



Lesson 3: Taking a Break to Manage Strong Feelings

Primary Goals:

1. Teach students how to take a break to calm down
2. Discuss taking a break as a way to manage strong feelings
3. Practice taking a break
4. Identify situations where taking a break should be used
5. Capitalize on in-vivo opportunities to encourage and reinforce students taking a break to manage strong feelings

Materials for Main Lesson:

- Sand Timer
- Stress Ball
- Taking a Break Sequence Handout
- Take a Break Strategies Handout
- Book: The Lemonade Hurricane: A story of mindfulness and meditation by Licia Morelli

Materials for Supplemental Activities:

- Sand Timer
- Stress Ball
- Taking a Break Sequence Handout
- Take a Break Strategies Handout
- My Guide for Taking a Break to Calm Down Handout
- Book: The Lemonade Hurricane: A story of mindfulness and meditation by Licia Morelli



Lesson 3, part 1: Taking a break (10 minutes)

Teacher: "Last week we talked about a way we can calm down when we are feeling mad, sad, or excited."

Ask the students:

"Who can remember what we learned to do to calm down last week?"

Praise student responses about deep breathing and lead them in a quick practice.

Teacher: "Today we are going to learn another way to calm down, called Taking a Break."

Facilitate student conversation by asking:

"What do you think it means to take a break to calm down?"

Allow students a chance to respond and facilitate conversation around 2 to 3 student answers.

"Taking a break means walking away for a few minutes to clear your head and feel better so you can make good choices."

Continue the conversation by asking:

"When might you want to take a break to calm down?"

Allow students a chance to respond and facilitate conversation around 2 to 3 student answers.

"Sometimes you might not get to go to the center that you want, and you get mad or you are just really excited and want to run around but it's not time for running."

"These would also be good times to take a break because even when we are having lots of big feelings, we want to make sure we are staying safe and following the rules in our classroom. So, we're going to learn how to take a break to calm down when we are sad, mad, or really excited."

Teacher: "So first, we are going to learn the steps to taking a break in our classroom."

Facilitate conversation by asking:

"If you are having a strong feeling what do you think you need to do first?"

Allow students a chance to respond and facilitate conversation around 2 to 3 student answers.

"First, we have to stop what we are doing and name the feeling we are having."

Provide some examples to the students as needed and model the behavior for them.

Teacher: "After we stop and name our feelings what do you think we need to do next?"

Allow students a chance to respond and facilitate conversation around 2 to 3 student answers.

"Then we should ask for a break and go to a place to calm down."

***If you have a calm down area suggest it for use. If not designate an area of the room (chair, rug, etc.) for calming down. Model both steps (naming feelings and going to the calm down area).**

Teacher: "The calm down area is a place for you to go to be alone and take time to yourself to calm down. So only one person should be in the calm down area (or chair) at a time."
"After we get to the calm down area, the next step in taking a break is setting our timer."

Introduce students to the sand timer and model setting the timer while in the calm down area.

Teacher: "The last step in taking a break is deciding what I want to do during my break to calm down."

Introduce the students to the "Take a Break Strategies" and model what each one might look like.

Teacher: "So my favorite ways to calm down is to take deep breaths and squeeze on the stress ball. I will breathe deeply and squeeze the stress ball until the timer runs out of sand. Then if I am calm and ready, I will rejoin the class."

Model rejoining the class activity when the timer runs out of sand.



Lesson 3, part 2: Book Reading (10 minutes)

Read aloud:

The Lemonade Hurricane: A story of mindfulness and meditation by Licia Morelli

- Before Reading:
 - Ask the students what they think the book will be about and why they think that.
- During Reading:
 - Ask the students to:
 - Explain what is happening in the pictures
 - Decide if they think Henry is making good choices and why they think that
 - Identify how they think the different characters are feeling at different times and why they think the character might feel that way
 - Discuss different times when they might need to take a break and calm down

Supplemental Activities (OPTIONAL)



Activity: Taking a Break Practice

- Have students practice the steps of taking a break and reflect on personal experiences by:
 - Thinking of a time when they felt frustrated, sad, or angry
 - Talk through scenarios with students if they need prompting
 - Have students practice asking for a break, naming their feeling, setting the timer, breathing deeply, counting, thinking happy thoughts, and playing with a stress reliever.
 - **BONUS:** Remind students to take a break when they are upset and practice it in classroom situations where it may be useful.



Art: Personalized Take-A-Break Guide

- Help the students make their own "guide to taking a break"
 - Provide each student with the "Take a Break Strategies" sheet
 - Have students color the strategies and choose their 3 favorites (or make up another one that would be appropriate)
 - Have students cut out their choices
 - Then provide the students with the "First, Then, Next tiles" and have them cut each one out.
 - Provide each student with the "My Guide" sheet
 - Assist students in selecting and ordering the steps involved in taking a break and their calm down choices
 - Have students glue the steps and choices onto the worksheet in the appropriate order
 - Once complete - have students talk through the steps of taking a break and what they will choose to do when they are taking a break to calm down.



