

Grace + Zen Songs, Games, Props, Etc.

This document is a work in progress and is added to often! Always check back for new fresh class ideas to keep your kids from getting bored.

Props

Lavender Spray:

- Spray in air above children during relaxing pose, or any other time before or during class.

Animals:

- Choose an animal, move your body like that animal.

Feathers:

- Can be used to dance with during freeze dance
- Set feathers on floor and each child lays on stomach behind a feather. Move feathers to a 'finish line' using only your breath. This helps students learn to control their breath and take long slow exhales.
- Balance feather on head to help body stay still in any balancing pose.
- Dance with feathers in hand like any flying creature you can imagine.

Numbers

- Shape your body like the number you choose. Standing or laying on floor. Alone or with partner.
- Or, choose a number and an object/letter/pose/animal, etc. Hold the pose for that many seconds.

Letters:

- With a partner or small group, think of a few things starting with the letters on your block. Create yoga poses like these things. Stop the class, then have the class guess your letters.
- Or move your bodies into the shape of the letter.

Heart Shapes:

- Use these to show students where to set their mats or sit if they don't have a mat.
- Or, hold at your heart and think of a loving wish to send to someone. Think of your wish as you breath in, send your wish as you breath out.
- Hold at your heart and sit for 1 minute thinking of someone that you love. Each child can share if they want.

Eye Pillows

- If class has more children, they can take turns or work with a partner.
- Place on eyes in 'relaxing pose'
- Lay on back and balance on feet up in the air

- Balance on back in cat pose. Try lifting one arm and opposite leg for a challenge.
- Toss from hand to hand ten times to gain focus at the start of class or any time during class.

Mindful Bubble Jars:

- Use at end of class during relaxing pose. Watching the bubbles helps students relax. If older students, have children sit tall and watch bubbles for 1 minute without looking anywhere or moving to help improve focus and still the mind.

Yoga/Ballet Flash Cards:

- These cards demonstrate some of our favorite yoga poses. Each student can choose a card. Or students can take turns laying the cards out in different orders to create a yoga sequence to teach to the class.

Mantra Flash Cards:

- Each month, there is a new mantra to learn, discuss, and recite in each class. The months are listed on the back of the cards. Use the discussion points on the back of the cards to ask questions at the start of each class. Do not ask questions in the toddler and preschool classes, as they are too young to comprehend. Recite the mantra at the end of class before you say namaste. We review the same mantra all month long to really let the meaning of the mantra sink in.

Singing Bowl:

- Hold with hand flat on bottom. Ding the side one time. Each child has a turn when sharing at the start of class.
- Use to get attention of students if class gets hectic.
- The vibrations of singing bowls are said to be calming and healing.
- Use to set a slow breathing rhythm. "Each time I ding the bowl, take a slow inhale, then exhale."

Ribbon dancing:

- Good way to practice 'por de bra' watching your arm movements and dancing with your head and whole body.

Balance Beam:

- Place yoga blocks in a row and have each child balance across. They can walk on their tip toes, flat, add in some tree poses, airplane poses, etc. Toddlers must hold hand with parent as they walk across to avoid injury. They often fall off.

Hoola Hoops:

- Hoola hoop on your hips, gallop while holding over head, twirl, etc.

Small Candles

- Use during relaxing pose. Balance on head to practice sitting still.
- Balance on forehead while laying on back, to practice staying still.
- Balance on stomach and watch move up and down as you breath to help calm mind.

- Place in front of each student and have them try to stare at candle and not lose their focus for 30 seconds or 1 minute. In yoga this is called Trataka and helps with focus and concentration. A form of meditation.

Bubbles

- Blow in air during freeze dance to excite young children.
- Use to practice slow exhales at end of class.
- Have students lay on their backs with toes up to the sky. Pop the bubbles with their toes. Having their legs up reverses blood flow in the body, bringing fresh blood throughout our body, improving circulation, and bringing fresh oxygen to the brain. This helps with depression and insomnia and is overall good for the brain.

