



Active Insight: Evidence in Action



Tip #838: Mindful Movement Across Learning Opportunities

Overview

Mindful movement activities such as breath-synchronised stretching, slow balance challenges and sensory movement walks give students simple ways to settle and reset alongside the higher-intensity activities that are common in HPE. As students pay attention to how their body feels, match their breathing to movement and notice how they are feeling during the activity, they build a better understanding of the connection between movement and wellbeing. These activities also work well as active transitions between more energetic lessons or learning blocks.

Key Teaching Ideas

Mindful movement shifts the focus from external performance to internal awareness. Teachers can embed brief mindful practices into different sections of the lesson, for example, asking students to perform three slow sun salutations before beginning a numeracy block, or leading a one-minute body scan at the end of a high-intensity session. The key is making the internal experience explicit: asking students to describe what they notice in their body, how their breath changes with different movements, and how their emotional state shifts after a period of slow, intentional movement.

Practical Application

- **Breath-Synchronised Stretching:** Guide students through stretches where movement is explicitly tied to inhalation and exhalation, reaching arms up on a deep inhale and folding forward on a slow exhale which helps develop focus and body awareness.
- **Dynamic Balance Challenges:** Incorporate slow-motion balancing tasks that require intense concentration and core stability, asking students to describe what they notice in their body as they hold each position.
- **Active Transition Breaks:** Use short mindful movement sequences between classroom activities, such as a slow balance sequence where students move from standing on two feet to balancing on one foot, changing sides and finishing with a controlled stretch before starting the next lesson. This gives students a chance to reset and refocus before returning to learning.



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- **Sensory Movement Walks:** Conduct slow walking exercises where students focus entirely on the physical sensation of their feet contacting the ground, developing proprioceptive awareness through deliberate attention to movement.
- **Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Guide students through simple tension and release exercises, such as squeezing their fists tightly for five seconds before letting them fully relax. These activities help students notice the difference between tense and relaxed muscles and recognise when their body needs to release tension.

Next Steps

[Anywhere PD](#) offers resources on mindful movement and breath-based HPE practices. Visit [Active Education Australia](#) for tools on integrating self-regulation and wellbeing into physical education lessons.

References and Research

1. Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (Version 9.0) – Encourages students to develop self-awareness, self-management and movement strategies that support health, wellbeing and lifelong participation in physical activity.
2. Whitehead, M. (2010). *Physical Literacy: Throughout the Lifecourse* – Explains how purposeful movement experiences develop body awareness, confidence, motivation and understanding, supporting lifelong engagement in physical activity.
3. Australian Sports Commission. (2019). *Australian Physical Literacy Framework* – Describes how physical, psychological, cognitive and social capabilities develop through meaningful movement experiences that build body awareness, self-regulation, confidence and movement competence.