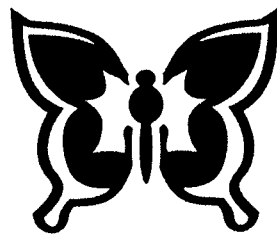


# Keeping It Cool:

Using Yoga and Relaxation Strategies to Help Students  
with Exceptionalities Cool Down, Focus and Learn!

Carla Tantillo  
Founder

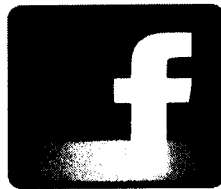


MINDFUL  
PRACTICES

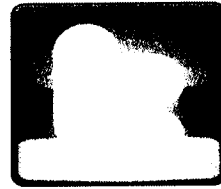
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*Empowering students and teachers through Wellness and Social-Emotional Learning  
to create a more effective educational environment*



## The Cooling Down Approach

EFFECTIVELY MANAGE YOUR CLASSROOM AND meet your students' social-emotional learning needs all at the same time!

Yoga and relaxation strategies help students cool down and understand the connection between their energy levels and their behavior.

INCREASED SELF-AWARENESS  
+ IMPROVED SELF-REGULATION

## IMPROVED BEHAVIOR

When students' behavior improves, they are more focused academically and are less distracting to the other students around them.

### CALM MINDS PRODUCE CLEAR THOUGHTS!

Use relaxation activities, breathwork and yoga to help cool student energy when behavior is disruptive.

☆☆ COOL STUDENTS = FOCUSED LEARNERS

THEREFORE, Students (and teachers) are empowered with lifelong learning tools to positively control their energy and behavior.



## USING THIS BOOK

### SAMPLE SCHEDULE (TOTAL TIME 10 MINUTES)

**8:40 AM**

*Breathwork activity  
before reading groups*

**11:45 AM**

*Three yoga poses  
after lunch*

**1:30 PM**

*Relaxation activity  
before math test*

**2:30 PM**

*Behavior tool for  
disruptive student*

# Five Steps to a Cooler Classroom

## 1

### STEP ONE: Take Care of Yourself!

Establish a time each day to breathe, relax and collect your thoughts. Teacher self-care is a critical aspect of any cool classroom.

## 2

### STEP TWO: Reflect

As a teacher, take a moment to reflect on your most stressful time each day. Is it after lunch or maybe Friday afternoons? When do the majority of the disciplinary infractions in your classroom occur?

## 3

### STEP THREE: Select a Time

Use yoga and relaxation activities at the time(s) each day when you need to constructively harness student energy. Plan to implement five to ten minutes daily; add it to your class schedule.

## 4

### STEP FOUR: Set Up Your Cool Classroom

Designate bulletin boards, chalkboards or wall space in your classroom for a:

- Cool Down Corner (*page 25*)
- Courageous Concepts Board (*page 26*)
- Classroom Confidence Mirror (*page 28*)
- Basket of Class Forecast Pins (*page 29*)
- Cool Kids' Club (*page 30*)

## 5

### STEP FIVE: Be Consistent

- Design a simple implementation plan, and be consistent. Try the following:
  - Add a Cool Classroom Thermometer (*page 183*) to your bulletin board. Build students' self-awareness by moving the arrow to reflect the different levels of energy throughout the day.
  - Use non-verbal cues, like turning off lights or turning on soft music, to signal to your students that yoga time has begun.
  - Use yoga poses or relaxation activities, instead of candy or free time, to positively reinforce student behavior. Example: "*Jasmine, thank you for listening to directions. Will you go to the Cool Down Corner and choose a yoga pose to teach the class after lunch?*"

