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## Yoga in My Public-School Classroom

Hannah Sumich

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### *Abstract:*

*This paper discusses the pre-established research on implementing a yoga program in an urban, public classroom setting. Then, results of a yoga practice in the urban, public classroom are presented and discussed. Yoga in this urban, public school classroom, had mixed responses, with some students flourishing and enjoying the practice whole-heartedly, and some students were pained and disliked the practice strongly. The majority of participants enjoyed the practice, and would opt to continue participating if the program continued.*

### **Introduction**

The problem that I am looking to solve with this research is how to effectively manage my classroom and create community. I know that no matter what classroom I will be in, grade level or subject, managing my students and creating an environment of respect and care will be difficult to do. I am looking to proactively address any potential problems in my classroom regarding the environment and student behavior. I want my students to be respectful citizens in a democratic classroom, and I want them to understand that I care about them. Taking time to care about my students holistically, and as a human, is a great way to create that environment. Plus, the calmness, 'Zen', and concentration that come from the implementation of yoga into my classroom should be a welcomed addition to whatever content we are learning in the class.

Additionally, spending time with students outside of just teaching them the content is an important way to get to know their interests and goals. I want students to have their say as part of that democratic classroom. In order to do so, I need to pre-assess their interests and cater certain parts of content to be more relevant and applicable to them. Since I want choice to be a core part of my class, I will need to differentiate instruction. I will need to get to know my students and what they care about. I want my students to learn about important factors of physical and mental health that can hopefully become an important aspect of life-long learning and self-care for them.

I think that it is incredibly important that I also establish myself as a life-long learner. Modeling this yoga and learning along with my students will be a great experience for all of us. Also, having high expectations in the practice will be a great way to model my high expectations for the classroom as well. With high expectations and mutual respect, my students will hopefully want to try their best and we can create an environment of care and authentic learning for them. Finally, I want to empower my students to be active and

successful in whatever their interests are. If any of my students enjoy yoga and want to continue, that will be great and I will be glad to have helped them find a passion. But more importantly, although all my students will come into this practice at varying levels of readiness, I want all of them to come out of the experience having grown and learned something about themselves. I hope that all my students find some benefits from the practice of yoga and some its basic teachings.

## Literature Review

### Classroom Management

Many researchers have looked into the effect yoga and mindfulness practices have had in their classroom. Reduction of fights and benefits of character are two themes that are prevalent. Williamson (2012) reports:

“In the year before the yoga program was introduced, there had been 225 classroom disruptions, 320 disorderly conducts and 150 fights. During the pilot program in 2010–2011, these metrics were all cut by more than half: 110 classroom disruptions, 40 disorderly conducts and 52 fights.”

Dariotis, Mirabal-Beltran, Cluxton-Keller, Gould, Greenberg, & Mendelson (2017) also report that benefits were four-fold: psychological, cognitive, physical and behavioral such as improved social skills and less externalizing behaviors (p. 53). Ebert (2012) also says that positive thinking, nutrition, wellness, and being a peacemaker were all traits that can be raised while also improving “learning-readiness” (p. 4).

A sense of calmness also has been reported with the implementation of yoga programs into schools. Ebert (2012) explained why this is important: “when children are anxious, stressed, distracted or unbalanced it is nearly impossible for them to learn. A calm and present state of mind is a prerequisite for children to be psychologically and physiologically ready for learning” (p. 3). Ebert also reports that self-regulation is important for students to be able to sit still and keep both attention and motivation on-task in the classroom (p. 3). Case-Smith, Sines & Klatt (2010) also cite that self-reported anxiety and anxious behaviors were lowered between a control group and a group that participated in a yoga program (p. 228). The students enjoyed yoga for the ability to, as one student put it, “get all the hyperness out of me” (p. 231), which benefits students trying to focus in a classroom.

Williamson (2012) also looked into behavioral and classroom management issues of fussing and frequent interruptions through yoga in the classroom.

### **Academic Benefit**

When student attention increases in the classroom, it is clear that academics will improve. Williamson (2012) finds that student attention spans actually increased when students participate in yoga programs:

“They were resolving their own conflicts. Lessons went more smoothly. The teacher describes how, before standardized testing, her students would request a ‘few minutes for breath.’ And it apparently paid off—though she did not teach to the test, she says her students’ scores were among the school’s highest”.

Ebert (2012) also cites that yoga can help strengthen certain other skills that benefit academic success, such as self-regulation, pro-social dispositions, mastery and positive attitude towards academic success (p. 3).

### **Environment of Care**

Care and respect are two critical traits needed in classrooms that promote an environment of care. Kriete & Bechtel (2002) note that through doing group activities such as in a morning meeting they can heighten a sense of community and sense of group identity that can raise care in the classroom (p. 77). Cousins (2000) also has remarked that students are most successful when they meet someone who cares about them and believes in them (p. 74). Cousins also comments on respect in the classroom: “We each, when born, have a chance to mold ourselves, to form ourselves into that human being which we and others respect,” (p. 70). Williamson (2012) adds that a yoga practice can help students feel safe and accept others’ differences better. Again, through morning meeting the teacher can set the tone

of respect and trust, and hope that extends past the practice and into teaching as well (Kriete & Bechtel, 2002, p. 9).

### **Mental/Physical Health**

Another benefit of practicing yoga in classrooms is the improved mental and physical health. Cousins (2000) remarks that athletes generally leave the school system having received proper physical training, but anyone else may miss that part of the schooling experience (p. 29). Expeditionary Learning is a program that also emphasizes the importance of physical education being brought into the classroom (Expeditionary Learning, 2011, p. 49). Ebert (2012) agrees that yoga in the classroom can be found as something the students enjoy, and that can encourage life-long health and overall wellbeing (p. 8).

Ebert also cites that within that overall wellbeing, mental health can be addressed as an important component of a healthy life (p. 3). Case-Smith et al. (2010) confirm this with student reports that express “I feel like I’m in a good place”, supporting a positive self-concept (p. 231). Williamson (2012) also reports that: “[Yoga] has been described as a discipline for focusing and connecting mind, body and spirit, and has found adoptees among other religions as well as the non-religious.”

