



WINTER | Air Breathing: Plants + People

Summary:

One thing our tiny gardeners excel at is breathing! Today, we can work on getting our winter wiggles out and spend a little time exploring our breath.

Before Visiting the Garden:

Gather: Warm weather clothes

Explore: “Breathing Flower” by Choi Jeong Hwa: Does the flower look like it is breathing?

Read: *A Boy and a Bear: The Children’s Relaxation Book* by Lori Lite

In the Garden:

As our little people grow and develop, their desire to communicate can sometimes outpace their ability to communicate. Some of our tiny gardeners do not yet have the language they need to tell you what it is they want, even though they know exactly what they want! As you may have noticed, this can lead to your little gardener experiencing frustration. Today, we’re going to focus on one simple way to calm our gardeners, deep breathing.

Questions to Explore:

- Can you show me your sad face? Happy face?
- Take a deep breath; what do you feel?
- In the winter air, can you see your breath? What does it look like?
- Can you make your breath speed up? Hint: try running!

Activity:

1. When we get frustrated or overwhelmed, we often hold our breath. Today, we’re going to do a few exercises to find our breath.
2. Lay flat on the ground. Have your tiny gardener lay with their head on your belly and their hand on their belly.
3. Take a deep breath so that your gardener can feel the rise and fall of your stomach. Ask them to take a deep breath and make their hand rise and fall on their stomach.
4. Next, do a little running and jumping to get your breath warmed up and your body moving.
5. Calm your breath back down by taking some deep breaths while raising and lowering your arms over your head. Use these exercises with your tiny gardener the next time they are frustrated or overwhelmed. Help them to pause, breathe, and calm down before moving onto their next adventure.

Beyond the Garden | Silly Straws

One simple way to get your gardener to practice deep exhaling is to have them blow through a straw. To make it extra fun, let them blow bubbles into a water cup while they work on slowing down their breath. The giggles that ensue might make that difficult!

Continue Exploring | Supporting Materials

A few more breathing exercises: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/adventures-in-learning/2015/09/calming-breathing-exercise-for-kids/>