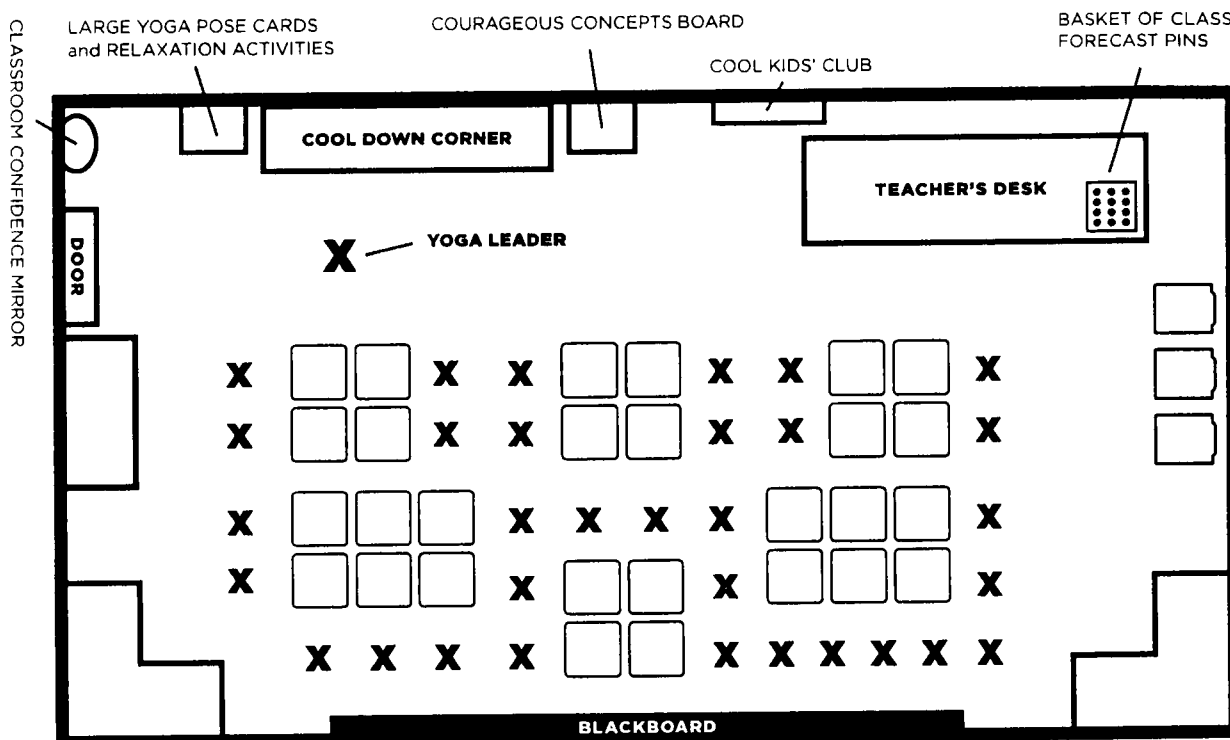
COOL =  
LEVELHEADED  
& RESPECTFUL  
STUDENTS



# Your Cool Classroom

## LESSON PLANS

USE **YOGA, BREATHING AND RELAXATION** strategies to help students learn to keep their cool, improve behavior and enhance achievement!



### YOUR COOL CLASSROOM INCLUDES:

**KEY:**  
 = STUDENT DESK    **X** = STUDENT YOGA SPOT

- Cool Down Corner*
- Courageous Concepts Board*
- Classroom Confidence Mirror*
- Class Forecast Pins*
- Cool Kids' Club*

### SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Bulletin Boards and/or Pocket Charts*
- Large Yoga Pose Cards*
- Baskets and Pins*
- Velcro™*
- Sentence Strips*
- Mirror*
- Copies of Cool Classroom Lessons, Relaxation, Breathwork Activities*
- Cool Classroom Thermometer*



