



Mindfulness with Aloha Breath



Lesson 8 – The Mouth (Waha), Mindful Eating

Grade Level: Pre-K-2

Objectives:

- Empower students with a research-based, social-emotional tool (mindfulness) that is grounded in the values of aloha- aloha breath (AB).
- Develop students' growth mindset and resiliency skills by increasing students' awareness, connection, and relationship with their mouth.
- Strengthen social-emotional learning by encouraging students to notice how eating is influenced by the three parts of their brain (Dino, Hippo, and Bear Awareness).

CCSS Benchmarks: HE.K-2.1.1/HE.K-2.3.1 (Mental/Emotional Health), HE.K-2.1.5 (Personal Health/Wellness), HE.K-2.5.2/HE.K-2.5.4 (Communication Skills), HE.K-2.6.1 (Decision Making Across Topic Areas)

Materials: *Mindfulness with Aloha Breath* storybook, chime/bell, a snack of your choice (e.g., grape, banana, piece of chocolate-nuts free, etc.)

Purpose:

- Increase academic excellence by providing students with research-based attentional training strategies that strengthen the prefrontal cortex.
- Foster students' ability to cultivate healthy self/emotional regulation, prosociality, and better decision-making by encouraging students to pause and become aware of their inner/interpersonal experience before acting/reacting.

Mindful Eating

- Explore the mouth's function and the role mouth played in the story.
- Have students investigate what parts within the mouth are needed for eating (jaw, teeth, tongue, etc.).
- Expand discussion to connect it with Dino, Hippo, and Bear Awareness:
 - Dino. "How do we eat when Dino is present? We might not really know what we are eating (distracted), and/or we eat very quickly. Because Dino is there to protect us from being hungry, we eat quickly to make sure we have enough calories (energy) so we can live."

- Hippo. "How do we eat when Hippo is present? Perhaps we remember that we like to eat certain foods like cookies and ice cream, and don't like other food like broccoli."
- Have students brainstorm their preferences for favorite and least favorite foods, their reasoning, connection to Hippo/memory, and emotional influence: "What kind of food do you eat when you feel really happy versus sad?"
- Point students towards the importance of Bear Awareness with eating: "Bear Awareness, the wise observer, notices everything with aloha. How does it function with the mouth? It tells your mouth to take the time to taste, to chew, to swallow, noticing all the sensations of eating. You can really taste the food when Bear Awareness is present. Bear Awareness also helps you to select the type of food that is good for your body. Can you describe a time when you ate with Bear Awareness?"

Mindful Eating

- Start each session with 3 deep aloha breaths, asking for a volunteer to lead the class.
- Introduce the activity by showing students food of your choice (e.g., piece of chocolate) and explore the reasons it exists: "Where does this candy come from? (sugar canes, cacao/farmers, businesses, money to buy candy, rubber for tires for Aunty/Uncle to drive to the store to buy them, planes to ship it overseas, the sun which grew sugar canes, the rain that watered them...perhaps the entire Universe can be experienced in this tiny pieces of candy).
- Invite students to imagine themselves as alien scientists on a mission to Earth, and they have never seen/tried this "chocolate" before: "Before these "chocolates" are given to you- you must swear to not eat them when you get them. Keep them wrapped in their wrapper. You will be given instructions when to eat it, but do not eat it at first. We have to do a safety check to make sure it's not dangerous."
- Guide students to observe with all five senses and with Bear Awareness leading:
 - "Just look at it. What do you see? (shining foil, colors, wrinkles, etc.) Have we seen all there is to see?" Now, notice how it feels in your fingers? (Cold, hot, rough, soft) Do you feel more with your left versus right hand/finger?"
 - "Listen to it, what do you hear if you gently put it by your ear (silence)? What if you carefully rub it, does it change the sound? Smell it, what do you notice? Finally, let's taste the tiniest bite of it we can."
 - "Take your teeth and nibble a piece off, but do not chew. Notice if your mouth wishes to start chewing it all by itself, but strengthen your Bear Awareness- staying still- letting the chocolate perhaps melt on your tongue.

What does it taste/smell/feel like now? Notice everything you possibly can. Doing great work here, alien scientists."

- Guide student in slow-motion chewing and perhaps savoring the sweet experience: "Tasting this chocolate like it's the last bite left in the whole universe. Watch how your waha/kino enjoys eating the chocolate. Notice if your kino wants to swallow, chew faster, noticing how it goes down to the stomach. Is your mouth watering for another piece?"
- Conclude with gratitude: "Thank your kino/mouth for the ability to eat such a delicious, nutritious thing (yes- cacao/chocolate can be good for Bear Awareness! In moderation...)"

Alternative Activities:

- Jaw massage- after thoroughly washing hands, set up the class in a gratitude circle, and have students gently, lovingly massage their face and jaw. They can share what favorite foods they ate recently.
- Mouth mirror game- have students partner up, face each other, imagining they are mirrors, and as one moves their mouth the other does the same thing with their mouth.
- Mouth charades- have one student silently wear an expression on their mouth (smiling, frowning, tongue out, etc.) and the rest of the students guess what feeling the leader is presenting.
- Waha yoga! Creatively explore the sensations surrounding the mouth. Stretch the mouth wide, left, right, breathing through the motions, letting the jaw muscles open and soften
- Can you make this sound game? Have one student leader make a sound, then the rest of the class try to replicate it (singing and whistling are welcome as long as the inside voice is being used).
- Jaw Animal breathes- select a student leader to pick an animal and imitate how their jaw moves- doing two movements synced with the breath in and the breath out, as fellow students follow the leader's example.

Activity Assessment:

- Allow students to articulate their experience of the mindful eating practice. Survey the class to see if students have changed in any way, and see what are the biggest takeaways from the day.

Reflections

*Empower students to lead these practices outside of class with their ohanas and spread aloha.

LESSON PLAN ASSESSMENT:

Please scan this QR code or click the link and provide us with a quick, anonymous assessment of the lesson plan:



[Lesson Plan Assessment Link](#)

CONTACT US:

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at: mindfulaloha@gmail.com

Thao Le, PhD, MPH
Professor

Benji Whitenack
Graduate Teaching Assistant

