



## Brain Lesson-Prefrontal Cortex

### Wise Owl

**Why we like it:** We enjoy teaching students about their brain and how to be in charge of it. When kids understand how their brain works and that they can be in charge of it, they are empowered to take responsibility for themselves. The Prefrontal Cortex is responsible for executive skills like focus and problem solving and general learning.

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Materials:** Wise Owl puppet, Ms. Elephante puppet, breathing ball, Guard Dog puppet, chime, **brain poster**, Guard Dog, glitter jar materials, **feelings chart**, **finding my calm poster**, brain puppets mindful coloring page, gel pens

**Lesson Activities:** Settle Your Glitter; Mindful Coloring; Read *Little Monkey Calms Down*

**FocusedKids Lesson Video:** [Settle Your Glitter Video Lesson](#)

#### VOCABULARY

Wise Owl, Prefrontal Cortex, calm, focus, breathing ball, deep breaths, slow, relaxed, thinking, problem-solving

#### MAKE IT A HABIT

- Catch kids using Wise Owl.
- “I see Judy is using her Wise Owl to get ready for math.”
- “I see Jose is using his wise owl to get everything put away and ready to line up for lunch.”
- Bring out Wise Owl during times of focus, transition, and other times in the day when students should be getting focused, getting organized, being responsible, etc.

#### PRACTICE IT

- Make a Wise Owl puppet. Hold up Wise Owl when you see students showing executive functioning skills.
- Form class groups that could earn “Wise Owl” points. Every time kids use Wise Owl their group gets a point. 20 points could mean a brain celebration.
- Listen to the Chime.
- Use the breathing ball as a tool to guide deep breaths during a brain break.

#### SEND IT HOME

We learned about Wise Owl this week! Wise Owl helps us remember things, solve problems, and be flexible. Wise Owl is important for learning. Ask your kiddo how they have been using their wise owls. Make your own with the coloring page and popsicle stick sent home. Try to catch your kiddo using their wise owl at home and watch their problem-solving skills grow!





### CORE LESSON

#### Opening Brain Break

Start off with the chime. Hands on belly or other anchor spot (heart, lap, knees). Listen to the chime consecutively from one time to three times depending on the student's needs for getting regulated. See chime lesson in the *brain break* section. Use this short time to help students get their brains and bodies ready for learning. "Before we can learn about our brain, we have to get our brain ready."

#### What to Say

***A key part of this lesson is engaging the class by having the puppets do the talking. This can feel silly or uncomfortable at first but it is necessary for engaging the class and integrating the information.***

- Spend a few moments doing a short review of Guard Dog and Ms. Elephante.
- "Today we are going to learn about the third key player in our brain."
- Get Wise Owl puppet out and remind the kids that owls are very quiet and shy animals.
- Talk in a very calm and quiet voice.
- They like it when everyone around them is very still.
  
- This will engage the class with the Wise Owl puppet. You can walk around the class and let students pet Wise Owl's head if they are very calm and still. You can then begin to talk about Wise Owl's job in their brain using Wise Owl as the teacher.
- "I (Wise Owl) represent one of the key parts of your brain that you use every day."
- Make Wise Owl quiet, be very serious and calm. Have him be focused, and move its head around to take in everything.
- "My job is to be focused so you can do your best learning. I also help you solve problems, be responsible and all of the other important things you need to do to be smart."
- "Now you know my name- What is it?!" Kids say in a whisper voice "Wise Owl"
- "Scientists have a really special, really long word that they call me. Are you guys scientists? Because if you are, I better tell you my science name. Are you ready?"
- "Scientists call me the Prefrontal cortex. Repeat after me (5 times) 'pre (pause) frontal (pause) cortex.' My nickname is PFC. Repeat. My brain's job is to learn, solve problems, and help you understand what you are feeling. It's a big job since you will be learning for the rest of your life. I get bigger as you get older and grow up when you are 25 years old."
- "Well, Wise Owl, I'm not sure I can remember that big scientific name. Wise Owl, how do your scientist friends remember that big name?"
- *Have Wise Owl look at you for a long time...and you can say, What? It's a big name! and Wise Owl says,*





	<p>“Okay, it is tricky. There’s a secret chant. Are you ready for it? P-F-C (hold up fingers to count each letter), follow me (make Wise Owl look around)! I’ll make you smart( put a hand on your forehead)!”</p>
Lesson Activity	Settle Your Glitter
Closing Gratitude	<p>Create a closing routine with your class around gratitude. We know that when children practice thinking about what they are grateful for it wires their brains to be happier, calmer, and less stressed. See the gratitude section for more ideas or to expand on what we provide.</p> <p><a href="#">Gratitude for Students</a></p>

LESSON EXTENSIONS	
Brain Science	Your prefrontal cortex is 80 percent developed at age 3 and not fully developed until your mid-twenties! So you need a lot of support and experiences to help build this part of your brain.
Books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Your Fantastic Elastic Brain</a>, <a href="#">Your Brain</a>, <a href="#">Little Monkey Calms Down</a></li> </ul>
Websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <a href="https://momentousinstitute.org/">https://momentousinstitute.org/</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Focusedkids.org (<a href="https://focusedkids.org/what-you-need-to-know-old/kids-brains/">https://focusedkids.org/what-you-need-to-know-old/kids-brains/</a>)</li> </ul>





MAKE IT YOUR OWN!

