <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOYTNOzK2ml> (optional)

The learners will need the picture of either the Tree pose or the Warrior pose sent to them by the teacher, as well as a pen or pencil, coloured pens/pencils and paper or a notebook.

Introduction

This lesson plan helps raise awareness of yoga and relaxation, which can benefit the physical and mental well-being of children as well as adults.

In the first part of the lesson, learners do a basic yoga pose and a warm-up. They then learn and practise language for giving instructions for yoga poses. Next, they create their own instructions for a yoga pose, which they give to a partner to follow. After the yoga poses, learners experience a guided relaxation. They then draw a picture to illustrate the 'story' they heard during the relaxation, or they can draw a picture of a different scene that they find relaxing. Finally, they describe their picture to a classmate.

Checklist for online teaching

Make sure you are familiar with the online platform you are using

- Have you tested your microphone and camera in the platform to make sure they work with it? A headset with a mic is usually better than a device's in-built speakers and mic.
- Do the learners need a URL or code to join the class? Do they all have this?
- Do you know how to share what is on your computer screen so that the learners can see it?
- Do you know how to mute the learners' microphones if you need to?
- Do you know how to use the 'breakout rooms' if the platform has this facility? Is this enabled?
- Does the platform have a 'raise hand' button that the learners can use to indicate they want to speak? You can also use this function to get them to indicate if they can hear you or see what you're showing on the screen, or to hold a quick vote!
- Do you know what the platform looks like from a learner's perspective? It may look different or have slightly different functions compared to the teacher's view. If you use screenshots to explain to learners where to click on something, make sure they're taken from a learner's perspective.
- Do you know how to troubleshoot some of the technical issues that you or your learners might experience with the platform? Does it make a difference if they are accessing the platform from a mobile device or a certain browser?
- Do you know if your learners' parents or another adult will be available during lessons to help them resolve technical issues?
- Have you considered safeguarding and child protection issues? For example, you may wish to insist that learners do not record the lessons.
- Most online platforms have support videos or tutorials available online. Have you looked at these?

General tips

- Make sure you have explained to your learners (and ideally a parent or another adult if they can be around during lessons) about how to use the basic functions of the platform, how to troubleshoot issues and how to check their settings. This could be done in an initial lesson where

you practise using the different buttons and teach them the things to try if there are technical or connection issues. This is also a good opportunity to teach them the language connected with the platform, such as 'mute', 'breakout room', 'refresh', etc., which they will need each lesson in order to follow your instructions.

- Make sure you have explained to your learners the rules and the behaviour you expect during lessons, such as patience, respect for each other, writing only relevant things in the chat, etc.
- Always check your microphone and camera before each lesson and check with each learner at the start that you can hear and see each other, and that they can see what you share on the screen.
- Make sure all the learners know they must arrive on time and what they must bring, such as their notebook and pencil case. Many online learning platforms have a virtual waiting room. It's a good idea to tell your learners to join the class at least five minutes before it begins to avoid disruption.

Procedure

<p>Before the lesson</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check with your learners' parents/carers and/or your school to make sure that it's OK to do a lesson that includes some physical activity and whether there are any learners who are unable to do the poses/warm-up for any reason. Ask the parents/carers to ensure that there will be an adult at home with the child during the lesson. • If anyone is unable to do the poses/warm-up due to mobility issues, you could include some adapted yoga poses/stretchers to do instead. Websites such as https://www.wheelpower.org.uk/resources/adaptiveyoga can provide you with some ideas. • Both you and the learners should try to make sure that where you attend the lesson, you are able to make a little bit of space and adjust your screen/camera for when you are sitting on the floor, sitting on your chair and standing up. • Prior to the lesson, or during the previous lesson, send half the class the picture of the Tree pose and the other half the picture of the Warrior pose. They should either print it out or make sure they know how to open it. • Before you start the lesson: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Test your microphone and camera to make sure they work. – Make sure that you have the accompanying PowerPoint open and shared.
<p>At the start of the lesson</p> <p><i>slide 1</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome the learners as they arrive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Check that you can all hear and see each other. – Check that they can see the first slide.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If they can't, ask them (or ideally an adult they have present) to check their settings or troubleshoot in the way you have shown them previously. You may need to write this in the chat facility if they cannot hear you. • Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider having a short task for the learners to do until they have all arrived. For example, you could have a poll set up (if your platform has this function) or a simple activity where they write in the chat, such as to say what they've done that week. - Consider muting learners' microphones after greeting them to avoid having too much background noise when you get started. Tell them if you do this and explain why. You could also suggest that, if possible, they use a headset with a mic rather than their device's in-built speakers and mic.
<p>1. Introducing the topic (5 minutes)</p> <p><i>slides 2+3</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 2 and have a brief discussion with the learners about yoga. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which country does yoga come from originally? [India] - What do we do when we do yoga? [relax our body and mind, stretch, do poses, etc.] - Have you ever tried yoga? [If they have, did they like it?] • Show slide 3. Ask them to guess and write in the chat the names of some yoga poses, using the pictures as clues. [Answers: <i>Cobra pose, Fish pose, Happy baby (or Child's) pose, Crocodile pose, Mountain pose, Bridge pose, Flamingo pose</i>] • Ask the learners if they know or can guess the names of more poses. Accept all reasonable suggestions. For reference, Wikipedia has a list of poses (or <i>asanas</i>): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_asanas
<p>2. Listening skills (5–10 minutes)</p> <p><i>slide 4</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 4. Tell the learners to sit on the floor and, if necessary, adjust their screen so that they can see it. Before you begin, tell them that the pose is not always easy! But with practice it can become comfortable. • Do the Easy pose with your learners. They listen and copy you as you give them step-by-step instructions, using the instructions sheet.
<p>3. Building language for body parts and actions (15 minutes)</p> <p><i>slides 5+6</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 5. Tell the learners that they're going to warm up before learning some more poses. They should stand up and make sure they can see their screen. • Use the warm-up instructions on the instructions sheet, as they contain the language that the learners will need in the next stage for doing the Tree and Warrior poses. Learners listen to your instructions and copy you as you do the actions.