### **Life-long Learning and High Expectations**

Another benefit that can be seen from doing yoga with students is that it establishes the teacher as a learner, and encourages life-long learning for students. Dariotis et al. (2017) report that fourth-graders who took part in a yoga program were disappointed when it did not continue into fifth grade because “we didn’t learn everything so I would like to learn more things” (p. 63). Kriete & Bechtel (2002) also mention the importance of working with students on something together to heighten group identity (p. 79). Berger (2003) also notes how modeling behaviors in the classroom is a convenient and efficient way to show your students how to do anything, from experimenting to writing a good essay (p. 83). The

Expeditionary Learning program supports this notion, stating that modeling is one of the more effective ways to teach lessons (Expeditionary Learning, 2011, p. 33).

Setting high expectations for students in this practice has been found to translate into the content as well. Berger (1996) supports the idea that: “a school culture of quality connotes a culture of high standards for all students in all domains: standards for academic achievement, arts, physical fitness, critical thinking, and creativity, but also standards for kindness, integrity, industriousness, and responsibility,” (p. 21). And again, Berger (2003) emphasizes the need for higher expectations in every aspect of the classroom, including trust, responsibility, and accountability (p. 151). Berger (1996) has remarked how self-esteem doesn’t come from compliments, but instead accomplishments of quality in the classroom (p. 49). Although some students may struggle to find these accomplishments academically, teachers can build their self-efficacy through these yogic practices and hopefully their academics will benefit as well.

### **Urban Students**

Finally, Case-Smith et al. (2010) classifies stressors that affect urban students more as witnessing or experiencing violence and/or bullying (p. 227), and when yoga is practiced and modeled regularly its practice can reduce these stressors and create an environment of care. This environment and the previous-mentioned calmness can also lead to better academic performance, which will build student self-esteem inside and outside the classroom.



### **Methodology**

Data was collected over four weeks of power poses practice. A lot of the research included information on connotations of yoga, especially in urban areas, so this practice is called “Power Poses” in order to avoid any negative connotations. This classroom is in an urban setting, a low-income, public school, with twenty-one fourth-grade students. Eight of these students are males, and 13 of these students are female. We practiced power poses in the morning, after their work for the morning but before starting content for the day. The schedule and practices used are as follows:

#### **Power poses schedule**

This is the schedule I set out to use in my power poses practice. But, due to illness and snow days it ended up changing a little bit. I took class observations the days that we did not practice power poses, so Tuesday and Thursday of weeks 1, 3 and 5. Week 2 was before Thanksgiving break, so students were off Wednesday-Friday. 11/15, the first Thursday, the school had a snow day, and I did not take observations. And Wednesday, 11/28 I was not at school due to illness, so we did not complete power poses that morning. Additionally, 12/6 and 12/7 we had a substitute teacher in the classroom.

- a. Week 1:
  - i. 11/12- Monday: Do my best
  - ii. 11/14- Wednesday: Sitting mountain pose and desk puppy
  - iii. 11/16- Friday: Do my best and peace breath
- b. Week 2:
  - i. 11/19- Monday: Do my best and sitting mountain pose and peace breath
  - ii. 11/20- Tuesday: Open heart
- c. Week 3:

- i. 11/26- Monday: Do my best and mountain to tall tree to touch toes
  - ii. 11/28- Wednesday: Mountain to tall tree to touch toes
  - iii. 11/30- Friday: Lightbulb brain vacation
- d. Week 4:
- i. 12/3- Monday: Do my best and sitting mountain pose
  - ii. 12/5- Wednesday: Desk puppy and open heart
  - iii. 12/7- Friday: Lightbulb brain vacation and mountain to tall tree to touch toes

### Practices

1. Do My Best. (Ebert, 2012).
  - a. Begin in Standing Mountain pose. Standing up tall with your arms at your sides and your feet about hip distance apart, inhale as you raise your shoulders towards your ears. Exhale and roll them back and down. As you do so, notice your weight go into your feet, anchoring you solidly to the ground.
  - b. Reach the right elbow across the body to the left knee as you raise it, and then do the same thing for the left elbow to the right knee. Do not rush to alternate the sides and continue at moderate speed for a minute or so. Once this becomes easy for you, try adding the following chant, coordinating your movements with your words. Repeat 3 times or more.
    - i. Opposite Elbow Opposite Knee  
I stand up strong, just like a tree.  
I use my mind, and body, and breath,  
To focus myself, and do my BEST!
2. Sitting Mountain Pose. (Ebert, 2012).

- a. Sit down in a chair and scoot forward slightly to bring your back and bottom away from the back of your chair. Adjust yourself as needed to ensure that your feet are flat on the floor and your posture is straight and tall. Your knees should be directly above your ankles. Rest your hands on your thighs.
  - b. Close your eyes or find a focus point. A focus point is a small, unmoving object upon which you can focus your gaze.
  - c. Breathe slowly and deeply in and out. Focus on the sound and feeling of your breath. Continue for at least one minute or until you feel centered and relaxed.
3. Peace Breath (Ebert, 2012).
- a. Close your eyes and breathe slowly and deeply in and out through your nose.
  - b. Begin to imagine that your heart is filling up with love and peace. With each inhale, watch it fill up to overflowing so that now you have plenty to share. Can you feel it?
  - c. On your exhale, breathe out very slowly, as you silently say, “Peeaaaaccccccee.”
  - d. Repeat several times, and as you say the word, “peace,” feel peacefulness and love flowing out from your heart into the room, to touch your classmates, your community and the world. Imagine this flow of peace reaching all of the people, places and animals that need it the most.
  - e. Optional: have a discussion with your kids around the idea of peace if time allows. Start with saying: “When we feel peaceful, we help those around us to feel peaceful, too. Why do you think this is so? Try it and see what happens!”
4. Desk Puppy. (Ebert, 2012).
- a. Stand behind your desk with your chair pushed in. Place the palms of your hands on the middle of your desk.

