Script: Eating Awareness Exercise

Guide your students in an exercise to expand eating awareness. You can use the same foods you brought in for the six tastes exercise. Give one sample of food to each student. Here is a script you can follow:

> We are going to do an exercise that puts into practice the principles we've learned. Please make sure you have a piece of food in front of you. For the next few minutes we are going to do an exercise, which calls for your one-pointed attention on the act of eating.
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> Please close your eyes. Acknowledge in your heart that eating is a sacred act. In order to sustain our lives, we must take something each day from outside ourselves and bring it inside, making it a part of us for a while. Starting each meal with a moment of silence reminds us of this remarkable alchemical process.
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> Please open your eyes now and look at your food. Notice its color, its shape, its texture. What do you think the food will taste like? Will it be sour? Sweet? Will it be crunchy or soft? Let your eyes anticipate the taste of the food and notice how your body responds. Notice your desire to eat the food. Are you physically hungry? Is your mouth watering? Is your body ready to accept this food?
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> Bring the food to your lips. Touch your lips with it. Smell the aroma of the food. Now gently allow your teeth and lips to bite into the food. Delight in its textures as it enters your mouth. What is the first flavor you can detect? Are there any other flavors hiding underneath that flavor?
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> Listen to the sound of your chewing. Feel the sensation of your saliva mixing with the food, making it a part of you. Close your eyes and experience the full range of sensory input. As you swallow the food, try to follow it with your mind as it passes down the back of your throat into your stomach. How far can you follow it down?
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> Do you feel full after having swallowed that bite? Is there a desire for another bite? Go ahead. We will continue eating in this way for a few minutes.
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> *[Wait for a couple of minutes.]*
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> What did you notice?