

Yogi T: Animal Adventures!

Focus: Gross Motor Skills & Creative Arts - Introduction to Yoga

Age: 2.5 years old

Let's Get Started: Warm-up Wiggles (5 minutes)

Hello, T! Today, we're going on a special yoga adventure! But first, let's wake up our bodies!

- **Wiggle Fingers and Toes:** "Can you wiggle your tiny fingers? Now your tiny toes? Good job!"
- **Shoulder Shrugs:** "Let's lift our shoulders up to our ears like a surprised turtle! And down... Up! And down."
- **Arm Circles:** "Let's make big circles with our arms, like a windmill! Whee! Now small circles."
- **Gentle Head Nods:** "Nod your head yes, very gently. Now shake your head no, like you don't want any more broccoli! (Giggle)"

Yoga Adventure Time! (10-15 minutes)

We're going to pretend to be different animals and things from nature. Watch me, and then you try!

1. The Brave Tree (Tree Pose - simplified)

"Let's be a tall, strong tree! Stand up tall. Can you lift one foot just a little bit, like a root? Maybe you can put your hands together like branches reaching for the sun. Hold it... 1, 2, 3! Great tree, T!" (Help T with balance if needed, even just lifting a heel is great).

- Focus: Balance, standing tall.
- Creative: "What kind of tree are you? A big oak tree? A yummy apple tree?"

2. The Fluttering Butterfly (Butterfly Pose)

"Now let's sit down. Bring the bottoms of your feet together, like butterfly wings! Can you flap your 'wings' (knees) up and down? Flutter, flutter, little butterfly! Where are you flying today?"

- Focus: Hip opening, gentle movement.
- Creative: "Let's fly our butterfly to a flower!"

3. The Playful Puppy (Downward-Facing Dog - simplified as "Puppy Pose" or "Dog Stretch")

"Woof woof! Let's be a playful puppy! Put your hands on the floor, and your knees on the floor. Now lift your bottom up to the sky, like a puppy stretching! Wag your tail! Woof woof!" (Alternatively, a table top moving into cat/cow is also good).

- Focus: Stretching the back and legs.
- Creative: "What sound does our puppy make?"

4. The Sleepy Cat & Happy Cow (Cat-Cow Pose)

"Meow! Now let's be a sleepy cat. Stay on your hands and knees. Round your back up to the sky and look at your tummy, like a sleepy cat stretching. Meeeeeow. Now, let's be a happy cow! Drop your tummy down and look up to the sky! Moooooo! Let's do it again: Sleepy cat... Happy cow..."

- Focus: Spine flexibility, coordination.
- Creative: Animal sounds and movements.

Quiet Time: Flower Breathing (3-5 minutes)

Phew! That was a fun adventure! Now let's calm our bodies down with some special breathing.

- "Imagine you have a beautiful flower in your hand. Let's smell the flower: take a big sniff in through your nose (demonstrate a slow, deep breath in)."
- "Now, imagine you have a birthday candle. Let's blow out the candle: gently blow the air out through your mouth (demonstrate a slow, gentle breath out)."
- "Let's do it again. Smell the flower... (inhale)... Blow out the candle... (exhale)." Repeat 2-3 times. (Can use a real or imaginary feather/pinwheel to give a visual for blowing).

Cool Down & Hugs! (2-3 minutes)

"Great job being a yogi today, T! You were a wonderful tree, a beautiful butterfly, a playful puppy, and a stretchy cat!"

- **Gentle Rock:** (If T is receptive) Sit together and gently rock side to side or sing a calming song.
- **Big Hug:** "Give yourself a big hug for doing such a great job! And a big hug for me!"

Clean Up & Transition

Roll up our yoga mat together (if using one). "All done yoga! What adventure should we go on next?"

Notes for the Grown-Up:

- **Keep it Playful:** The goal is fun and exploration, not perfect poses. Praise all attempts!
- **Short & Sweet:** Toddlers have short attention spans. Keep the active yoga part to 10-15 minutes.
- **Follow T's Lead:** If T isn't interested in a pose, skip it or try a different animal. If T wants to repeat a pose, go for it!
- **Safety First:** Ensure a safe, clear space. Supervise closely.
- **Model Enthusiasm:** Your excitement will be contagious!
- **Assessment:** Observe T's participation, attempts at poses, and signs of enjoyment. Notice which movements T seems to favor or find challenging – this can inform future activities.