- b. Take a step back and bend forward so that your head comes down between your arms.
  - c. Check your alignment. Your arms and legs should be straight. Your back is flat with your hips pressing back-ward. Your heels are on the floor.
  - d. Let your head hang and relax between your arms. Feel the stretch in your shoulders, arms, hamstrings and calves. Release into the stretch a little more with each exhale: “Ahh”.
  - e. When you are finished, step forward and roll your spine back up to standing. Shake out your limbs as needed
5. Open Heart. (Ebert, 2012).
  - a. Begin in Sitting Mountain Pose and reach back to hold onto the sides of your chair.
  - b. Inhale as you roll your shoulders back and lean forward opening your chest towards the sky.
  - c. Hold this pose for 3 – 5 full breaths, imagining each exhale is sending love from your heart out into the world.
  - d. Slowly exhale and return to Sitting Mountain. Repeat as time allows.
6. Mountain to tall tree to touch toes & reverse
  - a. Stand tall with legs shoulder width apart and arms down by your side.
  - b. Bring arms up into tall tree, and stretch your back long and tall.
  - c. Reach your arms down to the ground, and touch your toes if you can. Inhale and exhale slowly, and reach back up to the sky.
7. Lightbulb Brain Imagination (Ebert, 2012)
  - a. “With each exhale, ask your mind and muscles to relax completely. When you are still and listening, I will begin...Imagine your brain is like a light bulb.

Your light bulb brain is very hard at work all day, every day. It shines very brightly, filled with energy, thoughts, ideas and creativity. Sometimes, it gets very, very tired... Notice now that your light bulb brain has a dimmer switch. Ever so gently, turn the dimmer switch down so that the light from the bulb begins to dim. Feel your light bulb brain begin to relax and settle down. Oh, that feels good! Feel your head begin to relax...your thoughts slow down, your ideas go to rest. Breathe in deeply now, and on the exhale, turn your dimmer all the way to 'OFF.' The light is turned off and your light bulb brain is now completely at rest. Take moment and let your light bulb brain recharge and restore itself... (After a minute or more). When you are ready, slowly begin to turn your light bulb brain back on, so that the light becomes a little brighter with each inhale until light and energy have filled your brain and body once again. When you are ready, take a nice deep breath in through your nose. Exhale, "Haaa" through your mouth. Very, very slowly sit up now. Breathe in and out deeply once again before gently opening your eyes. Notice how you feel."

### **Data**

The forms of data collected were surveys, observations, and interviews. Before implementing this program, I gathered background knowledge about how my students feel in the classroom. Topics include how stressed or anxious they feel at school, how confident they feel in their academic performance, if they would call themselves a good or bad student, and how respected/important for they feel in the classroom. I want students to take the same survey before and after participating in the yoga program, to standardize results as much as possible. Two questions were added to the final survey to see how students felt about the practice and if they would continue it. These questions collected qualitative answers to allow

students to explain their answers completely, and then I generalized the answers to look for trends and patterns. The pre and post surveys are attached as Appendix A and B, respectively.

Through observations, the number of class interruptions and behavioral issues in the classes with the students participating was recorded to see if the number changed after the practice. The kinds of interruptions were categorized as yelling out during class, talking out of turn, off task/distracted behavior, oppositional behavior, or aggressive/angry behavior. Finally, six students were interviewed with questions similar to the post-survey, but with an opportunity to elaborate and explain their answers. I selected two student who enjoyed it, two students who did not enjoy it, and two students who were indifferent. I focused on three questions: **1.** “Did you enjoy practicing power poses? Why or why not?” **2.** “What was your favorite part or practice of the power poses?” And **3.** “Would you want to continue practicing this in the classroom? Explain.” These interview responses were used to cross reference and back up survey responses and classroom observations.

