

Unit 1 Yoga Guide

Why Yoga?

- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and The National Association of the Education for Young Children (NAEYC) recommend that children should participate in activities that support the development of the whole child. Yoga is a safe and fun activity that helps children grow flexible and strong in body and mind. This daily doodle activity complements our busy days, providing a time for gathering in a quiet, relaxing way.
- Yoga has been shown to be effective in helping kids develop social skills, focus on the present moment, and slow down their thoughts. Yoga's physical benefits include increased flexibility, coordination, balance, strength, and body-awareness. Yoga at an early age can also encourage self-esteem and acceptance through exercise in a noncompetitive, fun atmosphere.

Curriculum Expectations

- It is expected that yoga be a part of each and every doodle day. At a minimum, you will notice that yoga is required during the afternoon Happy Hour in each daily lesson plan, and a recommended transition tool during the pre-nap routine.
- The poses and links included in each unit guide will help you in planning and leading each session during Happy Hour as well as other areas in the day as you choose. You will see in this Yoga Guide that we will start with some simpler poses. Throughout the year we will move to more complex poses, and then work towards applying these poses to stories, songs, and games. To ease into a yoga routine, start with slow, brief sessions, focusing on just one pose at a time with lots of language, praise, and guidance. Keep in mind that a child's attention span is typically their age in years plus 3, meaning that the developmentally appropriate expectation is that a 2 year old will focus for about 5 minutes.
- Feel free to sprinkle yoga sessions in several times a day. It is an excellent transition tool and great for winding down before naptime. With that said, remember that yoga doesn't have to be a stand-alone event - make connections to learning wherever possible! Yoga can be an extension of a read-aloud, a way to ease into a gross motor activity, or a great way to wind down after an active team game.

Share!

- Have ideas for future poses? Would your class like to create a yoga video or submit photos of poses? Wouldn't it be awesome for our Yoga Guide to be completely built using our own doodle photos? We appreciate your feedback and are grateful for your efforts in sharing photos and videos with us! Please upload to your google drive account shared folder or share with db.educationteam@gmail.com

* Thanks to namastekid.com. Many of the images found in this guide are part of a free media kit that they share.

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Salutation Seal

(This is great for starting and ending your sessions)

Benefits: calms the body and mind, helps relieve stress, relaxing

1. Sit with your legs crossed.
2. As you inhale, bring your palms together. Gently press hands against each other, straighten your back, and allow your eyes to close.
3. Hold this position and breathe deeply.



Table Pose

Benefits: aligns spine, strengthens bones, increases coordination and balance

1. Begin on your hands and knees, with your knees and feet hip width apart.
2. Place your wrists directly under your shoulders with your palms on the floor.
3. Spread your fingers apart.
4. Keep your back flat, being careful not to drop your head.



Child's Pose

Benefits: stretches the hips, thighs, and ankles; calms the mind; relieves stress and fatigue

1. Kneel on the floor, touching your big toes together.
2. Sit back on your heels, and separate your knees hip-width apart.
3. Exhale, bringing your head down, and rest it on the floor in front of you.
4. Place your hands wherever they are comfortable by your head, your knees, etc.
5. Relax and breathe, holding this pose.

Tip: Have kids make a squeaking sound to encourage breathing.



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Mountain Pose

Benefits: improves posture, strengthens core muscles and legs, reduces flat feet

1. Stand tall, with your toes touching and heels slightly apart.
2. If it is more comfortable, you may keep your feet a few inches apart.
3. Gently sway back and forth.
4. Slowly, bring the swaying to a standstill. Stop with your weight balanced evenly on your feet.
5. Firm your thigh muscles, lift your knees, and pull in your belly.
6. Press your shoulders back and hang your arms beside your torso. Breathe deeply and hold for 30 seconds to 1 minute.



Airplane Pose

Benefits: Benefits: improves balance, develops concentration, strengthens legs, chest, and arms

Begin in mountain pose above.

1. Extend arms out to either side.
2. When you feel balanced, exhale and lean forward, lifting one leg straight behind you.
3. Hold this pose, then return your leg to the ground and your arms to your sides.
4. Repeat with opposite leg.

Tip: To encourage breathing, have kids make airplane noises or talk about where they are flying.



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Tree Pose

Benefits: improves balance; strengthens thighs, calves, and ankles; stretches legs and chest; develops concentration

Begin in mountain pose.

1. To help with balance, extend arms out to either side.
2. Lift your right foot, turning your knee out; place your foot above or below your left knee, depending on your comfort level.
3. Press your hands together, in salutation seal.
4. Raise arms overhead, and look up to your hands.
5. Return hands to your chest, and lower your right leg.
6. Repeat with left leg.



Star Pose

Benefits: improves balance and coordination, increases strength and core stability, releases tension, stretches shoulders and chest

1. Stand with your feet wide apart.
2. Stretch your arms out to either side.

Tip: To use star pose to energize kids, have them shine and sing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star". To use star pose as a relaxation pose, have children take deep breaths as they enjoy the full body stretch.



Kite Pose

Benefits: stretches arms, improves balance and coordination, strengthens core and legs

Begin in Star Pose.

1. Stand tall, with your legs spread wide.
2. Reach your arms out to either side.
3. Keeping your neck and spine straight, tip your star to one side, balancing on one leg for as long as you can.
4. Return to star pose, with both feet on the floor.
5. Tip your star to the other side, and hold it with your leg firmly on the floor.



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Bridge Pose

Benefits: chest, neck and back; calms the mind; reduces stress and depression; improves digestion; strengthens legs.

1. Lay down on your back.
2. Place your arms on the floor, alongside your body.
3. Bend your knees, setting your feet flat on the floor.
4. Exhale, and lift your hips towards the ceiling.
5. Hold this pose for a few breaths.
6. Exhale, and lower your hips back to the floor.



Happy Baby Pose

Benefits: gently stretches inner groin muscles and spine; calms the mind; helps relieve stress and fatigue.

1. Lay down on your back.
2. Exhale, bend your knees into your belly, and hold onto your feet.
3. Allow your body to gently rock side to side.



Frog Pose

Benefits: tones legs; increases hamstring flexibility; improves heart health.

1. Squat on the floor, balancing on your toes, knees spread wide, hands on the floor between your legs.
2. Look up and inhale.
3. As you exhale, straighten your legs and lower your head toward your knees..
4. Return to squatting position, and then repeat.

