

Mindfulness Lesson – Mindful Me

Materials/Preparation:

Children will have a beginning understanding of what it means to be mindful, as well as an understanding of the way the different parts of the brain impact their emotions and ability to make sound decisions. The children will also have had previous lessons and experiences with visualization.

Focus:

The focus of the lesson is helping children to understand that they can make mindful choices in social settings.

Connection:

This lesson will connect with previous lessons on the parts of the brain, on what it means to be mindful, and on strategies children can use to calm themselves and pause before reacting, such as breathing techniques.

Objective:

The objective is to help children bridge the lessons in the classroom to everyday situations they encounter during recess and/or outside of school.

Introduce, Model, Set the Stage

Review some of what they have learned about mindfulness so far, including the lesson on the various parts of our brain that impact our ability to be mindful and make sound decisions. Have the children turn and talk to their partner and practice using their fists to model this (from a previous lesson). Ask the children to share ways in which our breathing techniques and mindfulness strategies have helped us in the classroom so far (from previous lessons).

Teaching Point:

You have learned how to use some of our mindfulness strategies in the classroom. Now it is time to think about how these strategies can help you and others on the playground.

Why is this important?

The children need to learn to generalize what they have learned so that they can understand how they can independently use the tools they have acquired through the previous mindfulness lessons.

Active Engagement:

Have the children think about the rules we have for our playground and share a few out loud with the class. Have them choose one rule in their minds and think about why that rule is important. Ask them to turn and talk to their partners and ask each child to share the rule s/he has picked and why s/he thinks it's important.

Have students "put their mindful bodies on." Ask them to close their eyes and visualize the following scenario: "You are on the dinosaur playground and you are waiting for a turn to climb onto the dinosaur's back and walk across it. Just as it is your turn, another child approaches the dinosaur from

the other end and begins to come toward you, using the bottom part of the dinosaur's back as monkey bars. (Pause) Visualize what the 'unmindful you' would do in this situation. (Pause) Visualize the other child reacting to your actions or words. (Pause) Now visualize what might happen next and what the possible consequences might be. (Pause) Turn and talk to your partner about your visualization."

"Now think back to original scenario at the dinosaur. (Pause and remind them of the original scenario) Visualize that child starting to use the monkey bars again. Now visualize what the 'mindful you' would do in this situation. (Pause) Visualize the other child reacting to your actions or words (Pause). Now visualize what might happen next and what the possible consequences might be (Pause). Keep your eyes closed and savor that good feeling from being the mindful you. What do you notice about how your body feels?"

"Turn and talk to your partner. Share your 'mindful you' visualization."

Reflection/Dialogue:

Have some students share with the class so that they can hear different mindful responses. Tell the students that after recess, we will have time to reflect on real scenarios that came up at recess that day. Tell them how much you are looking forward to hearing about some of the mindful decisions they make and what the consequences of those actions/decisions were. Also tell them to try to be mindful of what is happening around them so that they may notice some positive, mindful actions others are making as well.

Journal Prompts/Follow Up

As a follow-up, use the children's journals to continue this work. Have them write "Mindful Me" on the left hand page and "Unmindful Me" on the opposite page. Read them a scenario and have them use their visualization techniques to "record" their mindful and unmindful reactions into their journal. They may do this with writing or illustrations or a combination of the two.

References:

"Mindful Awareness." *The MindUp Curriculum: Brain-focused Strategies for Learning-and Living: Grades Pre-K-2*. New York, NY: Scholastic, 2011. 34-40. Print.

Teacher Reflection:

My plan is to revisit this lesson and my hope is that the message in it will help to foster more positive interactions on the playground and beyond. I am hopeful that the children will consider their "mindful me" in times of confusion and/or conflict.