- Do the warm-up a second time, but this time the learners should repeat the instructions after you, in order to practise pronunciation of the language.
- Then show slide 6 and explain how to use the table. Going from left to right, they can create a sentence using words from each column. Read an example, pointing to the words. Then ask them to do the action. For example:
 - Bend your knees.
 - Straighten your left arm above your head.
 - Put your right foot behind you.
 - Stretch your arms up.
- Ask one of the learners to make a sentence. The other learners do the action. Repeat a few more times until you are sure that the learners understand how to create the sentences and that they understand all the vocabulary.
- Then ask the learners to all write some sentences in the chat, using the table. Read out some of the sentences, correcting as necessary.

**4. Speaking and listening skills
(20–30 minutes)**

slide 7

- This next activity works best in breakout rooms, but it can also be done as an individual activity.
- Ask the learners to find or open the picture you sent them before the lesson. Explain that some of them have the Tree pose and some of them have the Warrior pose, and check they understand the meaning of the two words. Tell the learners that they are going to write instructions for the pose in their picture and then teach it to someone else.
- If working in breakout rooms:
 - Tell the learners that they will work with one or two partners with the same pose. They will have 5–10 minutes to speak with their partner(s) and decide what instructions you need to get into and then out of that pose.
 - They can use the picture they received and the table on slide 7 to help them. Additionally, if you wish, you could send them the link to the relevant video and tell them to pause it at 0:15, where they will see the four steps of the pose:
 - Tree pose: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SfLrMwxcw1g>
 - Warrior pose: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOYTNOzk2ml>
 - When they have decided, they should practise the instructions on each other to see if they work. Then everybody should write the instructions in their notebooks.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check that they have understood what to do, then put the learners who received the picture of the Tree pose into breakout rooms in pairs/threes, and put the learners who received the picture of the Warrior pose into breakout rooms in pairs/threes. Monitor and help the learners as needed. - Bring the learners back from the breakout rooms. Explain that they are now going to work with one or two partners who have the <i>other</i> pose. They need to take turns to give instructions for and demonstrate their pose. Their partner follows the instructions and copies the pose. - Put them into breakout rooms again in new pairs/threes, with at least one Tree and one Warrior in each. Monitor and help the learners as needed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your learners are working individually: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask the learners to look at their picture, the table on slide 7 and, if you wish, the relevant video mentioned above to help them write instructions for getting into and then out of that pose. - After writing, they should read and try following their instructions to see if they work. - When they are ready, nominate individual learners to give their instructions to the whole class. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If you have a lot of learners, you may wish to find pictures of other simple yoga poses to give to learners for more variety. • As a whole class, get some feedback. Which pose was easier or harder? Which was more fun?
5. Listening skills (5–10 minutes) <i>slide 8</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain to your learners that at the end of a yoga session, people often practise relaxation. Tell them that you are going to tell them a little story that will help them relax and feel good. They should imagine the story with their eyes closed. Before you start, ask them what they can see in the picture on slide 8 [<i>the sky, a rainbow and clouds</i>]. • While listening, learners can either lie on the floor, sit in Easy pose or sit on a chair. Read the text for the relaxation from the instructions sheet, using a slow and gentle voice.
6. Creative skills (10–15 minutes) <i>slide 9</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the learners to draw a picture that illustrates the story they have just heard, or to illustrate another relaxing scene that they can imagine. • Once they have finished, put the learners into breakout rooms in pairs or small groups, where they can ask their partner/group to close their eyes and imagine the picture while they describe it. Remind them to use a slow, gentle voice.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Alternatively, ask some learners to describe their picture to the whole class.
7. Setting homework (5 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For homework, learners could find another yoga pose to learn. They could look online or, if they know someone (e.g. in their family) who does yoga, they can ask them. They show and describe their pose in the next class. • Alternatively, you could ask learners to find out the English names of as many yoga poses as they can and share them with the class next time. • You could also ask them to write a description of the picture they drew in the previous stage.
At the end of the lesson <i>slide 10</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise the learners for their participation and work and tell them you're looking forward to seeing them again in the next lesson. • Make sure they know how to exit the platform, and wait until they all leave before leaving yourself.
Further ideas and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN International Day of Yoga (21 June): https://www.un.org/en/observances/yoga-day • Yoga poses for kids: http://unicefkidpower.org/yoga-poses-for-kids/ • Yoga pose videos: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWUvWqxGsU5UyYb15V8DTLidku5Bqx71d • Primary school yoga resources: https://www.ghll.org.uk/mental-health/yoga---emotional-health-and-wellbeing/yoga-resources-/yoga-resources-for-primary-schools/ • Adaptive yoga: https://www.wheelpower.org.uk/resources/adaptiveyoga

Contributed by

Jo Blackmore