

WHILE-TASK: WHAT HELPS ME TO RELAX? JOURNALING

Linguistic focus

Writing

Thematic focus

Writing about free time

Language level/target group

A2/B1

Teacher instructions

In the book, there is a passage that reads **“Try tensing up all of your muscles and then relaxing them, one by one”** (page 8). This sentence should be a starting point for thinking about and practicing relaxation in the classroom.

As an introduction, the students are asked to try out the task and talk about how it felt to tense up all their muscles and then relax them one by one. Afterward, the students share with their partners what they find relaxing. The ideas can later be collected on the blackboard through a mind map and are the basis for the journaling exercise.

The journal is intended to be a private space for the students to express their thoughts and feelings in English. In the context of the book, the journal has a thematic focus aimed at reflecting on relaxation. It should be a space where they can write freely without worrying about grammar, punctuation, or spelling.

Possible continuation – Journaling

If the necessary resources are available, consider providing the students with a small booklet solely dedicated to journaling. To form an inspirational and optimistic basis, the students should initially be motivated to decorate the journal and create a visually appealing booklet that reflects their personality. They might also be asked to perform a few of the actions collected in the mind map. In their journal, they could answer questions such as “Do I like to do that?”, “Does this action help me to relax?” or “How does this action make me feel?”. Students can also be given the option to write down a stream of consciousness (ignoring the questions/prompts) or to add drawings or pictures to those reflections.

Additional material to be used

- Journal template [Happy 9.1]
- What helps me relax? (with answer key) [Happy 9.2]

JOURNAL TEMPLATE

[The full-size template can be found as a PDF in the appendix.]

The journal template is displayed within a window frame with a red title bar, a close button (X), and three window control buttons (green, red, yellow). The main content area has a light pink background. The title 'my journal' is in a bold, black, typewriter-style font. To the right of the title is a mood scale section with a red header 'Today I am feeling' and five white circles. Below the circles are the labels 'very happy' and 'very sad'. Below the mood scale is a large white box with a black border and rounded corners, containing the prompt 'What is important to me today?'. To the right of this box is a green header 'three things I am grateful for' above three horizontal lines, each preceded by a small red starburst icon. At the bottom is another large white box with a black border and rounded corners, containing the prompt 'What will I do today to relax?' followed by two horizontal lines. The background of the journal page features a light blue grid pattern.

my journal

Today I am feeling

very happy very sad

What is important to me today?

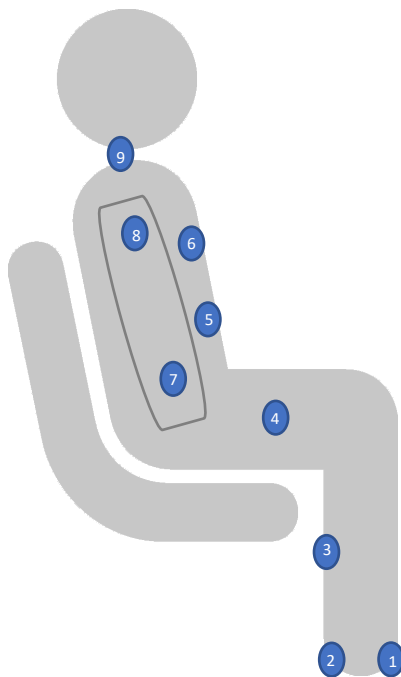
three things I am grateful for

What will I do today to relax?

WHAT HELPS ME RELAX?

Task 1:

- Tense up all your muscles, then relax them one by one.
Start at the feet and move towards your head.
- Read each sentence carefully. Fill in the blanks with the body part you relaxed.



First, I relaxed my **1**_____. Next, I let my **2**_____ relax. Then, I allowed my **3**_____ to relax. Moving up, I let my **4**_____ relax. Continuing, I felt my **5**_____ relax. Then, I allowed my **6**_____ to relax. Next, I let my **7**_____ relax. Following that, I felt my **8**_____ relax. Finally, I let my **9**_____ relax.

Task 2:

Note down what helps you relax.

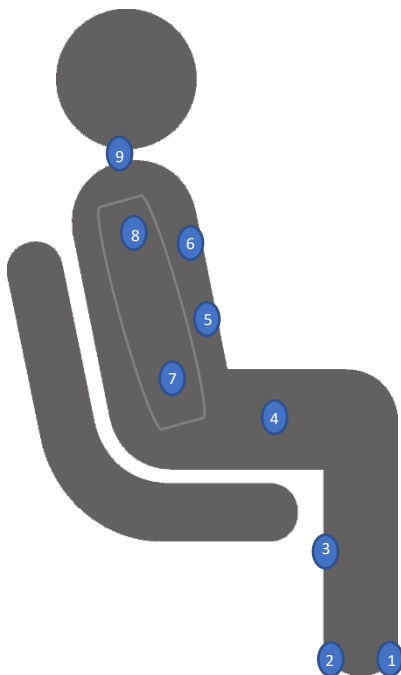
Tell your partner what you find relaxing.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

WHAT HELPS ME RELAX? – ANSWER KEY

Task 1:

- Tense up all your muscles then relax them one by one.
Start at the feet and move towards your head.
- Read each sentence carefully. Fill in the blanks with the body part you relaxed.



First, I relaxed my **1 toes**. Next, I let my **2 ankles/feet** relax. Then, I allowed my **3 calves** to relax. Moving up, I let my **4 thighs** relax. Continuing, I felt my **5 stomach** relax. Then, I allowed my **6 chest** to relax. Next, I let my **7 arms** relax. Following that, I felt my **8 shoulders** relax. Finally, I let my **9 neck** relax.

Task 2:

Note down what helps you relax.
Tell your partner what you find relaxing.

This question requires individual responses from the students. Answers will vary but could include activities such as playing with friends, watching TV, listening to music, taking a warm bath, etc.