



YOGA INTRODUCTION

LESSON PLAN

MEDICAL DISCLAIMER

Not all exercises are suitable for everyone and it is recommended that you consult your doctor before beginning this or any exercise program. To reduce the risk of injury, never force or strain or attempt these exercises without the assistance of a trained yoga instructor. If you experience pain or discomfort during this exercise, stop immediately and consult your doctor. The instruction presented is in no way intended as a substitute for medical advice.

LESSON 1: Yoga Introduction

NASPE Standards: 1, 3

Grades: All

Equipment: Yoga mats, chart paper, pens

Theme	Yoga Introduction
Concept	What is yoga? How can yoga support my health?
Time In (Breathing) 1-3 minutes	Sounding Breath Explain that in yoga we can hear and feel our breath. We can breathe shallow or we can breathe deep.
Discussion 3-5 minutes	What is yoga? Why do yoga? Brainstorm what students know about yoga, have heard, seen or think. Share with students that yoga means union. Yoga is the practice of connecting breath with movement. When we do this we are able to develop strength, flexibility, and balance in our minds and bodies. Yoga helps us to improve our health and fitness. In yoga class we will do breathing, poses, relaxation and games.
Warm-Up 5 minutes	Yoga Pattern
Yoga Postures 15-20 minutes	Rock, Cow, Cat, Downward Dog, Rag Doll, Mountain, Warrior I, Warrior II, Mountain, Tree, Frog, Butterfly, Seated Forward Fold Explain that a lot of yoga poses are named after things in nature—plants, animals, mountains, etc. because a long time ago yogis noticed the qualities of these things and created poses to practice being strong, balanced, flexible, etc. like the things in nature are.
Game 5-10 minutes	Be a Mountain
Partner Work 5-10 minutes	Tree
Relaxation 3-5 minutes	Rest Pose Have students lay down and close their eyes, then cue them to imagine different parts of their bodies relaxing and becoming heavy like beanbags as you say them.

SOUNDING BREATH

Benefit:

- Allows you to tune-in to yourself and tune-out everything else
- Integrates the mind, body, and breath

Instructions:

1. Cover your ears with your hands so you can hear no sound.
2. Inhale and exhale evenly through your nose.
3. As you listen to your breath, think of a word to describe the sound of the breath.



Tailoring Tidbits:

For a more visual exercise, imagine your hand is a mirror and you are using your breath to fog up the mirror.

YOGA POSE PATTERN

Instructions:

1. Start with a simple pattern.
2. Repeat the pattern two to three times.
3. Add on to the pattern.
4. Repeat without the teacher's lead.

Examples:

Rock, Table, Cow, Cat, Rock (x2)

Rock, Table, Cow, Cat, Downward Dog, Table, Rock (x2)

Repeat the pattern without the teacher's lead.

Grade:

Pre-K to K; 1 to 3; 4 to 5

ROCK



Physical Benefit:

- Stretches the ankles, quadriceps, hip flexors, and lower back

Mental Benefit:

- Calms the mind

Gaze Point:

Down the nose

Instructions:

1. Begin in Table Pose.
2. Inhale, bring your knees mat distance apart, your big toes touch together.
3. Exhale, lower your bottom back to your heels as your stretch your arms forward toward the front of your mat.
4. Breathe.

Cues:

Make sure that the tops of your feet are flat on the mat. #2

Let your forehead rest. #3.1

Spread your fingers wide like the five points of a star. #3.2

Creative Language:

Allow your back to be completely flat, so that you could balance a cup on your low back. #1

You can come to this pose at anytime in your yoga practice when you need a break. #4

Grade:

Pre-K to K; 1 to 3; 4 to 5

Other Anatomical Focus:

Hip

Modifications:

Notice	Reason	Modification
Bottoms in air	Tight hip flexors	Come onto forearms and let forehead rest
Toes tucked under	Lack of awareness	See cue #2

CAT AND COW



CAT



COW

Physical Benefit:

- Strengthens the back
- Stretches the lower back, abdominals, chest, spine, shoulders, and neck

Mental Benefit:

- Stimulates the mind

Gaze Point:

Cat: Navel
Cow: Up

Instructions:

1. Begin in Rock Pose.
2. Inhale, come up onto your hands and knees.
3. Exhale, tuck your toes under and spread your fingers wide.
4. Inhale to Cow Pose as you arch your back and look up towards the sky.
5. Exhale to Cat Pose as you round your spine and bring your chin to your chest.
6. Repeat.