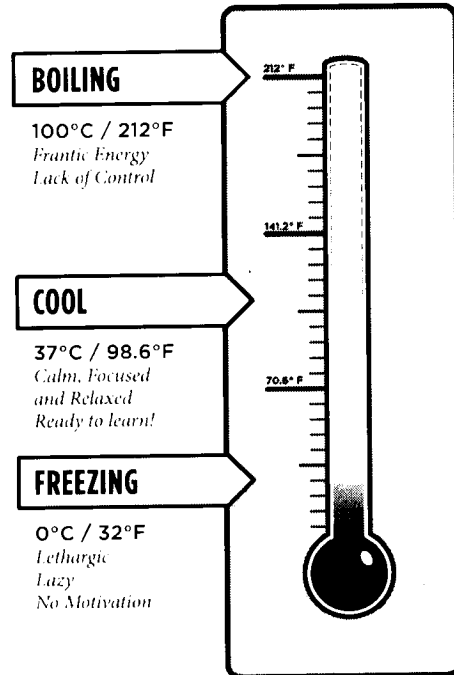
# I Can Keep My Cool

**WORKSHEET**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Please shade or color the thermometer to reflect your energy level today.



**BEFORE YOU CONTINUE YOUR SCHOOL** day, take a moment to check out how you're feeling. Please draw a picture or write a short story about how you feel in this moment. Your teacher will set a timer for four minutes. There is no right or wrong way to complete your story or picture. The only requirement is that you write or draw for the entire four minutes. Take a breath, relax and cool down!

Large empty rectangular box for drawing or writing, with an arrow pointing to it from the text above.



# Cool Down Corner

**USE SELECTING YOGA POSES AS** a way to positively reinforce student behavior. After lunch the yoga leader stands at the front of the room and leads the students through the poses chosen for that day. The temperature on the class thermometer should move according to the different levels of the students' energy throughout the day. Another great name for this classroom tool is Relaxation Station.

Today's yoga leader is:

Javier

Today's yoga poses for after lunch are:

**Tree Pose**



**Warrior Two Pose**



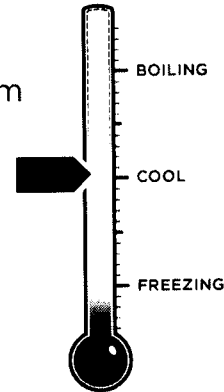
**Seated Arm Stretch**



The activity we will practice before today's test is:

Lion's Breath

Our classroom temperature today is:



**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

- Bulletin Board or Pocket Chart
- Velcro™
- Yoga Leader Pin or Lanyard (optional)
- Cool Classroom Thermometer

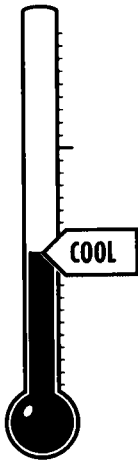
**WHEN YOU ARE FIRST INTRODUCING** yoga to your class, choose three yoga poses that will be fun and comfortable for both you and the students.





# Tree Pose

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the sequence below to learn the yoga pose. Once you have practiced each step, draw a picture of yourself doing the pose in the box labeled My Pose Picture.



  **Tree Pose** CONCENTRATE

**FIRST:** Stand with big toes together, feet parallel. Focus your gaze on a point in front of you.

**THEN:** Shift your weight onto your right leg. Lift your left leg, and turn it out to the side while you keep your hips facing forward.


**NEXT:** Place the left foot above or below the knee. Press your foot into the leg as the leg presses back into the foot.


**LAST:** Lift your arms overhead like the branches of a tree. Repeat on the left side.

**MATH TERMS**


Use the following terms in a sentence to describe Tree Pose:

1. Open Triangle
2. Turn
3. Facing

 **My Pose Picture**



**YOGA TIP**  
To help balance, pick a spot in front of you to focus your gaze. Don't forget to breathe.



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**FOCUS TIP**

Choose something very specific for your focus, like the center of a letter O on a bulletin board.



# WORKSHEET

# Warrior Two Pose

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the sequence below to learn the yoga pose. Once you have practiced each step, draw a picture of yourself doing the pose in the box labeled My Pose Picture.