**Data and Analysis**

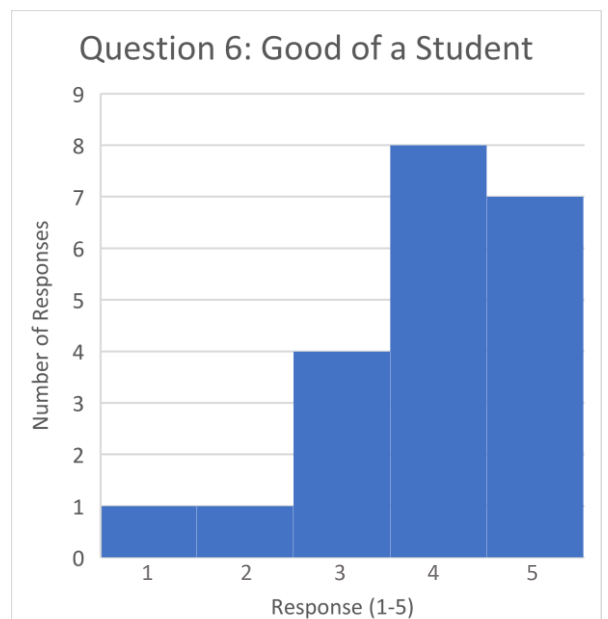
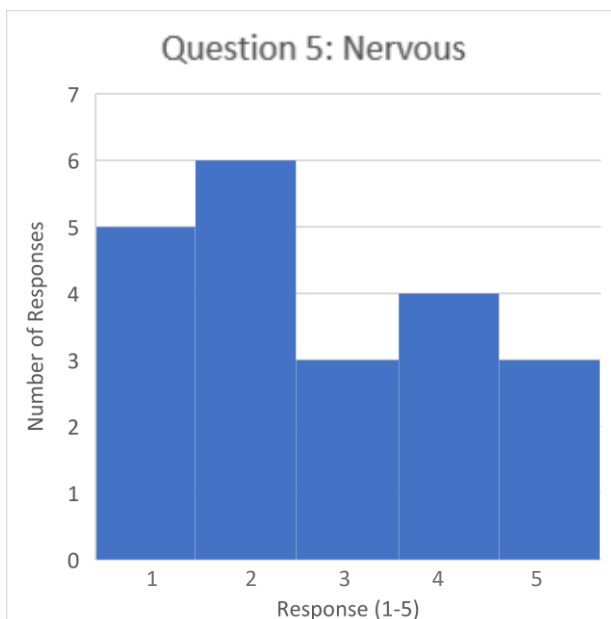
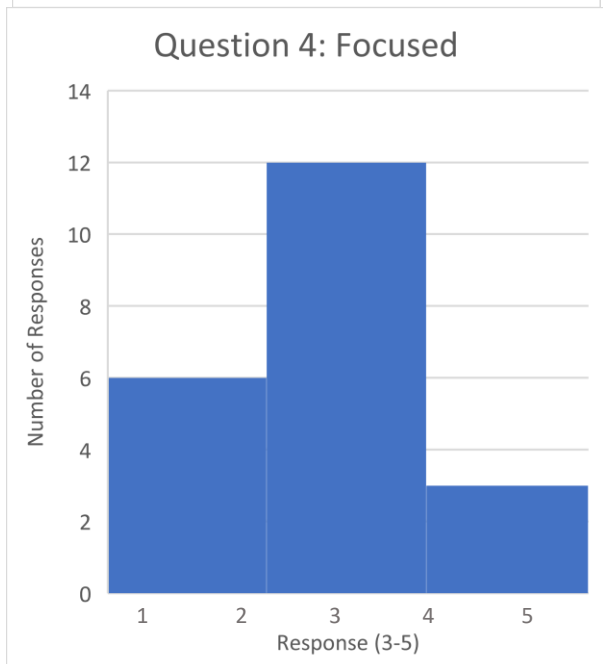
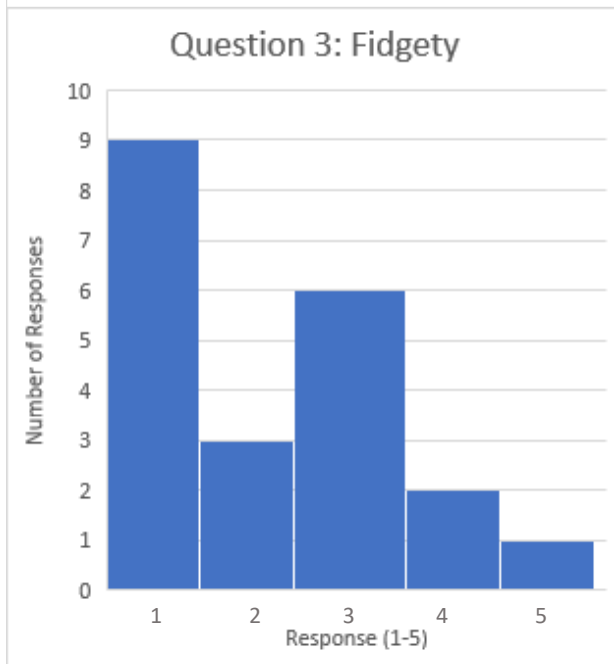
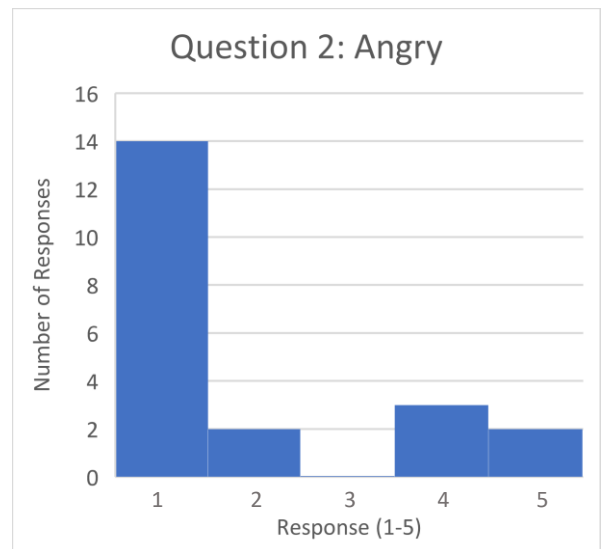
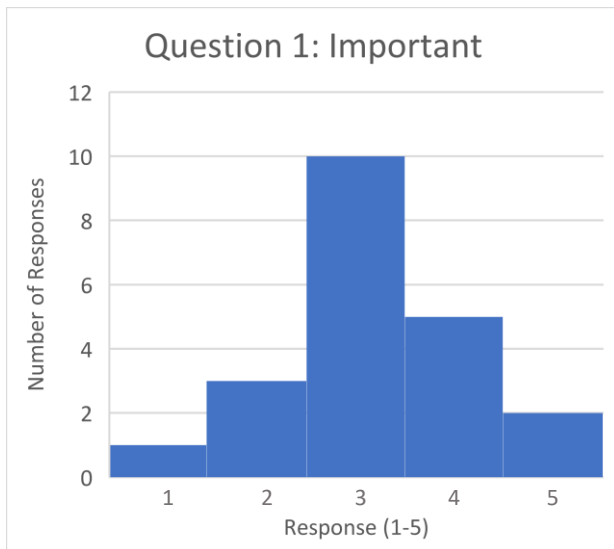
**Survey Responses: Quantitative Data**

These tables are student responses to the Pre-Surveys. Questions asked students to rate their feelings on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being not at all and 5 being extremely so. These are their responses:

**Pre-surveys**

<b><u>Student</u></b>	<b><u>Questions</u></b>							<b>7</b>	
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>		
<b>1</b>	3	1	2	4	1	5	1	*1=yes	
<b>2</b>	3	2	2	4	2	4	1	0=no	
<b>3</b>	4	1	2	4	2	4	1		
<b>4</b>	4	2	3	3	4	4	1		
<b>5</b>	3	1	3	4	4	3	1		
<b>6</b>	2	1	3	4	1	3	1		
<b>7</b>	5	1	1	4	2	5	0		
<b>8</b>	3	3	4	3	3	1	1		
<b>9</b>	4	3	1	4	1	3	1		
<b>10</b>	3	1	1	4	1	4	1		
<b>11</b>	3	1	1	5	2	5	1		
<b>12</b>	3	1	1	3	3	4	1		
<b>13</b>	3	1	1	4	1	4	1		
<b>14</b>	2	1	3	5	2	5	1		
<b>15</b>	3	3	4	3	4	5	1		
<b>16</b>	4	1	3	3	4	4	1		
<b>17</b>	3	1	3	4	2	4	1		
<b>18</b>	1	4	1	3	5	3	1		
<b>19</b>	4	1	1	4	5	5	1		
<b>20</b>	2	1	1	5	5	5	1		
<b>21</b>	5	4	5	4	3	2	1		
<b><u>Averages</u></b>	3.19	1.66	2.19	3.85	2.71	3.90	0.95		