Cues:

Check to make sure your knees are two fist distances apart. #2.1

Walk your hands forward until your hands are underneath your elbows and your back is flat like a table. #2.2

Creative Language:

Moo and meow with the movements of the spine. #4/#5

Grade:

Pre-K to K; 1 to 3; 4 to 5

Modifications:

Notice	Reason	Modification
Knees too close together	Lack of awareness	See cue #2.1

DOWNWARD DOG



Physical Benefit:

- Energizes the body
- Strengthens the quadriceps, hip flexors, abdominals, neck, and arms
- Stretches the feet, calves, hamstrings, back, chest, shoulders, and palms

Mental Benefit:

- Increases calmness
- Relieves stress

Gaze Point:

Navel

Instructions:

1. Begin in Table Pose.
2. Inhale, tuck your toes under.
3. Exhale, press into your hands and lift your hips up towards the sky.
4. Breathe.
5. Inhale and look forward to come back to Table Pose.

Cues:

You are making an upside-down V shape with your body. #3

Gently try to straighten your arms and legs. Allow your head to relax as you look towards your belly button. #4

Creative Language:

Spread your fingers wide like the five points on a star. #1

Walk your dog by bending your knees side to side. #4

Grade:

Pre-K to K; 1 to 3; 4 to 5

Other Anatomical Focus:

Inversion

Modifications:

Notice	Reason	Modification
Weight in arms or roundedness in the back	Tight hamstrings	Bend at the knee
Fingers closed	Lack of awareness	See creative language #1
Wrists lifting off mat	Weak arms, tight hamstrings, or lack of awareness	Bend at the knee
Shoulders dropping into ears	Tight shoulders or tight hamstrings	Bend at the knee

RAG DOLL



Physical Benefit:

- Strengthens the ankles, knees, quadriceps, and abdominals
- Stretches the calves, hamstrings, hip flexors, back, and neck

Mental Benefit:

- Builds concentration
- Calms the mind

Gaze Point:

Down the nose

Instructions:

1. Begin in Mountain Pose.
2. Inhale, reach your arms up to the sky.
3. Exhale, bend your knees and reach your hands toward the floor.
4. Inhale, catch opposite elbows.
5. Exhale, allow your back to be long and your head to be loose.
6. Breathe.
7. When you are ready, bring your hands to your hips. Inhale, tuck your chin to your chest to roll up to Mountain Pose.

Cues:

If this is comfortable, begin to straighten your knees. #4

Creative Language:

Imagine your head is like a coconut hanging from a palm tree. #4

Grade:

Pre-K to K; 1 to 3; 4 to 5

Other Anatomical Focus:

Standing

Modifications:

Notice	Reason	Modification
Rounding in the back	Tight hamstrings	Slightly bend the knees
Tension in the neck	Overall tightness	See creative language #4

MOUNTAIN



Physical Benefit:

- Aligns the spine
- Improves posture
- Strengthens the ankles, knees, quadriceps, buttocks, abdominals, and neck
- Reduces flat feet

Mental Benefit:

- Builds focus
- Increases alertness

Gaze Point:

Down the nose

Instructions:

1. Begin standing.
2. Inhale, step your feet hips distance apart (Pre-K - K) or allow your big toes to touch (Grades 1-5).
3. Exhale, extend your arms down, palms facing the sides of your legs.
4. Breathe.

Cues:

Allow your shoulders to melt away from your ears. #1

Bring your shoulder blades to touch at your back. #2

Creative Language:

Your feet and legs like the base of a mountain. The top of your head rises to the sky like the peak of the mountain. #4.1

You are strong and grounded in Mountain Pose. #4.2

Be still and strong in your Mountain Pose. #4.3

Grade:

Pre-K to K; 1 to 3; 4 to 5

Modifications:

Notice	Reason	Modification
Collapsing or slouching in spine	Lack of awareness	See cue #1
Off balance	Difficulty finding balance or equilibrium undeveloped in younger children	Feet hips distance apart

WARRIOR I



Physical Benefit:

- Increases endurance
- Strengthens the ankles, knees, quadriceps, hamstrings, abdominals, back, and arms
- Stretches the calves, quadriceps, hamstrings, hip flexors, chest, and shoulders

Mental Benefit:

- Builds focus
- Develops willpower

Gaze Point:

Down the nose

Instructions:

1. Begin in Mountain Pose.
2. Inhale, bring your hands to your hips.
3. Exhale, step your left foot back an entire leg’s distance keeping your right foot at the front of your mat.
4. Inhale, bend into your front right knee, with your back leg straight.
5. Exhale, reach your arms up to the sky.
6. Breathe.
7. When you are ready, bring your hands back to your hips and step your left foot forward to Mountain Pose.
8. Repeat on the other side.