Parachute

- Make big slow ocean waves with slow inhales as the parachute reaches up, and slow exhales as the parachute goes down. After a few slow big waves, do small fast waves and let the kids jump up and down and go a little wild. Then start the big slow waves again. This helps teach self regulation. At the end, all students can hide under the parachute in sleeping mouse pose.
- Pull parachute tight and all walk around on tip toes. Can also hold while doing plies.
- Sing a nursery rhyme slowly while slowly moving up and down, then sign the song fast and move up and down fast.

Games + Make Believe

- **Freeze Dance:** Dance when the music is on, tell your body to freeze when the music stops. Tell the students that this game helps them learn to have their brain tell their bodies what to do, and that they are in control of their own bodies. This is especially important to announce in parent-and-me classes, so the parents realize we are doing more than just freeze dance. To add more of a challenge for older students, you can yell out a yoga or ballet move each time the music stops. Or you can tell the students to move like different things each round while the music is playing. Here are some ideas:
 - move like a giant/mouse/princess/windy tree/etc.
 - Be leaves blowing in the wind
 - Be snow falling from the sky
 - Be flowers growing from the ground
 - Bounce up and down quickly, then slowly
 - Hop around like a bunny, then a backward bunny
 - Jump right and left
 - Lean your body front, back, side to side
 - Step, walk, hop, and jump backward
 - Swim like a fish in the sea
 - Move fast like a lightning bolt
 - Be a big ocean wave crashing to the shore
- **Obstacle Course:** Balance on yoga blocks, frog jump in hoola hoops, ding the signing bowl, etc. Combine yoga, ballet, and props to take up the whole room.
- **Character dancing:** Suggest any characters such as a giant, a mouse, a baby, princess, lion, etc.
- **Partner dancing:** Hold hands with a partner and dance. This promotes positive peer interactions.
- **Breathing Circle:** Hold hands in a circle. Breath in as you walk together, breath out as you walk back. Great way to calm down the class. Good for all ages.
- **Volcano to Star Pose:** Sit in chair pose, rub hands together while saying 'voooooo!!!' then jump into star pose and say 'cano!'
- **Mix It Up!:** Sit in a straddle. Pretend to bake something (cake, cupcakes, cookies, muffins, etc. Ask students to each add one ingredient. Then pretend you are holding

a big mixing spoon as you mix it all up. Do 5 mixes one way, then 5 mixes the other way.

- **Bake A Pizza**: Sit in a straddle. Roll out the pizza dough, add your favorite toppings, then slice it up.
- **Body Part Twister**: Direct the children to touch their body parts together. Ex:
 - Finger to toe
 - Elbow to opposite knee
 - Toe to nose
 - Etc.
- **Over Under**: Give each student a prop. Instruct the students to move the prop over and under different different body parts. Ex:
 - Under your foot
 - On you head
 - On your shoulder
 - Hold the prop under your chin
 - Hold the prop between your knees
 - Hold between your feet
- **Rolling Burritos in your Mat**: Do this activity with a parter or in mommy and me. The child lays at top of yoga mat, ready to be rolled up inside the mat, like a burrito. Have the partner pretend to put all the ingredients inside the burrito, then roll the child up tight before then unrolling. Can also be: pencil, sushi roll, silverware rolled up in a napkin at a restaurant, hot dog in a bun, cinnamon roll, rolling pin, steam roller, crayon, marker

- **Charades**:

Whisper to each child when it is their turn. Can also use these during freeze dance.