Mindfulness Lesson – Gratitude Stones

Materials/Preparation: Children will have already created a class “Gratitude Tree” in a previous lesson, which would have leaves on it representing the many people we are grateful for in our lives. They will also already have had a lesson and practice in playing “memory movies” in their minds. For this lesson, we will need about 25 smooth small stones.	Focus: The focus is to help children recognize and reflect on the moments from their day that bring them a feeling of gratitude.
Connection: This lesson will connect with previous lessons on mindfulness, including lessons on the parts of our brains that influence our emotions, lessons on optimism/pessimism, and lessons on thankfulness/gratitude, including the creation of our “Gratitude Tree.”	
Objective: The objective is to help children focus on happy memories and positive thoughts in order to gain and maintain a calm, content perspective.	Introduce, Model, Set the Stage Review our lesson on creating a Gratitude Tree. Read <u>Feeling Thankful</u> , by Shelley Rotner and Sheila Kelly. Have the children turn and talk about the different kinds of things mentioned in the book, other than just people. What does this make them think about from their own lives? Show the children the jar of “Gratitude Stones.”
Teaching Point: Our days are filled with many happy moments. Taking the time to reflect on the positive moments and express gratitude for them will help us feel calm and content.	
Why is this important? Research has shown that gratitude has positive effects on the brain and makes the brain more ready to learn. It also helps cultivate empathy and calm the body.	

Active Engagement:

Pass a gratitude stone out to each child. Ask them to “put their mindful bodies on” as they hold the stone in their hands. Ask them to rub the stone gently with their fingers. What do they notice about it? Ask them to take deep breaths as they continue to hold and rub their stone. Now ask them to think of a happy memory from the day and try to play that “memory movie” in their mind. Ask them to notice how their bodies feel as they replay the memory movie in their minds. After a moment or two, tell the children to be grateful for that memory and to try to bring the good feelings they had during that moment back to the present moment with them. Have them turn and talk to their partners about how they feel, what they noticed about their bodies during this reflection, and why they think that memory was the one their mind focused on.

Reflection/Dialogue:

Ask some children to share their experience with the class. Tell the children that that jar of gratitude stones will remain in the classroom (perhaps in the Peace Corner). Encourage them to use the stones to help them think of the moments they feel gratitude for, particularly to calm themselves in moments of stress.

Journal Prompts/Follow Up

The following day, form a circle on the rug and teach the children about the “Gratitude Circle.” Use a gratitude stone for this activity. Pass the stone around in the circle and each child may share a moment/person/thing s/he feels gratitude for in that moment. Part of this lesson will be in encouraging children to listen to others in an effort to better understand the concept of gratitude, and to further deepen their appreciation of positive experiences.

References:

“Taking Action Mindfully.” *The MindUp Curriculum: Brain-focused Strategies for Learning and Living: Grades Pre-K-2*. New York, NY: Scholastic, 2011. 126-135. Print.

Teacher Reflection:

I am hopeful this lesson will serve as a foundation for a regular practice of a gratitude circle. I am also hopeful that the jar of gratitude stones will serve as a calming mechanism for some children.

Possible Sequence of Lessons in Mindfulness

- ° Basic lessons on the parts of the brain that influence our emotions, including the fist analogy and the clarity bottle
- ° What does it mean to be mindful?
- ° The Core Practice: Anchor Breath
- ° Breathing strategies – belly breaths and other calming breaths – encourage the children to create new ones over time
- ° Using our senses: Mindful Listening
- ° Naming Emotions
- ° Mindful Movement
- ° Mindful Me/Unmindful Me: Making good decisions that will have a positive effect on yourself and others.
- ° Peace Corner: What is its purpose? What can we do there?
- ° Using our senses: Mindful Eating
- ° Using our senses: Mindful Seeing
- ° Lessons on optimism/pessimism and gratitude:
 - ° Gratitude Tree, Gratitude Stones, and a Gratitude Circle
- ° Acts of kindness: how our mindful behavior can have a positive impact on others around us
- ° Reflections on how our mindful behavior can be extended to help the world beyond our classroom and school

References:

The MindUp Curriculum: Brain-focused Strategies for Learning and Living: Grades Pre-K-2. New York, NY: Scholastic, 2011. Print.