Cues:

Check that your right toes face the front of your mat. Turn your left toes to face the side of your mat at a 45-degree angle. #3

Make sure that the bent knee faces directly forward over the ankle. #4

Your hands are shoulder-width apart. Your pinky fingers turn in slightly towards one another and your shoulders melt away from your ears. #5

Be firm and strong as you stand here in your Warrior I Pose. #6

Creative Language:

You have headlights on the front of your hips and you want to shine them on the front of your mat. #4

Can you be a peaceful warrior (peace signs)? Can you be a strong warrior (muscles)? #6

Grade:

Pre-K to K; 1 to 3; 4 to 5

Modifications:

Notice	Reason	Modification
Off balance	Difficulty finding balance	Keep hands on the hips
Bending in the back leg	Tight hip flexors	Lessen bend in the front knee
Front knee turning in or out	Lack of awareness or weak inner thighs	See cue #4
Shoulders lifting up towards ears	Tight shoulders	See cue #5

WARRIOR II



Physical Benefit:

- Increases endurance
- Lengthens the spine
- Strengthens the ankles, knees, hamstrings, quadriceps, and neck
- Stretches the hip flexors, groin, abdominals, and shoulders

Mental Benefit:

- Builds focus
- Develops willpower

Gaze Point:

Over the front middle finger

Instructions:

1. Begin in Star Pose.
2. Inhale, bring your hands to your hips.
3. Exhale, turn your right foot out and keep your left foot as is.
4. Inhale, reach your arms to a “T”.
5. Exhale, bend deeply into your right knee.
6. Breathe.
7. When you are ready, inhale and return to Star Pose with your hands at your hips.
8. Repeat on the other side.

Cues:

Make sure your right foot is aligned with the arch of your left foot. #3

Make sure your knee is drawing towards the 3rd and 4th toes on your right foot. #5.1

Feel your arms and legs stretch in opposite directions as your stand strong in your Warrior II body. #5.2

Engage the outside edge of your back foot. #5.3

Equally extend from your front fingertips and the back ones. #5.4

Creative Language:

Stretch your arms as if being pulled in opposite directions. #4

Imagine you are a surfing warrior. #6

Grade:

Pre-K to K; 1 to 3; 4 to 5

Modifications:

Notice	Reason	Modification
Off balance	Difficulty finding balance or alignment	Keep hands at the hips
Bending in the back knee	Tight hip flexors	Lessen bend in front knee
Front knee turning in or out	Lack of awareness	See cue #5.1
Leaning forward	Lack of awareness	See cue #5.2, #5.3
Uneven arms	Lack of awareness	See cue #5.4

TREE



VARIATION 1



VARIATION 2



VARIATION 3

Physical Benefit:

- Lengthens the spine
- Strengthens the ankles, calves, knees, hamstrings, abdominals, back, and neck
- Stretches the quadriceps, hip flexors, chest, and shoulders

Mental Benefit:

- Builds concentration and focus

Gaze Point:

Down the nose

Instructions:

1. Begin in Mountain Pose.
2. Inhale, bring your hands onto your hips.
3. Exhale, step your right foot to the inside of your left leg.
4. Inhale, stand tall in your tree body.
5. Exhale, extend your arms up towards the ceiling.
6. Breathe.
7. When you are ready, bring your hands back down to your hips and return to Mountain Pose.
8. Repeat on the other side.

Cues:

Your right toes are like a kickstand. Your toes on your left foot keep you rooted to the mat. #3

Spread your hands wide allowing your fingers to turn in slightly and your shoulders to melt away from your ears. #5

Breathe smooth and steady to keep yourself balanced and focused. #6

Creative Language:

Your toes are the roots of your tree; they help you to stand strong and balanced. #3

Stretch your arms up like the growing branches on a tree. #5

Grade:

Pre-K to K; 1 to 3; 4 to 5

Modifications:

Notice	Reason	Modification
Off balance	Difficulty finding balance	1. Foot like a kickstand 2. Foot to inner calf 3. Foot to inner thigh
Foot on knee	Lack of awareness	1. Foot like a kickstand 2. Foot to inner calf

FROG



Physical Benefit:

- Strengthens the arches of the feet and ankle
- Stretches the ankles, groin, and back

Mental Benefit:

- Calms the mind

Gaze Point:

Down the nose

Instructions:

1. Begin in Downward Dog.
2. Inhale, look forward to your hands.
3. Exhale, gently step your feet to the outside of your hands.
4. Inhale, bend your knees deeply.
5. Exhale, press your elbows into your inner thighs.
6. Breathe.
7. When you are ready, step back to Downward Dog.

