

INTRODUCTION TO MEDITATION

GRADES: 3-6

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SUBJECT: Religion

TIME REQUIRED: Thirty minutes

OBJECTIVES:

1. To learn about meditation techniques and their connection to inner peace.
2. To compare and contrast meditation techniques used in Buddhism and Christianity.

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

CD of classical music and CD player (optional)

BACKGROUND:

Meditation is a form of mental discipline used for centuries in both Buddhism and Christianity. It's practice helps individuals experience inner peace. In the Catholic tradition it is used to rid the mind and heart of distractions in order to be more aware of God's presence. Among the general public, it is employed to calm oneself and focus.

PROCEDURES:

1. Explain the meaning of meditation, why it is important and what the lesson entails.
2. Compare Buddhist monks who meditate regularly to members of other religious orders who also meditate.
3. Have students sit in a comfortable position. This may be in their chairs or on the floor, with legs crossed, in a lotus position.
4. Lead students in a meditative breathing exercise. Sit and breathe naturally through the nostrils and try to become aware of the sensation of the breath as it enters and leaves the body.
5. As the students are breathing, say to them slowly, "Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in goodness and love. Breathe out hatred and evil."
6. Have the students continue to sit and breathe slowly while soft music is played in the background. (10 minutes each time)

EVALUATION:

Allow time after each exercise for the students to discuss how they felt during this meditation period.

ENRICHMENT:

Have each student draw a picture of her/himself as a peaceful person.

RESOURCES:

LeShan, Lawrence. *How to Meditate*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974.