Lantieri, Linda, and Daniel Goleman. "Chapter 3: Exercises to Calm the Body and Focus the Mind for Five- to Seven-Year-Olds." *Building Emotional Intelligence: Techniques to Cultivate Inner Strength in Children.* Boulder, CO: Sounds True, 2008. 39-46. Print.

Sequence of Major Lessons to Use in Class

Alyssa Mascaretti

1. Introduction to The Brain
2. What is Mindfulness?
3. Introduction to Mindful Breathing
4. Introduction to Mindful Listening
5. Mind/Body Movement for Settling
6. Mindful Seeing (Focusing on an object)
7. Body Scan
8. Mindful Walking
9. Gratitude Meditation
10. Kindness Meditation
11. Equanimity Meditation
12. Compassion Meditation

Each of these lessons can be compromised of many short mini-lessons to begin the social studies class. Each mindful practice/mini-lesson will be about 5 minutes or less. They will be gradually introduced throughout the school year and repeated often.

Mindfulness Mini-Lesson Planning Sheet #1

Alyssa Mascaretti

Materials/Preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Mind Up" Chapter 1 • Glitter Jar • Components of the Brain Poster 	Focus: How do our brains think and process information? Mini-Lesson**
Connection: In order for students to have an understanding of mindfulness, they need to understand the basic parts of the brain and how the brain works. This lesson provides students with a foundation to begin a mindful practice.	
Objective: Students will identify three parts of the brain and explain what each part of the brain is responsible for: the amygdala, the hippocampus, and the prefrontal cortex on the diagram of the brain. Students will discuss how the three main parts of the brain work together in decision making.	Introduce, Model, Set the Stage <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start class by telling students that today we will learn about the different parts of the brain to understand how our brains think, learn, and respond to stress. 2. MODEL: Make a model to show how the brain processes information under stress. Bring in "Glitter Jar" made in Mindfulness Training to demonstrate the way to amygdala on alert scatters information. Shake the bottle and mix up the solution. Ask students how the glitter jar may represent the human brain. Explain to students that eventually, all of their thinking (the glitter) will end up flowing in a clear direction to the PFC for thoughtful decision making.
Teaching Point: Today we are going to learn about how the brain works! Understanding how the brain works will show us how our brains think and learn. If we understand how the brain processes information we can work on reacting differently under stress to make better decisions.	
Why is this important? Our brain can serve as a "map" for showing us how we learn and why we act in a certain way. Neuroscience helps to explain how we can become better thinkers and both mentally and physically healthier. "Learning about the parts of the brain helps students understand how their brains respond to stress and prepares them for creating a calm mindset for thoughtful decision-making." Pg 27	