Cues:

- Bend your knees coming into a squatting position. #4.1
- Your feet press into the ground. #4.2
- Drop your bottom toward the floor. #4.3
- Reach your chest up toward the sky drawing your shoulder blades together. #5

Grade:

Pre-K to K; 1 to 3; 4 to 5

Modifications:

Notice	Reason	Modification
Heels lifting off the ground	Tight ankles	If painful, Bug Pose

BUTTERFLY



Physical Benefit:

- Strengthens the abdominals and upper back
- Stretches the knees, inner thighs, and groin

Mental Benefit:

- Calms the mind

Gaze Point:

Down the nose

Instructions:

1. Begin sitting with the bottoms of your feet touching.
2. Inhale, reach your arms up and show your peace fingers.
3. Exhale, bring your peace fingers to wrap around your big toes, fingers around the toe, thumbs on top.
4. Inhale, sit tall.
5. Exhale, gently bend forward, reaching your forehead toward the floor.
6. Breathe.
7. Inhale, keep your chin tucked to your chest as you come up.

Cues:

If students are moving their knees up and down (flapping butterfly wings), have them slow down their speed (to be gentle, graceful butterflies). #6

Creative Language:

What color butterfly are you? #5.1

Can you imagine yourself like a beautiful butterfly gently flying through the air? #5.2

Imagine you are folding forward into your chrysalis. #6

Grade:

Pre-K to K; 1 to 3; 4 to 5

Other Anatomical Focus:

Hip

Modifications:

Notice	Reason	Modification
Moving knees up and down	High energy	See cue #6

SEATED FORWARD FOLD



Physical Benefit:

- Strengthens the abdominals
- Stretches the calves, hamstrings, and spine

Mental Benefit:

- Calms the mind

Gaze Point:

Down the nose

Instructions:

1. Begin in Staff Pose.
2. Inhale, reach your arms up to the sky.
3. Exhale, extend your arms forward placing your hands to the outside of your legs.
4. Breathe.
5. When you are ready, inhale and come up to Staff Pose.

Cues:

Flex your toes back towards your shins. #2

Grade:

Pre-K to K; 1 to 3; 4 to 5

Modifications:

Notice	Challenge	Modification
Rounding in the back	Tight hamstrings	Slightly bend the knees

BE A MOUNTAIN

(Individual)



Directions:

Students stand at attention like soldiers: straight, tensed and rigid with feet together. The teacher moves about the group, gently touching students' shoulders to make sure students are balanced. Then, the teacher says, "Be a Mountain." Students assume Mountain Pose, feet slightly apart and body tall but relaxed. Coach students to breathe deeply and imagine that their feet are the base of the mountain - wide and strong, firmly planted in the earth. Now, the students remain solidly placed. Once the group can "Be a Mountain" successfully, the teacher plays energizing music and students move about the space. Each time the music stops, the teacher touches several students' shoulders until the entire group has had a turn to show how strong and balanced they are.

Teaching Note:

Some schools may have a "no-touch" policy, so it's important that you check in with your school before playing this game.

Skills:

- Grounding
- Finesse

DOUBLE TREE



Physical Benefit:

- Lengthens the spine
- Strengthens the ankles, calves, knees, hamstrings, abdominals, back, and neck
- Stretches the quadriceps, hip flexors, chest, and shoulders

Mental Benefit:

- Develops communication

Gaze Point:

Down the nose

Instructions:

1. Begin in Mountain Pose next to your partner.
2. Inhale, bring your outside foot like a kickstand to your inside leg.
3. Exhale, bring your inside palm to touch your partner's.
4. Inhale, press into your partner's palm, reaching your arms overhead.
5. Exhale, bring your outside arm up to the sky.
6. Breathe.
7. When you and your partner are ready, slowly bring your arms down and place your outside foot on the floor.

Cues:

Make sure your palms are pressing together. #4

Creative Language:

Imagine your arms are the branches of the tree. #6

Grade:

1 to 3; 4 to 5

Modifications:

Notice	Reason	Modification
Off balance	Difficulty finding balance	Kickstand the foot
Interlacing the fingers	Lack of awareness	See cue #4

RESTING POSE



Physical Benefit:

- Reduces fatigue
- Relaxes the body
- Relieves minor headache

Mental Benefit:

- Calms the mind

Gaze Point:

Up or eyes closed

Instructions:

1. Begin by lying down on your back.
2. Allow your hands to stay next to your hips.
3. Your palms face up towards the ceiling.
4. Release any tension you may be holding as you allow your body to relax.
5. Breathe.

Cues:

Your legs can either be straight or bent with your feet flat on the floor. #1

You can place your hands on your belly or underneath your bottom instead. #2

Creative Language:

Allow your eyes to close gently. #5.1

Become as silent and still as you can become. #5.2

Soften your gaze and look towards the ceiling. #5.3

Grade:

Pre-K to K; 1 to 3; 4 to 5

YOGAed.