



Introduction

Invite the children to find a comfortable sitting position in your chosen outdoor area. When they are ready, read aloud the script below.

Settling

'Spending time outside can help us to feel good. It has a positive impact on our emotions and how we feel in general.'

'Today, we are going to be focusing on things we can see and hear outdoors to help us feel calm and relaxed.'

'The season is spring and so much is changing all around us. Sometimes, we are so busy that we do not pay attention to these changes and we don't take time to notice and enjoy them.'

'So, we are going to see what happens and how it feels when we take time to be still and notice the sights and sounds of spring.'

'You might be amazed to realise just what you do see and hear.'

'We may also notice how our mind feels. You may notice very quickly that you like certain sounds and dislike other sounds. Our mind is always making this sort of judgement but we often don't notice this.'

'But for now, all we need to do is settle down and focus.'

'Make sure you are sitting comfortably. Have a good wriggle and stretch to get in a comfortable sitting position.'

Main Practice

'We start by concentrating on our breath as this can help us settle into the present moment.'

'Being in the present moment helps our mind to stop racing and helps us to let go of any uncomfortable feelings we may have.'

'We just take a few moments to notice where we feel the breath in our body. It could be at the nose, the chest or the belly. It doesn't matter where; we just need to focus our attention on how it feels.'

'We are going to focus on the breath for a few moments in silence. To help you focus, you can silently say 'in' as you breathe in and 'out' as you breathe out. This can help the mind feel calm and settled.'

(Allow a few moments of silence.)

'Take a moment to notice how you feel. Do you feel calm and settled?'

'OK, now we are settled, we are going to notice what sights of spring we can see.'

Aim:

To help the children practise mindfulness.

To enable the children to be mindful of the outdoor environment and the sights and sounds of spring.

To enable the children to concentrate on what is around them and be in the present moment.

To encourage feelings of calm, focus and relaxation.

To help children explore the benefits of being mindful for mental health and emotional wellbeing.

I can be mindful of what I can see and hear outside during springtime and I can identify how these sights and sounds make me feel.

'Take a moment to look around you. What can you see? How are things changing? Now, really look. Focus your attention on a sign of spring and spend time just watching and noticing. It might be a bulb appearing, an insect working or a leaf beginning to unfurl. Notice the weather and how it feels. Are there any clouds in the sky? How are they moving? Are they making any shapes or pictures?'

'Whatever it is, just notice and enjoy the feeling of being lost in the moment.'

(Allow a few moments of silence for the children to just watch and notice.)

'Now, let's close our eyes.'

'Let's focus our attention on the sounds all around us. What can you hear? We don't have to go searching for sounds. We can just allow them to come to us.'

'Maybe you can hear your own breathing. Perhaps you notice the sound of my voice. Just concentrate on what you can hear.'

'You may notice how quickly we think about the sounds. We name them in our mind and we start thinking about the sounds. Maybe we begin to judge them and we decide if we like them or dislike them.'

'You might notice that we wish certain sounds weren't there. That is OK because this is just thinking in our minds. When this happens, see if you can just bring your focus back to the sounds.'

'Now, focus on any sounds of spring that you can hear. What do you notice? How do they make you feel?'

'Are the sounds soft or loud? Clear or faint? Do they buzz, hum or rumble? Are they gentle and light? High or low? How does it feel just to listen to the sounds of spring?'

(Allow a few moments of silent listening.)

'It doesn't matter what you can hear; just see if you can focus on the sounds.'

'If you find you are daydreaming, that is OK. When you notice this has happened, just come back to listening to the sounds of spring.'

'Just resting... allowing sounds to wash over us.'

(Allow a final period of silent listening.)

Close

'Finally, we can let go of the focus on sounds. Allow sounds to simply be a background noise and once again focus on your breath. As we continue to breathe, in and out, we can open our eyes and have a little stretch.'

Hold a discussion on the sights and sounds of spring that the children have seen and heard. Celebrate each one, and the season itself, and ask the children if they would like to share how they are feeling. Explain that by spending time really focusing on what is around us outside, we can feel calmer, happier and more relaxed. These feelings can positively impact our emotional wellbeing.