Music and Movement: Calm Down Song

- Play the song: Calm it Down Dance 2 on YouTube.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5frILuFL6c>
- Encourage the students to watch the video and sing and dance along.
- Engage the students in a discussion about what they should do when they have strong feelings. Bring their attention to the "stop" directive in the song and link "stopping" to taking a break.
- Remind students that it is okay to ask for a break when they are upset



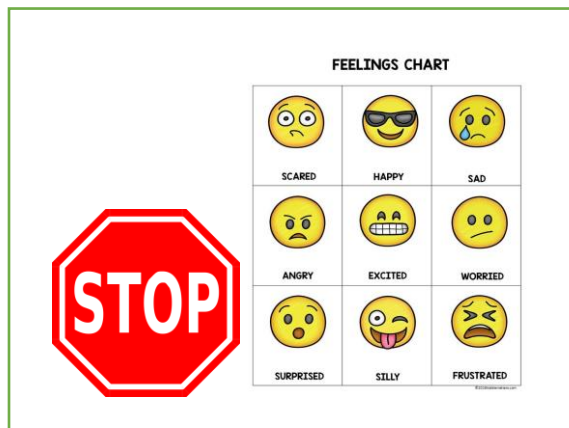
Book Re-Reading

Reintroduce the book: The Lemonade Hurricane: A story of mindfulness and meditation by Licia Morelli

- Before Reading:
 - *Ask the students what they remember from the book*
- During Reading:
 - Engage the students in an explanation of what is happening in the pictures, whether they think Henry is making good choices and why and identifying character feelings.
 - *Discuss different times when they might need to take a break and calm down*

“Take a Break” Sequence Handout

First



Then

Ask for a break and go to Calm down area



Next

Set the timer



Take a Break Strategies

Squeezing a Stress Ball



Imagining Your Favorite Place



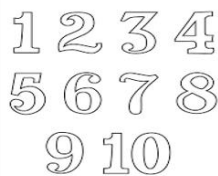
Taking Deep Breaths



Watching the Timer



Counting to 10



Closing Your Eyes



Giving Yourself a Hug




hug










My Own Way to Calm Down

My Guide for Taking a Break to Calm Down

First




FEELINGS CHART

		
SCARED	HAPPY	SAD
		
ANGRY	EXCITED	WORRIED
		
SURPRISED	SILLY	FRUSTRATED

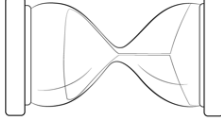
Then

Ask for a break and go to calm down area



Next

Set the timer



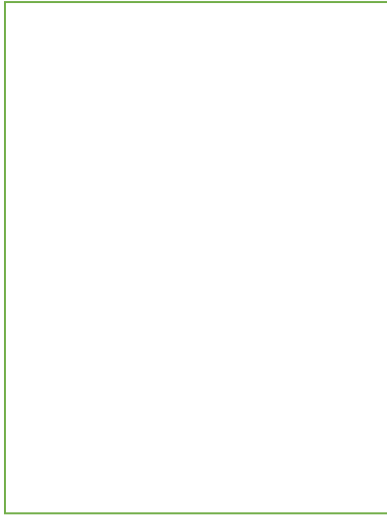
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Last

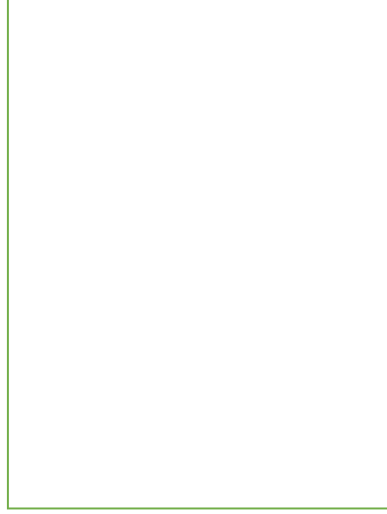
I can calm down by:

My Guide for Taking a Break to Calm Down

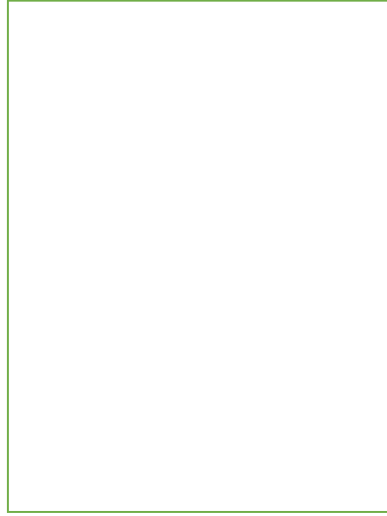
First



Then



Next



Last

I can calm down by:

