



# Nature Breathing

**Duration:** 30 - 45 minutes

**Recommended locations:** Meadow Lawn, Coastal Bluffs, Fern Canyon Trail or North Forest

**Hey Adults!** Guide your kids in nature breathing by reading the prompts below. Take it nice and slow, leaving plenty of time to focus on each breath.

## 1. Explore

As you wander through the Gardens, look for a peaceful place to sit. When you find one, take a moment to allow your body to settle into a comfortable position. We are going to practice deep nature breathing. These practices can be very peaceful and soothing.

### Let's begin with a warm-up!

Close your eyes and take a deep breath in through your nose. Breathe in and imagine you are smelling a flower with the most delicious smell. When you can't inhale any more, breathe out slowly through your mouth, as if you are blowing up a balloon. Repeat these breaths three times.

**Now that we are warmed-up, we can do some TREE BREATHING!** Trees bring in the energy and food they need to survive through their leaves and their roots.

Stand up. Keep breathing slowly and deeply. Close your eyes and imagine that you are a tree. Your feet grow roots that reach way down into the earth. Your legs and torso are a strong sturdy trunk, and your arms are branches. Pretend that you are growing leaves all over your arms, at the tips of your fingers and all around your head. As you continue to breathe in and out, imagine that your inhale is coming into your body through your leaves and your roots. Keep your eyes closed and take five deep breaths, in through your nose and out through your mouth. Absorb all the energy that you need to grow strong like a tree.

**When you are ready to explore a little further, take a walk to the ocean. There, you can practice WHALE BREATHING!**

Find a comfortable place to sit or stand near the ocean. Close your eyes and breathe deeply. Imagine that you are a whale: Your entire body has a thick layer of blubber to keep you warm. Instead of walking on land, you glide through water. As you breathe slowly and deeply, imagine that your breath is coming in and out through your back, between your shoulder blades. After three slow breaths, pretend to breathe out forcefully through your blowhole until your lungs are completely empty of air. Then take a long and slow breath in. With your lungs full, hold your breath and count to eight. Slowly exhale. Try this whale breath three times.

**Did you know?** From November to February, the California Gray Whales can be seen migrating south to Baja where the pregnant females give birth. Gray whales rarely make a splash at the surface of the ocean. They calmly breathe through their blowholes and then dive back under water. When they surface you might see a tall spout of water as they breathe out. While under water, a Gray Whale can hold its breath for 20-30 minutes!

## 2. Reflect

**Think back to your breathing exercises.**

*Where did you feel your deep breaths the most?  
How did you feel after the breathing activities?  
How could nature breathing be useful in your life?*

## 3. Wonder

**Breathing slowly and thoughtfully can help us de-stress and focus. Today, we practiced tree and whale breathing. What other animals or plants could you model your breathing after?**

We suggest trying:

**BUNNY BREATHING** - Take three quick sniffs through your nose and one long exhale.

**SNAKE BREATHING** - Inhale slowly through your nose and breathe out through your mouth with a long, slow hissing sound.