

Unit 2 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. Children benefit from yoga during many parts of their routine. For example: before nap, during Happy Hour (as noted in lesson plans), in small groups throughout the day, and whenever they are moved to do so!
- The poses and links included in each monthly guide will help you in planning and leading each session during Happy Hour as well as other areas in the day as you choose. 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.
- 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 share videos and photos of poses? Wouldn't it be awesome for our Yoga Guide to be completely built using our own doodle photos next year?
- **We appreciate all of your feedback and are grateful for your efforts in sharing photos and videos with us! Please share via Google Drive with: Jennifer.Horner@doodlebugs.com**

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Locust Pose / Snake Pose *Salabhasana*

Benefits: strengthens spine and backs of arms and legs; stretches shoulders, chest, and belly; improves posture; helps relieve stress; may help relieve symptoms of asthma

1. Begin by laying on your belly.
2. Exhale, and lift your head, upper torso, arms, and legs off the floor.
3. Gaze forward or slightly upward.
4. Hold this position, then release.
5. Raise the other hand to the sky.
6. Return that hand to the floor.
7. Repeat.

Tip: Children might find it easier to have their arms bent and hands by their chin. For increased difficulty, have arms extend alongside your body with



Floor Bow Pose *Dhanurasana*

Benefits: stretches entire front of the body, strengthens back muscles, improves posture

1. Begin on your belly, with your hands by your body, palms up
2. Exhale and bend your knees
3. Reach back with your hands and take hold of your ankles
4. Inhale and lift your heels towards the ceiling and your thighs away from the floor. Your chest will lift away from the floor.Â
5. Gaze forward
6. Hold this position, and release as you exhale.



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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 you back flat, being careful not to drop your head.



Giraffe Pose

Benefits: strengthens bones, increases coordination and balance, stretches arms and chest

Begin in table pose.

1. Reach one hand up to the sky.
2. Spread your fingers apart.
3. Return that hand to the floor.
4. Raise the other hand to the sky.
5. Return that hand to the floor.
6. Repeat.

Tip: To encourage children to hold the pose and breathe, have them reach for the highest leaves on the treetop and making munching sounds.



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Upward Facing Dog

Benefits: strengthens the spine, opens and stretches the chest, relieves stress and fatigue, relieves symptoms of asthma

1. Begin on the floor, lying on your stomach
2. Bring your hands up by your shoulders, palms on the floor
3. Inhale, press your hands into the floor
4. Straighten your arms, lift your head and torso up as high as you can, keep your elbows close to your body
5. Hold this position, breathing easily



The Mouse Pose

Benefits: relieve stress and tension, an ideal pose for calming down

1. Kneel on the floor as if you are a mouse! This could be fun to add mouse sound effects.
2. Lean your head forward slowly until it touches the floor in front of you.
3. Lay your arms next to your side with your palms facing up.

The idea is to stay still and quiet as a mouse. Focus on breathing, and add a few squeaks here and there for fun!!



Elephant Pose

Benefits: stretches lower back

1. Start by standing with your feet hip distance apart.
2. Clasp your hands together and lean forward as if you are trying to touch your toes.
3. Sway from left to right using your lower back.
4. To add fun pretend you are filling up your trunk with water! Lift your trunk up and spray your back!



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Candle Breath Pose

Benefits: engages the parasympathetic nervous system and calms children down, promotes self-regulation and awareness of breathing

like a snake.

1. Invite children to sit on the carpet with their legs crossed.
2. Bring pointer fingers to an angle creating a triangle.
3. Hold pointer fingers out in front of your mouth
4. This exercise focuses on breathing. Take a deep breath in through your nose, and exhale in a steady stream out of your mouth. Tell children to imagine that they are blowing out a candle. Just like on your birthday cake!



Triangle Pose

Benefits: increases coordination and balance, stretches entire body

This pose is fun to do while doing jumping jacks! After every five jumping jacks stop and do this pose.

1. Stand with your legs apart.
2. Bend to your side so you can touch your palm to your knee or calf.
3. Raise your opposite arm to the sky.

Hold for a few seconds and then continue with jumping jacks!



Yoga Minute: Stop and think about the way you are incorporating yoga into your daily routine. Have you been successful? Yoga is a popular activity in our classrooms if it is presented in an exciting way! Find different ways to use yoga! Try using a book that includes animals (such as **“Brown Bear, Brown Bear”** by Eric Carle) As you read incorporate the yoga poses you have learned! Or, have a yoga freeze dance. Turn on some music and dance! When the music stops strike a yoga pose!

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Skyscraper Pose

Benefits: stretches out the arms, and legs, and opens up the chest, increases coordination and balance

1. Stand up straight and place feet a bit more than shoulder-width apart.
2. Raise your arms above your head.
3. Grasp your hands and turn your palms up.



Spider Pose

Benefits: stretches hamstrings

1. Stand with feet hip distance apart and bend down into a squat.
 2. Place your hands between your feet and slide your hands around the outside of the feet and breathe in three times.
 3. Pretend you are building a spider web! Bob up and down while remaining in the spider pose.
 4. It may also be fun to try walking around in the spider pose! Or have spider races across the circle time carpet.
- Sing the itsy bitsy spider while doing this pose for extra excitement.

