

Mindfulness

activities and ideas

Mindfulness is focusing on and being in the present moment. Evidence suggests it can alleviate anxiety and has long term benefits. Here are just a few activities and some websites that can help too! Prepare the students especially when creating a relaxed and controlled environment.

Raisin/sweet meditation:

Give children the fruit and some way to record thoughts. Make sure they are clear they eat when you tell them and explain the need for a peaceful mood.

***Holding/touching:** Hold the sweet in your hand – be curious, focus on what it feels and looks like. Do they feel the weight of it? What is the texture? How does it feel in your fingers?*

***Seeing:** Ask the students what they really see, what does it look like? Does this look usual? Does it compare to other things they see?*

***Smelling:** Ask them to hold by their nose, does it have a smell? Does it smell strongly?*

***Placing:** Ask them to slowly place in mouths. Without chewing, notice what the tongue does, what sensations do they have and ow does this object feel in their mouth.*

***Chewing/ swallowing:** Ask that they take their time, bite into it. Again, ask what does it feel like? Ask they notice any tastes, notice any intention to swallow. How does it feel going down?*

***After-effects:** Ask they think about how this all felt. How this compares and how often they notice the amazingness of eating!*

Active mindfulness is a perfect starter or end of day activity for children and will have the added benefit of reducing any anxiety.

Gratitude

Focusing on what we are grateful helps us in our mindfulness. Pick a time specific and recent time for example yesterday or the weekend.

Think of 5 topics to prompt, for example someone who helped you and you are grateful...something, a part of your body...encourage them to think what makes them grateful and how that feels.

You could set up a gratitude jar in class or get students to attach gratitude notes to a tree, to collect and share.

You could use the alphabet as an additional prompt to vary topics.



Jumping to feel my heart pumping

Explain mindfulness and how paying attention to our bodies helps us focus on the present and how amazing we and it is. This would be a good outdoor activity too!

Get students to jump up and down counting to 20.

Get students to put their palm on their heart.

Suggest they put no effort in their breathing, breathe how they need to.

Let them feel their hearts for a count of 20. Reflect as a class.

Get your students to think about when they can be mindful...ie when practicing sport, cooking...playing. Encourage them that mindfulness is being present not silent, focusing your mind not necessarily emptying it and it is fun.

3/5 Senses

Ask students to take five slow breaths in through the nose and out - taking longer - through the mouth. Each sense needs at least 20/40 seconds.

What are three things you can hear?

What are three things you can see?

What are three things you can feel?

Add more detail to each as you explain. Explore and reflect as whole group

Reflections can explore how the sounds made you feel. How the wind felt on your face...

Links:

Childline mindful breathing activity and video:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/toolbox/calm-zone/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-DG2ZYEFIA>

Frog breathing speech - YouTube book:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXNoIyQEDt4> - child reading book

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4IUIK4iWV9Q> - adult reading book

Info: Oxford mindfulness centre - evidence-based information and further links:

<https://www.oxfordmindfulness.org/>

Book: Ultimate Mindfulness Book - Christian Bergstrom

Or try a mindful google yourself