- Build a building with blocks
- Climb a ladder/tree
- deal cards
- Deliver the mail
- Dig a hole with a shovel
- Erase the chalkboard
- Hammer nails
- Hang up laundry on a clothesline
- Ice Skate
- Juggle
- March like a soldier
- Paddle downstream
- Play hopscotch
- Play the guitar
- Pop like popcorn
- Put a key in a treasure chest and open it
- Put on a coat

- Put on an apron
- Put on gloves
- Scoop ice cream
- Shoot an arrow
- Sizzle like bacon
- Wrap a gift

• **Exploring Space:**

During across the floor, switch arm position halfway through the room. Show students where half way is, by pointing to something on the wall that they need to pay attention to. Then move backward or sideways on the way back. Overall just switch up the directions that they move around the room. Don't do this with toddlers, as they need the consistency.

• **Switcheroo Game:**

Find a partner. Stand back to back. When you call out the name of a body part, the children quickly turn to face each other and touch those body parts together, then quickly turn back to back again. Ex: hands, knees, elbows, toes, wrists, hips. Can also play in a trio, or with non-matching body parts. Ex: finger to toe!

Emotions

“Let’s warm up our faces! Did you know as dancers we get on stage and perform with our faces too?! Not just our bodies.

Let me a smile! Now a frown.

Now growl!

Wiggle your nose like a bunny rabbit!

Move your mouth side to side

Blow a big kiss

Tired yawning face

Counting and Moving

Move your arms up for 8 seconds, now down for 8 seconds

shake it out

Now up for 4 seconds, and down for 4 seconds.

shake it out

Now up for 2 seconds! and down for 2 seconds.

shake it out

repeat

Now let’s do it with our whole body! Start down low. Stand up for 8, then back down for 8. repeat for 4, then 2.

Traffic Light Game

“When I hold up a red object, you freeze!

If its yellow, you move slowly.

If its green, you go go go as fast as you can all around the room!”

*Use any props that are red, green, and yellow.

Pass the Pose Game

Stand in a circle. One person is the leader and does a yoga pose of their choice. This pose gets passed around the circle one person at a time. Everyone holds that pose until the leader does the next pose, which is then passed around the circle. Do a few times, choosing new leaders each time. Can use as a reward for good behavior.

Songs

Sing any of these songs during opening yoga circle with yoga music playing in background. Encourage the group to sing with you! These songs are appropriate mostly for toddler and preschool students. Older students will find this too 'babyish'. Singing familiar songs is the quickest way to relate to and engage young children. So use lots of songs if needed!

"Row Your Boat"

Sit in butterfly pose and rock side to side while singing. Soothing for young children. For parent and me class, sit on parent's lap, or back to back with a partner in butterfly and link arms.

*Row Row Row Your Boat, Gently down the stream
Merily merily merily merily, Life is but a dream
Rock rock rock your boat , Gently down the stream
If you see a (crocodile, lion, shark, alligator, etc.), Don't forget to scream!*

- - - - -

"I Am A Butterfly"

Can be any creature with wings (fairy, bird, eagle, etc.) Ask students what flying creature they want to be today. Sit in butterfly pose and flap wings while singing. To tune of frerajaca:

*I am a butterfly
I am a butterfly
Wings up high
Wings up high
Stretch to the right
Stretch to the left
And down low
And down low*

- - - - -

"Old McDonald"

Suggest different animal poses (dog, cat, cow, frog, snake, mouse, etc.) Slap knees or floor, or clap, to create a rhythm while singing. Great for toddler and preschool ages.

Old McDonald had a farm, e i e i oh

*And on that farm he had a (DOG!) e i e i oh
Let's all do dog pose! Shake your tail! ruff ruff ruff!*

“Run Around Yogi”

Can also be changed to something other than run, such as “jump up yogi, spin around yogi, bend your knees yogi, etc.”

This teaches self-regulation, similar to freeze dance. Repeat multiple times.

*Run Around Yogi,
Run Around Yogi,
Run Around Yogi (run around your own yoga mat fast!)
Real, real, fast!
Freeze! (freeze and take a deep breath with arms up, then arms down)*

Then repeat song and running, super slow motion.

“Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes”

Can sing at varying speeds. Touch each body part as you sing.

*Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes,
Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes,
Eyes and ears and mouth and nose
Head, shoulders, knees and toes! knees and toes!*

“Hokey Pokey”

Substitute “right hand in, right hand out” with yoga poses. Ex: “jump your frog pose in, jump your frog pose out,” etc. Get creative with the poses and ask kids for suggestions, depending on age. Repeat a few times, with a different body part or move each time. Can also sing at varying speeds.

Put your right hand in, put your right hand out,
put your right hand in, and you shake it all about!
Do the hokey pokey and you turn yourself around,
that's what its all about! (clap to each syllable here)

“Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”

Stand in star pose and rock side to side testing your balance.

*Twinkle twinkle little star, How I wonder what you are
Up above the world so high, Like a diamond in the sky
Twinkle twinkle little star, How I wonder what you are*

“The Wheels on the Bus:

“I’m A Little Teapot”

I’m A Little teapot short and stout (stand in 2nd plie,
Here is my handle (place one hand on hip)
Here is my spout (place other hand out like stout)
When I get all steamed up hear me shout (shake whole body)
Tip me over and pour me out (tip over pour out tea)

“If You’re Happy and You Know It”

If you’re happy and you know it, clap you hands. (clap clap)
If you’re happy and you know it, clap you hands. (clap clap)
If you’re happy and you know it, and you really want to show it,
If you’re happy and you know it, clap you hands. (clap clap)

If you’re happy and you know it, stomp your feet. (stomp stomp)
If you’re happy and you know it, stomp your feet. (stomp stomp)
If you’re happy and you know it, and you really want to show it,
If you’re happy and you know it, stomp your feet. (stomp stomp)

If you’re happy and you know it, shout hooray! (“hooray!”)
If you’re happy and you know it, shout hooray! (“hooray!”)
If you’re happy and you know it, and you really want to show it,
If you’re happy and you know it, shout hooray! (“hooray!”)

“The Ants Go Marching” (Sing while marching around in a circle picking knees up high)

The ants go marching one by one, hurrah, hurrah!
The ants go marching one by one, hurrah, hurrah!
The ants go marching one by one,
The little one stops to suck his thumb,
and they all go marching down
in the grout
to get out - of - the rain (hid down in sleeping mouse pose)

Common Imaginative Comparisons to Use in Class

Things That Move Fast:

Fire Engine
Jet Plane
Arrow
Wind
Cheetah
Spaceship

Things That Move Slow:

Turtle
Hands on a Clock
Snail
A train just starting up
Sun Rising
Snowman Melting

Ways to Jump (up and down)

Pretend you are a piece of bread popping out of the toaster
Quickly jump up and down like popcorn popping
Jump from one wall to the other
Jump fast!
Jump slow
Jump side to side
Jump around an object in a circle

Things To Leap Over:

Tall Building
Puddle
Like a deer leaping over fallen trees in the forest
Over hurdles in the olympics

Ways to bend

Pretend you are a yo-yo on a string
“plie” beans to bend. How many body parts can we bend? (try all different body parts, then the knees)
Pick you basket up off the floor, and reach up tall to pick an apple off the tallest tree in the orchard! Let’s walk around the room and pick all the little flowers from the floor and apples off the tallest trees.

Reach for a star! Now lay down to sleep. Repeat

Things that are straight

ruler
pencil
wall

Things that are round

pancake
ball
frisbee
pizza
sun
full moon
balloon

Ways to Walk

Nice and tall with good posture
Walk in place slow
Walk in place fast
Walk forward
Walk backward
Stomp really mad
Walk slow and sad
Pretend you're in a parade! Wave hello! Blow a kiss! Play the drums! Clap your hands!
Walk slow like there's gum stuck on the bottom of your shoes
Run in place with high knees!
Run loud and heavy!
Run quiet and quick!
Pretend you are tip toeing quickly across hot burning sand
tiny steps, big giant steps
Like we are ice skating, gliding across the ice!
Stepping in deep snow
Bouncing on the moon weightless

Jump Over (coming soon)

Move Under (coming soon)

Directions to Move (coming soon)

Traveling Steps:

Walking through thick jungle trees

*can do all fast, slow, in place, straight across the room, in circles, zig zags, etc.