Mindfulness Mini-Lesson Planning Sheet #2

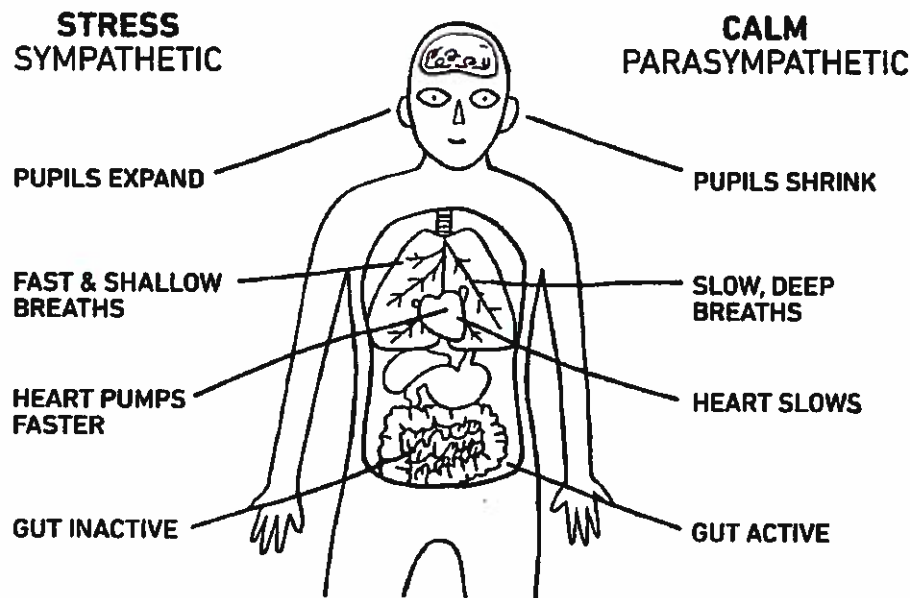
Alyssa Mascaretti

Materials/Preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mind Up Grades 6-8 Text 	Focus: <p>What is mindfulness? How can we begin to use mindful breathing to manage stress?</p>
Connection: <p>The previous lesson taught students how the parts of the brain work, and how by managing stress they will have more success with reading, writing, comprehension, and critical thinking. This mini-lesson is designed to build on that foundation and teach children a basic mindful practice: breathing.</p>	
Objective: <p>Students will be able to define and explain what mindfulness is and explain how it can help them be more resilient and focused in the classroom.</p>	Introduce, Model, Set the Stage <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin class with the question, "Has anyone ever heard of mindfulness?" Discuss as a class. 2. Transition to a close reading activity. Each student will have a copy of the "What is Mindfulness" worksheet. 3. Students will annotate and talk to the text as they are reading. This is an introduction to mindfulness and a group discussion will follow. 4. Discussion Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might you mindful thinking and breathing help in your life? • Why should be practice mindfulness in the classroom? • What are some other places you may want to try this? •
Teaching Point: <p>Today we will explore what it means to be mindful and learn the basics of mindful breathing.</p>	
Why is this important? <p>Beginning a mindfulness practice allows students to investigate/figure out what is going on in their head at any given time. Mindful practice will allow students to create a sense of peace for themselves and others.</p>	
Active Engagement: Introduction to Mindful Breathing (5 minutes) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practice using breath to build focus with students. Relaxing breath may help when your anxious or just want to settle. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model and discuss a mindful sitting position. Hands should be resting on thighs, feet on the floor, back up straight, eyes may be closed. • Teacher script: "Lets see what happens when we notice what we can about our breathing. Put your hand on your belly. Take a nice deep breath and see what 	

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you think. We can actually change the circuitry of the brain to help us be more peaceful and compassionate, simply by directing our thoughts and imaginations. Just like a bodybuilder lifting weights to build muscle, the more you think positive thoughts, the stronger the part of your brain that allows you to experience positive feelings will become.

Stress and the Body



Many of the body's functions work automatically, like breathing, blood pressure and digestion. These functions are controlled by the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS). The ANS is divided into two branches: the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS) - the "fight or flight" response during stress, intense activity, and emergencies, and the Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS) - the "rest and digest", or calming response.

The SNS or "fight or flight" is responsible for what happens to your body in response to very stressful situation. Adrenaline circulates through the blood, affecting every organ. Your heart pumps faster, blood pressure rises, breathing becomes faster and more shallow, pupils expand, and your muscles tighten. The SNS is your body's natural response during emergencies, but often times it is triggered during everyday stress, and when this happens it can make us feel unhealthy.

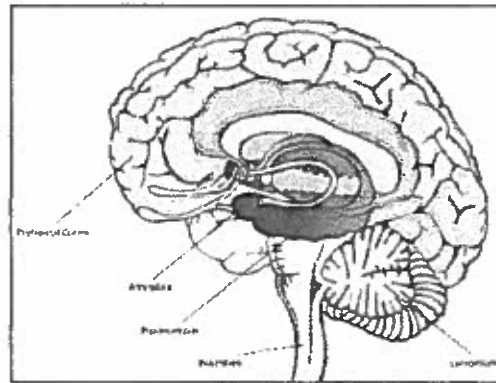
When we practice mindfulness and meditation and focus on deep relaxed breaths, we can turn off the SNS and turn on our Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS), also known as "rest and digest", which calms us down and helps us to relax. When the PNS is activated, your heart rate drops, blood pressure falls, breathing slows and deepens, pupils shrink, and muscles relax. This promotes good digestion, supports your immune system and just makes you feel good all over.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Introduction to Mindfulness in the Social Studies Classroom

How does the Brain Work??



