

BAM! Student/Teacher Resilience Lessons

Lesson 2: The Body (10+ minutes)

NOTE: Links to all videos, webpages, worksheets, and other materials mentioned in this lesson can be found at at.apa.org/resilience-bam. A full suggested script is also available online as a guide through the material in this lesson.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Students will be able to describe the three components of body, action, and mind (BAM).
2. Students will be able to list at least two ways stress is manifested in their bodies.
3. Students will be able to demonstrate a deep breathing exercise that can be used to help center their minds and relax their bodies when they feel stressed.

LESSON MATERIALS

- Mind-body connection webpages:
 - » apa.org/topics/stress/body
 - » apa.org/topics/stress
- Just Breathe video: youtu.be/L_qOORFmpRk
- Optional: How stress affects your body TED-Ed video: youtube.com/watch?v=v-t1Z5-oPtU

LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction (2-3 minutes)

- Remind students of the previous lesson's discussions about how their values can guide their actions to move forward.
- Invite students to consider something that was hard for them recently (invite one student to share). Share the overall BAM! (Body, Actions, and Mind) model of coping and focus on the current lesson on stress and the body. Students will learn how the mind and body are connected, and they will practice a stress-relieving breathing technique.

Mind-Body Connection Lesson (3-4 minutes)

- Discuss with students the mind-body connection and how the mind has the power to improve or worsen our physical functioning, depending on how we use it.
- [Display the APA mind/body webpage or ask students to review one or both of these pages on their own as an in-class or out-of-class assignment: apa.org/topics/stress/body or apa.org/topics/stress.]
 - » You may choose to scroll through the stress/body site to display the different body systems and have students read and discuss how each system is affected by stress. The class could be divided into small groups to each discuss a different system: musculoskeletal, respiratory, cardiovascular, endocrine, gastrointestinal, nervous, and reproductive.
- Optional discussion questions, to be used class-wide or in a small group; following an activity or on their own:
 - » When you feel nervous or worried, what do you feel in your body?
 - » Where do you feel stress in the digestive system, nervous system, etc.?
 - » How would you know when there is stress in your body?

Just Breathe Exercise (3-4 minutes)

- Describe the physical manifestations of stress and anxiety in our bodies, including:
 - » Muscles tensing and tightening
 - » Increased heart rate
 - » Faster/shallow breathing or holding breath
 - » Sweating
 - » Loss of stamina, feeling tired
 - » Change in appetite (either increased or decreased)
- Share how stress puts our bodies “on alert” and how we may hold our breath or breathe fast and shallow breaths without noticing when stressed.
- The easiest first step to stop this cycle and calm ourselves is through a simple exercise of breathing called Just Breathe.
 - » Have students breathe in slowly and deeply for a count of four.
 - » Ask students to hold their breath for a count of four.
 - » Then, have students slowly let their breath out for a count of six.
 - » If at any moment students feel uncomfortable, encourage them to sit quietly rather than feel obligated to participate.
 - » A video is available to use to guide students through this exercise at youtu.be/L_qOORFmpRk. You can also access this video at at.apa.org/resilience-bam.
- After doing the exercise, ask students:
 - » How did it feel to take these deep breaths?
 - » Did anyone feel like they were more tense?
 - » Did anyone feel like they were more relaxed?
- Share that with practice, this exercise gets easier and it helps us take a moment to just center ourselves. One benefit of paying such close attention to our breath is that it can take our attention away from thoughts and worries that might be swirling through our minds – even just for a few minutes.
- See the Progressive Muscle Relaxation exercise detailed in lesson 3 as an alternative here or as a supplement if time allows.

Closing (1 minute)

Summary

- Remind students how stress impacts the body and that our mind is connected to our body and that we can control some aspects of our body by using our mind.
- End the session by encouraging students to practice the deep breathing exercise at least once a day.

Note: Optional activities and discussion questions are provided in the full suggested script to allow you to expand the discussion and engage students further.

See the resource list at the end of this document for students who may need additional help.