

Calming your nerves for taking a test

Recommended for grades:

K4 – 8th grade

Practice description:

This practice can help to manage your nerves for taking tests. Nervous feelings and behaviors are normal during a test, but too many strong feelings can prevent you from being able to access your best thinking. By noticing and identifying your stressful thoughts and feelings, you might better focus and support yourself to get through the test.

Transcript:

Welcome to the Calming Your Nerves for Taking a Test practice.

- *Pause for 2 seconds*

Let's start by getting into a comfortable position with both feet on the floor, and a long, strong back so that your body supports your intention to be relaxed and aware. Allow your hands to rest in your lap.

- *Pause for 2 seconds*

Try softening your eyes and turning your gaze down toward your knees or to the images on the screen. If you feel comfortable, you may choose to close your eyes.

- *Pause for 2 seconds*

Take a few slow, easy breaths to bring your kind attention to yourself.

Imagine that you're going to be taking a test. Do you feel nervous, unfocused, or discouraged? Many people have these natural feelings before taking a test.

- *Pause for 4 seconds*

Do you think, "This is too much.", "I'm not good at tests."? If you have these thoughts, there is no need to believe them since they may be coming from a place of stress.

- *Pause for 4 seconds*

Think about what you feel in your body. Is there tightness in your shoulders or maybe you have a headache? Are there butterflies in your stomach? Is your heart beating faster?

- *Pause for 4 seconds*

Breathing into these feelings can help to soften and relieve tightness or stress. To calm these reactions, bring your attention to the area with the strongest sensations. As you breathe in, imagine the breath is moving to the area where you feel tightness.

- *Pause for 4 seconds*

As you breathe out, allow the edges of that area to soften.

- *Pause for 10 seconds*

Take a few more nourishing breaths and consider thinking to yourself, "I'm going to do my best", or "One question at a time."

- *Pause for 6 seconds*

Recognize that supporting yourself in this way helps you to calm your nerves and access your best thinking.

- *Pause for 5 seconds*

Now, imagine picking up your pencil and doing the best you can.

- *Pause for 10 seconds*

Imagine you have finished the test. You might congratulate yourself for doing your best by thinking "I did it." "Good job!" or "Nice work!"

- *Pause for 8 seconds*

Now, take a few more nourishing breaths before gently opening your eyes and bringing your attention back to the room around you.

- *Pause for 5 seconds*
- *Chime sound*