

Mindful Movement: The Yoga Flow Challenge with Nova

Learning objective: To understand the physical and mental benefits of yoga, identify key poses, and demonstrate an understanding of how movement and breathing improve physical health.

Nova the owl has been studying how humans use yoga to improve their flexibility, strength, and focus. Below is a series of yoga poses. Read the descriptions carefully and match them to the correct physical benefit. Then, complete the 'Greater Depth' challenge questions to test your scientific and creative reasoning.

Word bank: Flexibility · Core strength · Balance · Mindfulness · Respiration · Posture

1. The 'Tree Pose' requires you to stand on one leg while keeping your spine straight. Explain why this pose is effective for improving your physical balance and core stability. (2 marks)

2. Yoga encourages 'diaphragmatic breathing'. Justify why controlling your breath during movement helps to lower your heart rate after intense exercise. (2 marks)

3. Compare and contrast the physical requirements of the 'Downward Dog' (stretching the hamstrings and shoulders) with a high-intensity sport like football. Which muscle groups are used differently? (3 marks)

4. What might happen to your body's flexibility over time if you practised these yoga flows for 15 minutes every morning? Explain your reasoning. (2 marks)

5. If a yoga mat costs £12.50 and you buy one for yourself and one for a friend, how much change would you receive from a £30 note? (2 marks)

6. Design a new yoga pose named after a forest animal. Describe its shape and explain which part of the body it stretches. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a sketch of yourself performing your favourite yoga pose. Label the muscles that you can feel stretching (e.g., hamstrings, quadriceps, or shoulders).



Extension challenge: Research the history of yoga. Write a short paragraph explaining why it is considered a 'mind-body' exercise rather than just a physical workout. How does this link to the concept of 'mental wellbeing'?