There are two main parts of the brain:

1. The Limbic System- controls emotions and motivations from deep inside the brain.

Amygdala: The part of the brain that reacts to fear, danger, and threat. This part of the brain regulates our emotional state by acting as our brain's "security guard."

- If you are in a **positive** emotional state, the amygdala sends incoming information on to the conscious, thinking, reasoning brain.
- When you are in a **negative** emotional state the amygdala prevents the input from passing along, and blocks higher level thinking and reasoned judgment.
- In the negative emotional state the incoming stimuli is left for the amygdala to process and there is an automatic response of **fight, flight, or freeze**.

Hippocampus: This part of the brain is in the central brain area behind your ears in the temporal lobes. The hippocampus assists in managing our response to fear and threats, and is a strong vault of memory and learning.

If this part of the brain is under stress, it will be very difficult for information to pass to our Prefrontal Cortex!!

2. The Prefrontal Cortex- the learning, reasoning, and thinking center of the brain. SEL in Mathematics Districtwide Summer Course Projects allows us to learn to read, write, compute, analyze, predict, comprehend, and interpret.

happens. Close your eyes and put all of your attention on as much as you can about your breathing. Try to feel calm and feel grounded. Your breath is the anchor for your mind. An anchor pulls a boat to the center. So when your mind begins to wander have your mind come back to your breath. " Breathe in for the count of four.. hold for the count of seven.. and breathe out for the count of eight."

- Model, practice, and repeat with students.

2. Group Discussion: "What do you feel like?" "Was it hard?" "Was it easy?" "What did you notice?" "How did you feel?"

Conclusion:

Explain to students that this is a mindfulness practice and some days it will be easy and other days it may be hard. Continue with explaining that there is no "doing it right or wrong."

Follow Up:

Repetitions of mindful practices are essential. Before our class moves on to another mindful practice will work on the basic mindful breathing each day for about a week. The mindful breathing exercise will be a routine way of beginning class and settling for the 55 minute class period ahead.

References:

The MindUp Curriculum Grades 6-8 ISBN: 0-545-26714-5
Stop, Breathe, and Think iPad App by "Tools for Peace"

What to Expect:

- All sorts of things come up when you practice mindfulness- thoughts, feelings, sounds, and physical sensations.
- Sometimes it can feel uncomfortable, other times it goes really smoothly and feels great.
- Don't worry- its all part of the experience. The point is to notice and observe what's going on with an open mind, and to learn not to get hung up on anything in particular. If you feel stuck, just bring your attention to something neutral, like your breathing.



Why Should I Try It?

"Research has proven that mindfulness training integrates the brain and strengthens the important executive functions that support emotional and social intelligence as well as academic success." -Daniel J. Siegel, M.D. & Clinical Professor, Author of Mindsight and forthcoming Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain.

Studies have demonstrated the many positive side effects of kindness and compassion:

- Kindness makes us happier - acts of kindness cause elevated levels of dopamine in the brain which creates a natural high, often referred to as 'Helper's High'.
- Kindness makes us healthier and is good for our hearts - the emotional warmth associated with kindness produces the hormone, oxytocin, in the brain and throughout the body. Oxytocin causes the release of a chemical called nitric oxide, which expands the blood vessels and reduces blood pressure.
- Kindness keeps us young - Kindness and compassion reduces inflammation in the body. Oxytocin reduces levels of free radicals and inflammation in the cardiovascular system and so slows ageing at source.
- Kindness creates better relationships - when we are kind to each other we feel a connection and new relationships are forged, and existing ones are strengthened.
- Kindness is contagious - when we're kind we inspire others to be kind and studies show that it actually creates a ripple effect that spreads outwards to our friends' friends' friends — to 3-degrees of separation.