*Table 1*

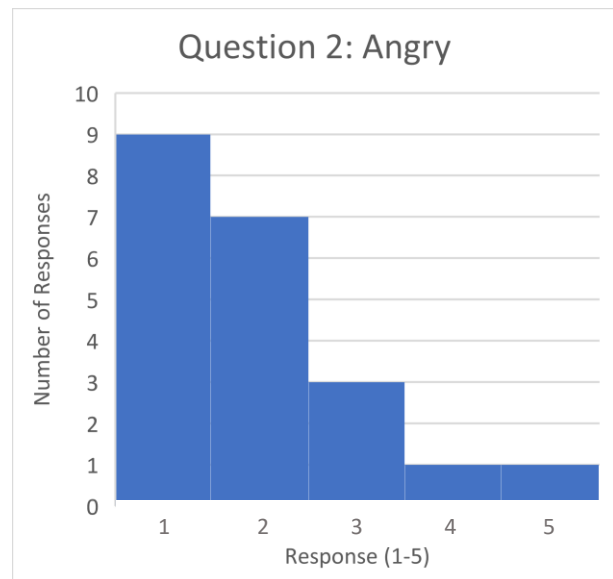
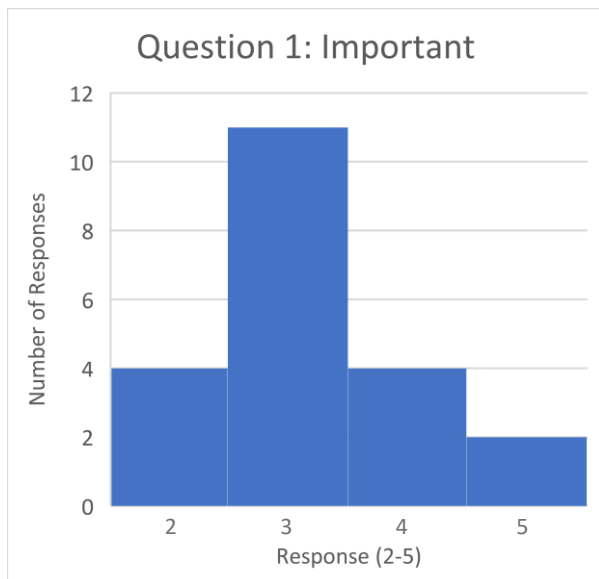


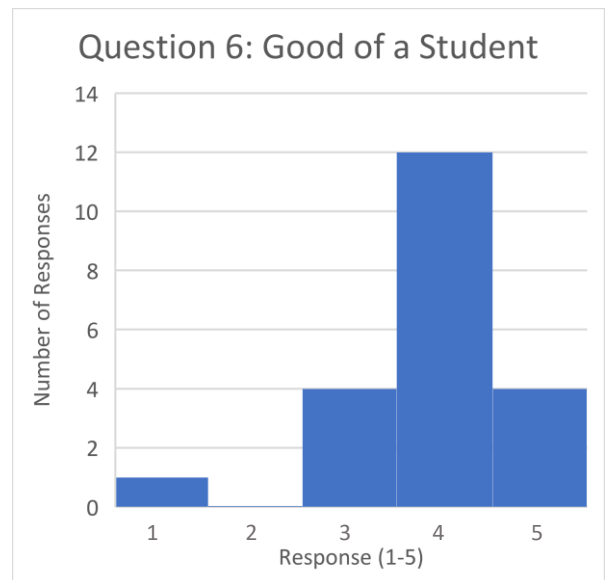
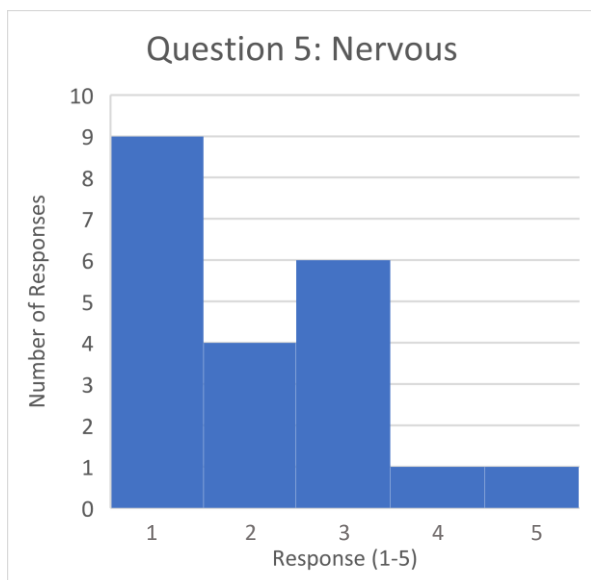
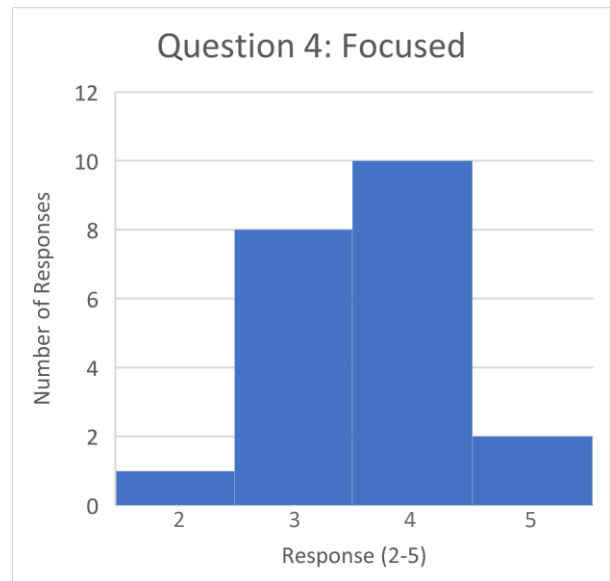
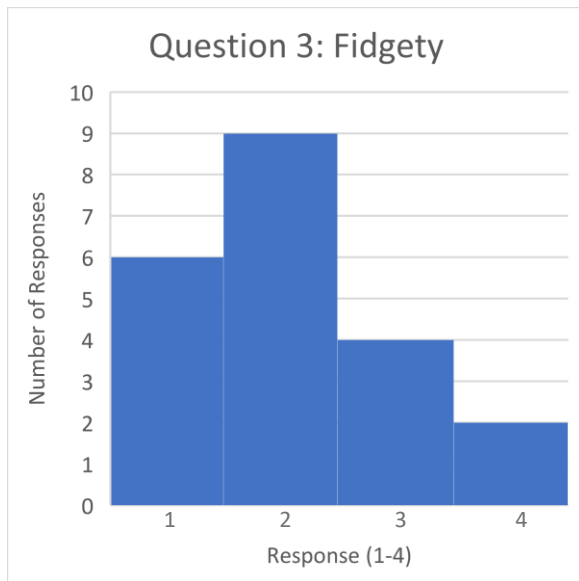


