Progressive muscle relaxation is a simple technique that can be used to reduce stress and increase focus. Reiterate the idea that it is important for us to learn to calm ourselves, and to focus. University of Arizona basketball coach Joseph Blair will lead you and the students through the exercise on the video, or you or a student can lead the activity by following the script below.

**Script:**

**Progressive relaxation demonstration:**
- Now we're going to use an activity to get our bodies and minds ready to focus. Again, we'll close our eyes, but this time we'll be breathing AND squeezing and relaxing our muscles.
- First, we'll practice with our hands.
- Inhale deeply, then tense your hands by squeezing them as tightly as you can. Try to hold the muscle for about 5 seconds and make sure you really feel the tightness. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
- Now open your hands and breathe out. Let the muscles become completely loose and relaxed. Notice the difference between the feelings of “tension” and “relaxation” in your muscles.
- Do you get the idea? I’ll lead you through the exercise from your head to your toes.

**Progressive relaxation:**
- Sit comfortably and close your eyes. We'll start with our face and work down.
- Face: Inhale deeply, then tense your face by squeezing it as tightly as you can. Make a funny face and really feel the tightness. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Now release your face and breathe out. Let the muscles become completely loose and relaxed.
- Shoulders – Shrug your shoulders up to your ears and hold – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Relax.
- Upper arms – Bend your elbows. Flex your biceps for five – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Relax. Feel the tension leave your arms.
- Forearms – Extend your arms out against an invisible wall and push forward with your hands, push – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Relax.
- Hands – Extend your arms in front of you. Clench your fists tightly and squeeze – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Relax. Feel the warmth and calmness in your hands.
- Back – Arch your back for five seconds – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Relax. Feel the anxiety and tension disappearing.
- Stomach – Tighten your stomach muscles, we call those ‘abs’, for five – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Relax.
- Glutes – Tighten your hip muscles and glutes (yes, that’s your rear end) for five seconds – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Relax.
- Thighs – Tighten your thigh muscles by pressing your legs together as tightly as you can. Hold – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Relax.
- Feet – Bend your ankles toward your body as far as you can – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Relax.
- Toes – Curl your toes as tightly as you can and squeeze for five seconds – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Relax.
- Now open your eyes and enjoy how relaxed your body and mind feel.