Body Part Recognition:

"Show me your x"

Students can point to each body part.

Make more exciting by giving them a prop to touch to each body part. Ex: "Touch your wand to your knee!" "Put your bean bag on your head!" etc.

Learn about our feet!

What do our feet help us do? Let's do each thing. (walk, run, skate, jump, climb stairs, kick a ball, stomp, dance, balance)

Flex/Point

Identify the parts of the foot: toes, big toe, baby toe, ball of the foot, arch of the foot, heel.

How can we move our feet? (flex, point, barbie feet, in circles, sideways.)

Learn about our hands!

How many fingers on each hand? Let's slowly count our fingers: 1 2 3 4 5. Now lets hide each finger as we count backward 5 4 3 2 1

What can our hands do? (wave hello, clap, slap our knees, slap the floor, high five, shake, make a fist, say 'stop!', say 'peace'!, give a thumbs up, say 'surfs up', say 'all done', say 'more' . Do all fast, and slow.

Move your hands like your slowly painting a big beautiful mural on the side of a building!

Now move your hands like you're petting a soft little puppy dog

Now move your hands like you're carrying a tiny little baby

Now you're hammering a nail!

Now you're playing the drums!

Now you're conducting and orchestra!

Writing a love note to mom

Talking on the phone

Playing the piano

Now we're rolling cookie dough into a little ball.

Now we're washing our hands.

And shake all the water off.

Give yourself a pat on the back.

And a big hug.

Now glue your hands to your sides and freeze!

Breathing Exercises:

Be a big balloon:

"Start in child's pose and think of a color balloon to be. Slowly stand up and make your body as BIG as possible as you breath in! Now breath out and wind down to the ground flat like a deflated balloon that has lost all its air and wiggled down to the floor." Child's body will move from down, to up and big, back to down.

This time, pretend you are a big solid ice cube! Now imagine the sun is shining on you on a hot summer day. Your ice cube is melting sloooooowly down to the floor and now you are a big sloppy loosy goosy puddle of water!

Now pretend you are a little seed in the dirt! Once I wanter you, you grow into a big beautiful tree! Now I'm going to come quickly chop down your trees and you quickly fall to the floor!

Tense and Relax

"Open your eyes wide!

Now shut them tight.

And move them really really fast!

Repeat with mouth, hands, legs, arms.

During Freeze Dance:

How many different ways can we twirl?!

Stay in one spot and twirl.

Now twirl the other way.

Turn slowly.

Turn quickly.

Turn with your arms open.

Turn with your arms tight.

Arms over head!

Turn on the floor on your knees.

Turn on your bottom!

Let's Fly!

How many different flying creatures can we think of? (bees, butterflies, fairies, unicorns, birds, fireflies, etc.)

Let's be big soaring eagles with our arms open wide

Let's be beautiful butterflies on the beach

Let's be quick zig zagging bubble bees in the park

Now land on a flower! Give it a kiss

Now lets be playful fairies skipping through the forest

etc.

Push + Pull

Let's push a shopping cart across the room. Now puuulllll it slowly all the way back to the wall.

Let's pull our wagon to the park! Now stand behind it and puuushhhh it slowly up the big hill.

Let's skip and pull a light kite through the air!

Let's push our friend on the swing!

Let's Move Backward

walk

stomp

crawl

jump

small steps

big steps

tip toe

Action Yoga Poses:

Donkey Kick

Yoga Push Up (Dog, plank, lay on belly, push up to snake. Repeat)

Partner Yoga Poses:

*for mommy and me, or any classes with a friend

(coming soon)