### MATH TERMS

*How do these terms relate to the pose?*

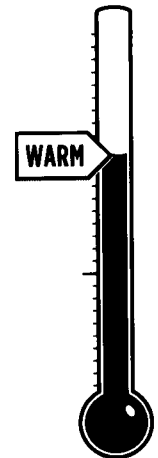
1. Right Angle
2. Perpendicular
3. Width



## Warrior Two Pose

ENERGIZE

- FIRST:** Begin with your feet parallel, hip-width apart. Extend your arms to a horizontal "T" position.
- THEN:** Step your feet out so the heels are below your wrists.
- NEXT:** Turn your right foot perpendicular to your left foot. Bend your right knee, and keep the knee above your ankle. Keep your hips facing the same direction as your left foot.
- LAST:** Lift your chest, and turn the head to look over the right fingertips. Repeat on the left side.

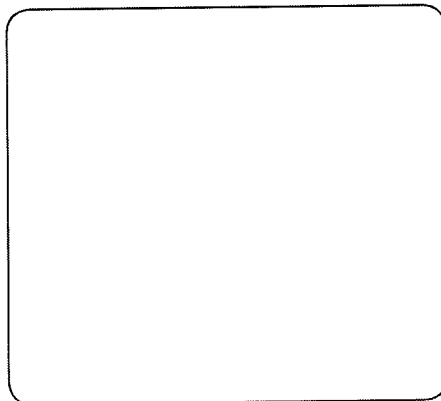


### SEQUENCING

*When linking several poses together, Warrior Two Pose can be grouped with Triangle Pose or Half Moon Pose.*



### My Pose Picture



### YOGA TIP

*Be sure to keep the front knee at a right angle.*



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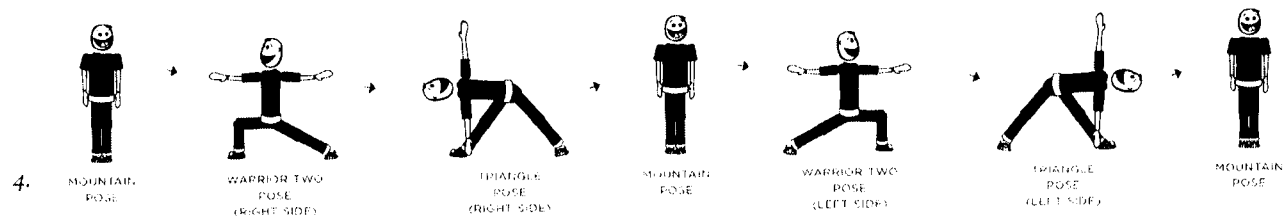
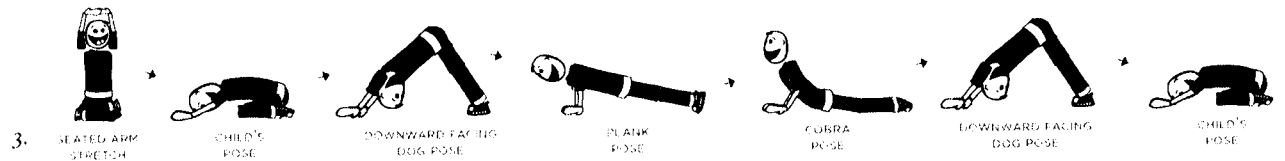
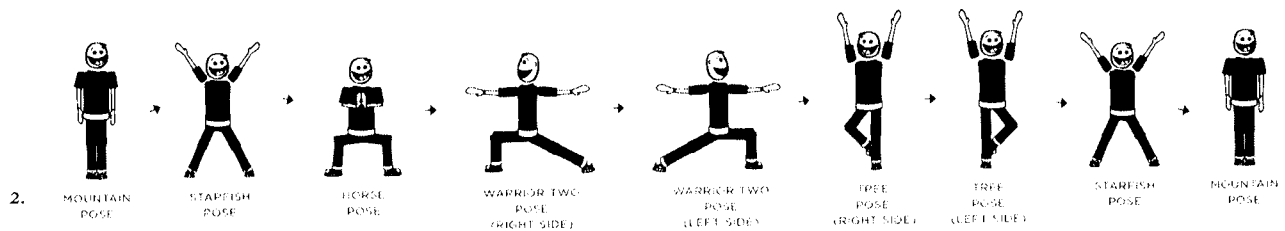
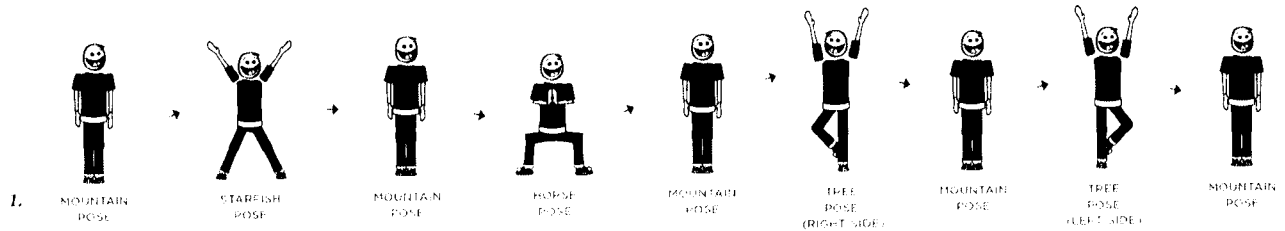




