

REGULATION

PULSE COUNT



BENEFITS

Quiets and calms. Develops inner listening and personal awareness. Educates about the heart and circulatory system. Teaches about bodily rhythms and cycles of nature. Develops awareness that we do have control over our bodies.

TIME

2 to 20 minutes

ACTIVITY

- Take two fingers to the side of the mouth.
- Tip head slightly back and draw a line down with fingers into groove along the neck.
- Press gently to find pulse.
- Raise other hand when pulse is found.
- Count pulse beats silently to self.
- Now, count the pulse for 15 seconds. Later, expand to 30 seconds, and then 1 minute.
- Ask students what their count was. (*Note: Counts will vary and some students may have trouble counting or may make up exceptionally low or high counts.*)

VARIATIONS & INTEGRATION

- Run in place for one minute, then take pulse again. Discuss the reasons the pulse is different after running. Then try the opposite. Relax the muscles, slow the breathing, and concentrate on “thinking” your heart rate lower. Try playing relaxing music. What happens to the pulse?
- Time the group for 30 seconds, then have them do the math to calculate their pulse rate per minute.
- Older students can track their pulse and daily activities. Graph results, determine averages, and explore the relationships between activities and pulse.
- Take the pulse when students come in from recess and again after a 5-minute relaxation.
- Take the pulse when students are watching television, playing video games, and so on.
- Use as an introduction to a health lesson on the heart or stress. Include information on healthy resting and active heart rates.
- Show physical education charts for healthy aerobic heart training rates. Calculate each student’s optimal training heart rate for their age.