**Post-surveys**

<b><u>Student</u></b>	<b><u>Questions</u></b>							
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	
<b>1</b>	2	1	2	4	1	4	1	1=yes
<b>2</b>	3	4	2	4	3	4	1	0=no
<b>3</b>	4	1	2	4	2	4	1	
<b>4</b>	3	2	4	3	4	3	0	
<b>5</b>	2	1	2	3	3	4	1	
<b>6</b>	3	1	3	3	1	4	1	
<b>7</b>	5	1	2	4	1	5	1	
<b>8</b>	3	1	3	3	3	1	1	
<b>9</b>	3	2	1	3	1	3	1	
<b>10</b>	4	1	2	4	2	4	1	
<b>11</b>	3	2	1	4	2	5	1	
<b>12</b>	3	2	2	4	1	4	1	
<b>13</b>	4	3	1	4	1	4	1	
<b>14</b>	2	2	2	4	3	4	1	
<b>15</b>	3	2	1	4	1	4	1	
<b>16</b>	3	3	3	3	3	3	0	
<b>17</b>	2	1	2	3	1	4	1	
<b>18</b>	3	5	1	3	1	4	1	
<b>19</b>	5	1	3	5	5	5	1	
<b>20</b>	3	2	1	5	3	5	1	
<b>21</b>	4	3	4	2	2	3	1	
<b>Averages</b>	3.19	1.95	2.09	3.61	2.09	3.85	0.90	

Table 2





Averages of Results

Quality	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Change	Statistically Significant?
Importance	3.19	3.19	0.00	No
Anger	1.66	1.95	+0.29	No
Fidgety-ness	2.19	2.09	-0.10	No
Focus	3.85	3.61	-0.24	No
Anxiety	2.71	2.09	-0.62	No
Good Student-ness	3.90	3.85	-0.05	No

*Table 3: Averages of results for both the pre- and post-surveys, the change in average, and then a T-test was run to determine if the change in average was large enough to be statistically significant.*

**Survey Responses: Qualitative Data**

**Pre-surveys**

Student responses to surveys were grouped by themes or bands with similar responses. Then, I tallied the number of students in each theme. In response to question 8: “Do you feel like your teachers care about you? Why or why not?” all students responded yes.

Response to Q8: “Do you feel like your teachers care about you? Why or why not?”	Number of Students
Teachers care because they help me	9
Teachers care because they teach me	3
Teachers care because why else would they be here?	2
Teachers care because they love everyone	2
Teachers care because they want me to learn	2
Teachers care because they protect me	1
No reason	1

*Table 4*

In response to question 9: “Do you feel calm and ready to learn every day? Why or why not?” two students said ‘no’, three said ‘sometimes/most of the time’, and the other eighteen said ‘yes’.

Response to Q9: “Do you feel calm and ready to learn every day? Why or why not?”	Number of Students
I feel calm because I like to learn	6
I feel calm because I get proper sleep	3
I feel calm because I want to learn	2
I feel calm because I know how to handle my stress	1

I feel calm because I know my teachers can always help me	1
I feel calm because I am not always talking	1
I feel calm because I do well and feel confident	1
I feel calm because I have a good classroom	1
I am most of the time calm	1
I am sometimes calm, except when I get embarrassed when I am wrong	1
I am sometimes calm, except I get mad easily	1
I am not calm because I'm tired and nervous	2

Table 5

### Post-surveys

Question 8 was the same on the post-survey, and all students responded 'yes' again.

Response to Q8: "Do you feel like your teachers care about you? Why or why not?"	Number of Students
Teachers care because they calm	8
Teachers care because they keep me safe and protect me	4
Teachers care because why else would they teach?	2
Teachers care because the teacher loves everyone	2
Teachers care because teaching is caring	2
Teachers care because they keep me on task	1
Teachers care because they don't say mean things	1
Teachers care because I'm a good student	1
Teachers care because they love teaching	1
Teachers care because they want all students to learn	1

Table 6

Question 9 was also the same on the post-survey, five students said 'no', two said 'sometimes'/'kind of', and fourteen said 'yes'.

Response to Q9: "Do you feel calm and ready to learn every day? Why or why not?"	Number of Students
I feel calm because I come to school to learn	3
I feel calm because I feel focused and not angry	2

I feel calm because I am a good student	1
I feel calm because power poses make me calm	1
I feel calm because I try hard	1
I feel calm because I love school	1
I feel calm because I listen to my teachers and parents	1
I feel calm because I sleep well	1
I feel calm for no reason	1
I kind of feel calm for no reason	1
I sometimes feel calm because sometimes I'm nervous	1
I don't feel calm because I'm tired or mad	2
I don't feel calm because there's a crazy environment	2
I don't feel calm because I'm always hyper	1

Table 7

Question 10 on the post-survey asked “Did you enjoy practicing power poses?”

Explain your answer in 2 sentences.”

Response to Q10: “Did you enjoy practicing power poses? Explain your answer in 2 sentences.”	Number of Students
I did enjoy power poses because they calm me down and relax me	8
I did enjoy power poses because they were fun	3
I did enjoy power poses because I like to feel free	1
I did enjoy power poses but hated interrupting work	1
I kind of enjoyed power poses because they hurt me	1
I kind of enjoyed power poses for no reason	1
I did not enjoy power poses because they hurt me	2

Table 8

Question 11 on the post-survey asked “Would you want to continue practicing power poses in the classroom? Explain your answer in 2 sentences.”