# Sample Yoga Pose Sequences

TEACHING TOOLS

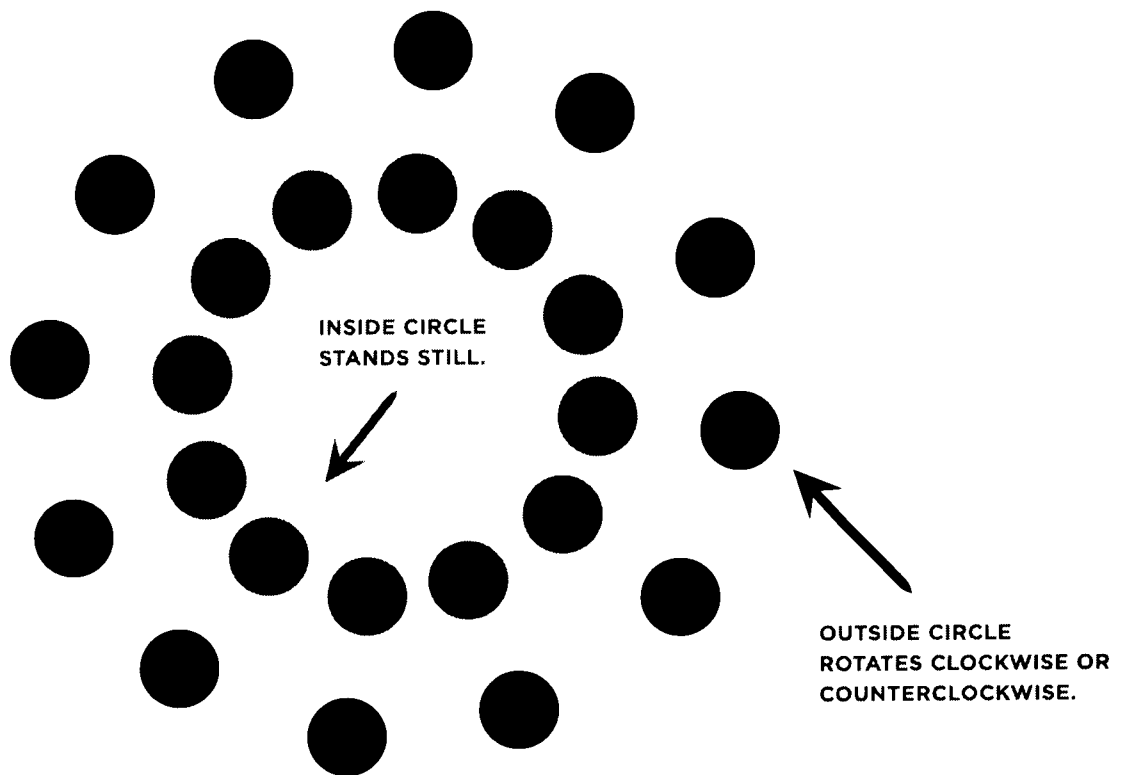
USE THESE YOGA POSE SEQUENCES to expand your classroom's yoga practice. Hold each pose to a count of three or five before moving on to the next pose in the sequence.





