



No materials required.

Prep Time: 0 mins.



As this is the third Monday of the month, please consider sharing or re-sharing the Monthly Kick-Off activity, and if appropriate, video at www.everymondaymatters.org. Additionally, a three-minute recap of the previous weeks may add extra context to this week and help connect the dots around the monthly theme.

WEEKLY KICK-OFF

- 1) **SHARE THIS WEEK'S THEME WITH STUDENTS: "TAKE A BREATH"**
- 2) **ASK 1-3 OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO HELP STUDENTS EXPLORE THE WEEK'S FOCUS:**

***NOTE:** *Choose questions appropriate to your students' ages, grades, ability levels, and classroom goals. Students may share their answers in pairs, small groups, or as a large group.*

- **What does it mean to "TAKE A BREATH"?**
- **What does it feel like when you "TAKE A BREATH"?**
 - Why do you think it feels that way?
- **When do you "TAKE A BREATH"?**
- **Do you always notice when you're "TAKING A BREATH"?**
- **What happens when you pause and "TAKE A BREATH"?**
- **How can pausing and "TAKING A BREATH" help you when things are stressful?**
- **Do you think that "TAKING A BREATH" can help you bring more peace into your life?**
 - How so?
- **How might "TAKING A BREATH" help you pause and choose how you'll act in a certain situation, instead of reacting in a way you don't feel like you can control?**
- **Do you think it's important to practice "TAKING A BREATH"?**
 - What are some ways you can do so?
- **Why is it important to intentionally and proactively choose to "TAKE A BREATH"?**
- **What can happen when we don't "TAKE A BREATH"?**

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- Do you think “TAKING A BREATH” can help you improve your relationships?
 - How so?
 - How might taking time every day to focus on your “BREATH” help you achieve “BALANCE” in your life?
 - How can “TAKING A BREATH” and “GETTING BALANCED” help all of us connect to how much WE MATTER?
 - How might “TAKING A BREATH” help you show others that they MATTER?
 - How might your life change by “TAKING A BREATH” and “GETTING BALANCED” more often?
 - How might the world be different if everyone did this?

3) READ THE WEEKLY INTRODUCTION ALOUD OR ASK A STUDENT TO DO SO:

When you breathe, you’re creating a space—space to make a choice. In our fast-paced world, it’s easy to react to... well, everything. But when we come back to our breath—when we choose to breathe in and out—we remember that we don’t have to react. We can respond based on what’s happening right now. Will we choose to act in a way that brings others happiness and love, or harm? This week, we want you to TAKE A BREATH. Well, we want you to take a lot of breaths. But the point of this week is to slow down and breathe. We want you to tune in as often as possible to your breath and listen to what it’s telling you. Right now, in this moment, is your breath slow or quick? Deep or shallow? There is no wrong answer, but your breath is talking to you. When we tune in, we get a better idea of how we’re feeling in this exact moment. So this week, give yourself permission to slow down, get present, and breathe in. And breathe out. And remember that breathing is the source of all life. Meditate with us on the breath this week and discover just how important it is to balance your life with your breathing. Taking a breath matters.

4) REVIEW HOW THIS WEEK SUPPORTS THE MONTH’S THEME OF “MONDAY GETS BALANCED”

- **Explain:**
 - “BALANCE” is so important
 - To “GET BALANCED”, there is one thing we must do—“BREATHE”
 - Regularly pausing and focusing on your “BREATH” helps you “GET BALANCED” by bringing more moments of calm throughout your day
 - When you “TAKE A BREATH” instead of reacting to something, you can manage a challenging emotion or situation even better
 - And, you might make some positive choices and actions more often because you’re giving yourself space to think and decide what you want to do or say
 - All of this helps you stay “BALANCED”
- **Continue:**
 - “TAKING BREATHS” throughout the day can also help you stay calm in the present moment instead of worrying about the past or future
 - Every time you find yourself waiting, walking, worrying, rushing, or feeling bored, remember to “TAKE A BREATH” to stay aware of the present moment instead of looking at a screen or worrying about the past or future
 - You can start to view every daily routine (like brushing your teeth, waiting in line, or walking to class) as an opportunity to turn off your thoughts and focus on your “BREATH”
 - And, you can start to view every choice and interaction as an opportunity to pause and “TAKE A BREATH” before responding or moving forward
 - By remembering to “TAKE A BREATH” you will “GET BALANCED” by becoming the person who lives in the present moment and who always responds to challenging situations with calm and constructive choices
 - And ultimately, focusing on “TAKING A BREATH” and “GETTING BALANCED” will bring you and the people you interact with more joy, calm, and fulfillment
- **Ask:**
 - How might “TAKING A BREATH” help you as you lead a “BALANCED” life?
 - Do you think “TAKING A BREATH” can help you build stronger, more peaceful relationships?
 - Are you ready to learn more about how to “TAKE A BREATH” this week?

5) PRESENT THE WEEKLY GOALS:

- Practice turning off our thoughts to simply see, feel, and hear the present moment
- Identify opportunities to pause, “BREATHE”, and respond constructively to challenging situations
- Discover how focusing on our “BREATH” helps both our minds and bodies feel happier and healthier
- Understand how “TAKING A BREATH” is an important part of this month’s theme “MONDAY GETS BALANCED”

“WHEN YOU ARE A KID, YOU LAY IN THE GRASS AND WATCH THE CLOUDS GO OVER, AND YOU LITERALLY DON’T HAVE A THOUGHT IN YOUR MIND. IT’S MEDITATION.”

- DICK VAN DYKE