Response to Q11: “Would you want to continue practicing power poses in the classroom? Explain your answer in 2 sentences.”	Number of Students
I would want to continue power poses because it was relaxing and calmed me down	8

I would want to continue power poses because it was fun	6
I would want to continue because I enjoy a challenge	1
I would want to continue for no reason	2
I would want to do power poses only when the class was hyper	1
I would, but do not want to continue power poses	1
I would want to continue power poses, but some power poses hurt me	1
I would not want to continue practicing power poses because it hurt me	2

*Table 9*

### **Interviews**

Students numbered 1, 8, 12, 16, 18, and 21 were also interviewed after the post-survey. These six students were selected because of the variety and reasoning of their responses. These six had differing opinions on power poses and whether they would continue or not, and I thought that that was representative of the feelings of the class. Again, the interview questions were:

- a. Did you enjoy practicing power poses? Why or why not?
- b. What was your favorite part or practice of the power poses?
- c. Would you want to continue practicing this in the classroom? Explain.

Students 8 and 21 loved power poses and would continue them. Here are their responses from the post-surveys to compare with interview responses:

Student 21:

8. Yes, I feel like teachers care about me because if they didn't they wouldn't teach me, and they wouldn't help me.
9. Yes, because I have good sleep and I have work sometimes easy [I find work easy].
10. I did enjoy power poses and because they are easy, and they are fun.
11. Yes, I would finish power poses and I would because they are relaxing

Quality	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey
Importance	4	5
Anger	4	3
Fidgety-ness	5	4
Focus	4	2
Anxiety	3	2
Good student-ness	2	3
Question 7	Yes	Yes

Table 10

During the interview student 21 answered that they did enjoy power poses because they are fun and relaxing because they stretch their body. Their favorite part was desk puppy because it stretched them out more than the other ones, and they would continue the practice because it can relax them when they feel angry.

Student 8:

- 8. Yes, because if I need help and she didn't come to me that means she doesn't care. She always comes to me.
- 9. No, because I feel tired, and sometimes I feel mad.
- 10. Yes, because it loosens up my body.
- 11. Yes, I like the 'opposite elbow, opposite knee I stand up tall just like a tree I use my mind and body and breath to focus myself and do my best'! I love it!

Quality	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey
Importance	3	3
Anger	3	1
Fidgety-ness	4	3
Focus	4	3

Anxiety	3	3
Good student-ness	1	1
Question 7	Yes	Yes

Table 11

In the interview student 8 responded yes, they did enjoy practicing power poses, specifically ‘Do my best’, which they recited by memory. That was their favorite part, and they would continue practicing because they enjoyed the stretch.

Student 16 and 18 were both not sure about the whole experience, they had reasons for not wanting to continue the practice. Here are their post-survey responses to compare with interview responses:

Student 16:

- 8. I think my teachers care about me.
- 9. Kind of everyday.
- 10. I kind of liked them.
- 11. I would but I don’t.

Quality	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey
Importance	4	3
Anger	1	3
Fidgety-ness	3	3
Focus	4	3
Anxiety	5	3
Good student-ness	5	3
Question 7	Yes	No

Table 12



For interview responses, student 16 did like doing the power poses, but sometimes they were hard stretched. Their favorite one was sitting mountain pose with their eyes closed, and their least favorite was desk puppy. They would still continue the practice in the classroom, however, because they liked getting exercise.

Student 18:

- 8. Yes, I do feel like the teachers care about me because they're here to protect you.
- 9. I don't feel calm because I'm always tired in the morning.
- 10. Kind of, because they're fun and all but it kind of hurts.
- 11. No, I don't because it kind of hurts like my back.

Quality	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey
Importance	1	3
Anger	4	5
Fidgety-ness	1	1
Focus	3	3
Anxiety	5	1
Good student-ness	3	4
Question 7	No	Yes

Table 13

Student 18 requested that I did not record the interview, instead I took notes while we talked. They said that they kind of liked practicing power poses. It was fun, but it hurt them. Their favorite part was the mountain pose, standing tall, and they changed their answer to the last question in the interview, they said they would want to continue practicing power poses in the classroom because they were kind of fun.

Student 1 and 12 were iffy on continuing the practice, or had restraints on continuing.

Here are their survey responses to compare with interview answers:

Student 1:

8. Yes, because they find ways to teach us. Also, they give us stuff on Friday for dojos.

[Students with a certain amount of points on Class Dojo receive candy and free time on Fridays]

9. No, not really because there is always yelling and craziness happening.

10. Eh not really. The ones I like are the right angle one, desk puppy, and tree.

11. Kind of, but I mean it really does nothing it is kind of useless [except when] we are just hyped up.

Quality	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey
Importance	3	2
Anger	1	1
Fidgety-ness	2	2
Focus	4	4
Anxiety	1	1
Good student-ness	5	4
Question 7	Yes	Yes

Table 14

For the interview they responded they enjoyed power poses, but at the same time they did not enjoy power poses. They did because they were fun, calm, and relaxing, but did not enjoy them because sometimes they hurt their body. Their favorite part was ‘Do my best’ and they would want to continue the practice to get everyone calm in the morning.

Student 12:

8. Yes, because they want us to learn. And also experience new things.

9. I feel calm because I love school.

10. No, because some of them (not all of them) make my body hurt.

11. I would only want to do ones that don't hurt me.

Quality	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey
Importance	3	3
Anger	1	1
Fidgety-ness	1	2
Focus	3	4
Anxiety	3	1
Good student-ness	4	4
Question 7	Yes	Yes

Table 15

During the interview, this student responded yes they did enjoy them, and when asked why they changed their answer to no. They said the practice hurt their back, and their favorite part was mountain pose. Ultimately, though, they would continue the practice to help stretch.

Students 8 and 21 loved power poses and enjoyed the practice a lot. These two students represented the majority of the class, 67% , as they felt the same way. Student 16 and 18 were both not into the practice, and would not continue which is also okay. This represented 24% of the class. Student 1 and 12 were iffy, and they were the only students that felt this way, I still wanted them and their feelings represented in the interviews.