# Compliment Game Fish Bowl

## LESSON PLANS



**BUILD COHESION IN YOUR CLASSROOM** as students develop respect and understanding for each other.

- 1** **STEP ONE:** Place your students in two circles: an inner circle and an outer circle. Ideally, both circles will have the same number of people. The circles face each other.
- 2** **STEP TWO:** Maintaining this formation, the students exchange compliments. Instruct the students in the inner circle to think of two compliments to give to their counterparts in the outer circle. The outer circle does the same. (To keep things simple, always have the inner circle begin.)
- 3** **STEP THREE:** Before the students share verbally, frame the activity by giving some concrete examples of a true compliment. For example, “*You are a cool kid because you are always on time,*” instead of “*I like that you are on time more now because you used to be lazy and show up late, and that was really annoying.*”



# Memory Minute

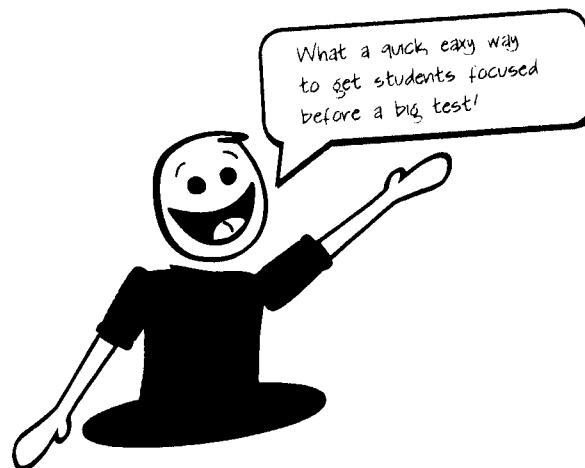
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**THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS ACTIVITY** is to have students clear their minds of absolutely everything for one minute.

**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

*Clock or Stopwatch*

- 1** **STEP ONE:**  
Dim the lights. The room is quiet.
- 2** **STEP TWO:**  
Instruct the students to sit down with their eyes closed, both feet flat on the floor and hands folded on their desks.
- 3** **STEP THREE:**  
Instruct the students to visualize a blank sheet of paper and to clear their minds of all thoughts.
- 4** **STEP FOUR:**  
Set the timer for one minute, and instruct the students to remain quiet.
- 5** **STEP FIVE:**  
For one minute everyone, including you, the teacher, is quiet and focused.
- 6** **STEP SIX:**  
At the end of the minute, turn up the lights to signal that instruction will resume.





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708.848.6456  
Attention: Violet



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This certificate entitles the bearer to **10% off Professional Development Services** with *Mindful Practices*.

Carla Tantillo, the Founder of Mindful Practices, is the author of *Cooling Down Your Classroom* and has worked with schools across the United States in innovative **SEL (social-emotional learning), wellness** strategies and **mindfulness training**.

Mindful Practices offers innovative professional development, parent, after school and recess programming in both SEL and wellness. We work with schools across the country to honor the needs of the whole child through mindful classroom management practices that bring relaxation, movement and breath work to the classroom.

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