

Balloon Breathing

- ☆ Blow up a balloon and demonstrate to the class how it expands when it is full of air and deflates when the air is let out. Explain that in this mindfulness activity we will be visualising our bellies as balloons, inflating and deflating. This is called 'belly breathing' and helps us to relax and calm our minds.
- ☆ Note that breathing in through the nose and out through the nose (if possible) is best for belly breathing.
- ☆ Guide pupils through the following mindfulness practice, using the script below.
- ☆ Instruct pupils to start in **Standing Mountain** posture.

Equipment:
Balloon



Put one hand on the chest, over your heart, and the other on your belly, under the belly button... Close your eyes or gaze softly at a point in front of you...

(pause)

Listen to your breathing... feel the air coming in and going out of your body. Notice how your chest and your belly move up and down with the movement of the breath... *(pause)*

Now slowly breathe in through your nose for 1,2,3,4. Feel your belly rising like a balloon inflating.

And breathe out through your nose for a little longer than you breathed in (if you can) for 1,2,3,4,5,6. Feel your belly going back down slowly, like letting the air out of the balloon. Gently push the belly out as you breathe in – making room for lots of air and gently pull the belly in again as you breathe out.

Breathing in, the belly gets bigger for 1,2,3,4. Breathing out, the belly gets smaller for 1,2,3,4,5,6.

Let's keep going for a few more rounds, breathing in for 4 and out for 6; I'll let you know when we're going to stop. *(continue to count in for 4 and out for 6 for up to a minute)*

Let's finish on the next breath now, breathing out for a full count of 6... 1,2,3,4,5,6.

Now, when you're ready, gently let the hands rest back down at your sides... Coming back to Standing Mountain... Pause, breathe normally and smile.