**Observations**

As I stated earlier, I took observations on the 'off' days on the practice, so Tuesday and Thursday of weeks 1, 3, and 4. There was a snow day 11/15, so I was not able to take observations. I classified the students' interruptions as yelling out, talking, off-task, oppositional, or angry. The data is as follows:

Date	Yelling out	Talking	Off-Task	Oppositional	Angry	Total
11/13	4	2	1	0	0	7

11/27	2	1	3	0	0	6
11/29	0	2	1	1	1	5
12/4	4	1	0	0	0	5
12/6*	2	3	2	3	1	11

\*There was a substitute teacher.

Overall, I found that in reality these observational statistics were not really recording what I wanted to record. Most of the interruptions were done by one or two students exclusively, and recorded the effect power poses had on them specifically more than the class as a whole. Also, 12/6 there was a substitute teacher, and I believe this had an effect on the number of interruptions. However, the decline in interruptions even before then was not statistically significant.

## **Conclusions/Limitations/Implications**

### **Conclusions**

In conclusion, these results did not support the research presented in the Literature Review. Average anger and fidgety-ness both went up, and average focus and good student-ness came down. Average importance stayed the same, and average anxiety came down. And again, it's important to note that none of the changes were statistically significant. But regardless, these averages do not entirely represent this research. A different way of looking at the data is that 62% of students enjoyed the practice, and 71% of participants would continue the practice. The students who didn't enjoy it or wouldn't continue the practice felt that way mostly because of pain in legs or back. If we look, for example, specifically at anxiety, only 3 students had their anxiety go up, the other 18 stayed the same or went down. One student, Student 18, had their anxiety go from a 5 to a 1. This result is great, and does make this practice worth it individually, even if not as a whole class. However, this practice did not prove statistically significant reduction in classroom interruptions, and my research was designed to see the impact on the classroom. In the classroom, there was not a large impact to behavior or to community except on a personal student level.

### **Limitations**

There are a lot of other things going on that could have affected the results in this way and not how I had expected. The biggest one probably would be the time of year and testing. This study was conducted before winter break, the end of the second quarter. This can be a really hard time for students to remain calm and ready to learn. Not to mention they were getting ready for their second round of testing. There are other limitations that could have affected my results, such as student absences, and weather days. There were a few students, for example Student 21, that were absent on days we did power poses and on survey/interview days. Student 21 had in-school suspension at least four days in the four

weeks, not to mention how many students come in late every day. Also, the weather often affected these students with cancellations and delays, and a change in routine always affects the students differently. Finally, there are statistical limitations on the scales and the surveys themselves. When you ask someone, especially young students to qualify a feeling they have, they may not be able to do so accurately, or may want to give a certain answer to make themselves feel better or look a certain way, even though the survey is anonymous.

### **Implications**

There is one major implication of this study, and that is that I will continue to practice yoga, or power poses and breathing, with students three times a week. I can make this optional, so that students can participate when they want. If they love ‘desk puppy’ but hate ‘touch toes’, they can only participate when they are interested. If I were to continue, or try again, I would keep the same schedule, three times a week, but on a regular, four-week period. Weather is an issue I will never be able to work around, so I know that’s not something I can out-schedule. I would also either change observations to something that’s more relevant, or find some other quantity that represents classroom interruptions. I could always look at Class Dojo, our classroom management system, and see which students are losing points and what they are losing them for.

I learned a lot about my students through this practice. Namely, they will try anything. The ability to try something that none of them have done before, practice and incorporate it into their daily lives, is a great skill and I am really proud of these kids. Some kids even asked me on ‘off’ days if we were going to practice that day, and were disappointed when it wasn’t in the schedule. I also learned that I really enjoy practicing yoga, and have incorporated it heavily into my own life. Stretching and breathing, along with mindfulness, are really vital concepts to holistic health. I plan on continuing this practice on an optional basis, and I hope a few students enjoy it and feel the benefits of holistic health.

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### Appendix A

Last letter in first name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last letter in last name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Pre-Survey

1. How **important** do you feel in the classroom? Circle your answer 1-5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Somewhat	<b>A little</b>	<b>A lot</b>	Extremely

2. How angry do you feel on a normal day? Circle your answer 1-5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Somewhat	A little	A lot	Extremely

3. How fidgety do you feel on a normal day? Circle your answer 1-5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Somewhat	A little	A lot	Extremely

4. How focused **and on-task** are you normally during class time? Circle your answer 1-5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Somewhat	A little	A lot	Extremely

5. How nervous or anxious do you feel during class time? Circle your answer 1-5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Somewhat	A little	A lot	Extremely

6. How good of a student do you feel that you are? Circle your answer 1-5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Somewhat	A little	A lot	Extremely



7. Are you learning ways to take care of yourself in this classroom? Circle yes or no.

Yes

No

8. Do you feel like your teachers care about you? Why or why not? (2 sentences).

9. Do you feel calm and ready to learn every day? Why or why not? (2 sentences).

**Appendix B**

Last letter in first name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last letter in last name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Post-Survey**

1. How important do you feel in the classroom? Circle your answer 1-5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Somewhat	A little	A lot	Extremely

2. How angry do you feel on a normal day? Circle your answer 1-5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Somewhat	A little	A lot	Extremely

3. How fidgety do you feel on a normal day? Circle your answer 1-5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Somewhat	A little	A lot	Extremely

4. How focused and on-task are you normally during class time? Circle your answer 1-5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Somewhat	A little	A lot	Extremely

5. How nervous or anxious do you feel during class time? Circle your answer 1-5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Somewhat	A little	A lot	Extremely

6. How good of a student do you feel that you are? Circle your answer 1-5.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Somewhat	A little	A lot	Extremely

7. Are you learning ways to take care of yourself in this classroom? Circle yes or no.

Yes

No

8. Do you feel like your teachers care about you? Why or why not? (2 sentences).

9. Do you feel calm and ready to learn every day? Why or why not? (2 sentences).

10. Did you enjoy practicing power poses? Explain your answer in 2 sentences.

11. Would you want to continue practicing power poses in the classroom? Explain your answer in 2 sentences.