

# Tai Chi

Action Schools! BC



 classroom

 Gymnasium

 outdoors

K - 3

Healthy Minds

Tai chi is an ancient martial art, now practised worldwide for its health benefits. Many people practise the art of tai chi as a way of developing good posture and promoting skeletal and muscular health, as well as focusing and calming the mind.

**HEALTH  
COMPONENTS  
OF FITNESS**

ENDURANCE  
FLEXIBILITY  
STRENGTH

BALANCING

**FUNDAMENTAL  
MOVEMENT  
SKILLS**

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS



### BIG IDEAS

- Daily physical activity helps us develop movement skills and physical literacy, and is an important part of healthy living (K-1).
- Good health comprises physical, mental, and emotional well-being (K-1).
- Learning how to participate and move our bodies in different physical activities helps us develop physical literacy (2).
- Our physical, emotional, and mental health are interconnected (2-3).
- Movement skills and strategies help us learn how to participate in different types of physical activity (3).

### CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES:

- Develop and demonstrate a variety of fundamental movement skills in a variety of physical activities and environments.
- Describe the body's reaction to participating in physical activity in a variety of environments (K-1).
- Identify and describe opportunities to be physically active at school, at home, and in the community (K-2).
- Identify and describe opportunities for and potential challenges to being physically active at school, at home, and in the community (3).
- Identify and describe practices that promote mental well-being (K-1).
- Identify and apply strategies that promote mental well-being (2-3).

## CONTENT

- Proper technique for fundamental movement skills, including non-locomotor, locomotor, and manipulative skills.
- How to participate in different types of physical activities, including individual and dual activities, rhythmic activities, and games.
- Effects of different activities on the body (1).
- Effects of physical activity on the body (2).
- Practices that promote health and well-being.



## FIRST PEOPLE'S PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.

## COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL HEALTH CONNECTIONS



## RELATIONSHIPS AND ENVIRONMENTS

- Use an outdoor area such as a field or park with trees to contribute to a sense of calm.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Tai chi is a great way for students to engage in physical activity that will also allow them to calm the mind, re-focus their thoughts, and develop movement skills.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Invite a community specialist to teach tai chi to your students.

## OUR SCHOOL POLICIES

- Fill out field trip forms or waivers for students to leave the school grounds and/or work with a community specialist.

## EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES



- DVD and music player
- Music: Calm, relaxing music, such as a yoga CD
- Tai chi resources, DVDs or YouTube videos (e.g., [Top 10 Tai Chi Moves for Beginners](#))

## IMPLEMENTATION



- Review/watch DVDs that demonstrate tai chi sequences alone or with students at first.
- Learn and perform the same sequence (8-Step Standing Sequence, following page), so it improves over time.
- Use student leaders to create and lead a sequence with younger students or in class with peers.
- Use calm relaxing music (a Yoga CD); set volume low.
- Breathe out on the push, and in on the pull (yin and yang).
- The flow of energy in a person's body is called qi (pronounced jee).
- Use imagery to help with the movements.
- Have students reflect on and explain how they felt during and after participating in tai chi (e.g. Did they feel calm and relaxed, did they have confidence in themselves to do the movements, how did their body feel during the activity, etc.).
- Have students explain how tai chi could influence their health and that of their peers and/or family members (e.g. It could help promote flexibility to reduce injuries, it can help lower stress levels, it can allow people to participate together in physical activity, etc.).

## ACTION TIPS

- Ensure teacher is present and can observe students at all times during the activity.
- Perform tai chi on a regular basis integrating into your class schedule, in the gymnasium or outdoors.
- Perform tai chi before intense periods of concentration or stressful times for students.

## SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- Ensure students warm up before the activity and cool down and stretch afterwards.
- Ensure surfaces being used are free from clutter or objects that might cause students to trip or slip on.
- Ensure students have enough space to move in without hitting another student or wall.

## EXTENSION OF LEARNING

- Brainstorm with students where and when (e.g., after school at a community venue, in their home, etc.) they can do this activity outside of school and who they might be able to do it with (e.g., family, friends, etc.).

# Tai Chi

## 8-Step Standing Sequence

Flow through the steps slowly with emphasis on precise movement, proper alignment, calm breathing in and out, keeping head up and eyes focused and soft. Use imagery to help to flow like water through the poses. Repeat on each side.



Stand upright, hands on waist, feet hip-width apart, knees slightly bent

**IMAGINE:** still and sturdy like a tree



Shift weight onto left foot, touch right toe on floor out in front

**IMAGINE:** silent and soft like a cat



Raise right knee up to waist height, balance on left leg, stretch head upwards

**IMAGINE:** balanced and tall like a stork



Keep feet together, circle arms out to sides and down beside the body, palms down

**IMAGINE:** slow and steady like the setting sun

Keep weight on left, place right heel back down on the floor in front of right shoulder

**IMAGINE:** firm and sure like a gymnast



Move right foot to side, bend knees in a wide crouch (sumo), weight on both feet

**IMAGINE:** strong and centred like a bear

Bring right foot to meet left foot, raise arms out to sides and up to the sky, palms up

**IMAGINE:** smooth and flowing like the rising sun

Pivot both feet to the right, reach both hands, palms up, to right, flow through centre and repeat other side

**IMAGINE:** graceful and soft like ribbons in the wind