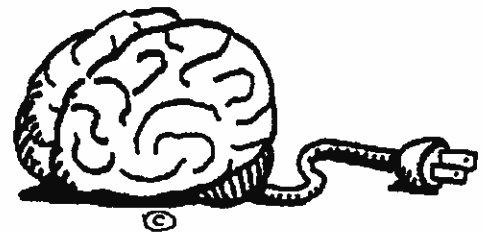


How does it work?

Thoughts and the Brain

You can rewire your brain just by meditating because our brains change based on how they are used. Every time you

have a thought, neurons connect like little impulses across the map of your brain. When these neurons connect, your brain grows thicker and stronger in certain places based on the thoughts



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Active Engagement:

- **Class Discussion:** "Think of a time when you felt stressed out and your mind looked like the Glitter Jar. What helped you think clearly and focus?"
- **How Does the Brain Work? Worksheet.** Students will read about how their brain works and teacher will demonstrate with hands how the brain reacts under stress. Class discussion will follow.

Conclusion:

To summarize the lesson, students will explain why regulating their emotions will lead to academic success.

Follow Up:

Next lesson we will learn and practice mindfulness strategies to regulate our emotions to ensure information is sent from the Amygdala and Hippocampus to the Prefrontal Cortex and we are not stuck in the "fight, flight, or freeze" modes.

References:

The MindUp Curriculum Grades 6-8 ISBN: 0-545-26714-5

Potential Sequence of Mindfulness Lessons

- Brain Science
- Mindful/Unmindful Self
- Core Practice: Anchor Breath
- Peace Corner
- Playing Mindfulness – Different types of breaths
- Mindful Listening
- Council Practice – Naming emotions
- Heartful Phrases
- Mindful Movement
- Setting Intentions
- Mindful Eating
- Mindful Seeing
- Practicing Distraction (The Distractor Game)
- Generating Gratitude
- Heartfulness Sent Out

References

The MindUp Curriculum: Brain-focused Strategies for Learning-and Living: Grades Pre-K-2. New York, NY: Scholastic, 2011. Print.

Lantieri, Linda, and Daniel Goleman. "Chapter 3: Exercises to Calm the Body and Focus the Mind for Five- to Seven-Year-Olds." *Building Emotional Intelligence: Techniques to Cultivate Inner Strength in Children.* Boulder, CO: Sounds True, 2008. 39-46. Print.

Rechtschaffen, Daniel. "Part IV: Mindful Education Curriculum." *The Way of Mindful Education: Cultivating Well-being in Teachers and Students.* New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 2014. Print.

Active Engagement:

The Amygdala is kind of like a police officer. It's ALWAYS looking out for you... checking that your body and feelings are safe. It sounds the alarm when it thinks things are not going well. This is the part of the brain that reacts with a feeling of anger, sadness, frustration and other emotions when it thinks you or your feelings are in trouble.

Turn and talk to your partner about a time when you felt scared, sad, frustrated or angry.

Your hippocampus and PFC help you learn, remember and make good decisions. They are kind of like your "memory keeper" and "wise leader." The problem is, if your amygdala is all fired up with strong emotions, these parts can't work very well.

Think about a time when you felt a strong emotion and it made you act quickly, without thinking. (Give an example here if no one comes up with one. For example, when Tommy took the block I wanted I got angry. I couldn't think clearly. I went over and knocked down his building.)

Show clarity bottle. Shake it to show how your thoughts can be jumbled (glitter floating all around) when you are upset. Wait a few moments to show how glitter clears to the bottom... When our "police officer" is calm, it allows our brains to clear up. We can think clearly and our "memory keeper" and "wise leader" can work properly.

(Demonstrate with fists and fingers how these two parts work together.)

Here's kind of how the parts of your brain work together. When your police officer is "worked up" (fingers going), your memory has a hard time remembering things and your wise leader can't help you make good decisions.

Here's what's really exciting: YOU can help calm your police officer down so that your memory keeper and your wise leader can do their jobs. (demonstrate with fingers)

Try it. Students copy what you do with your fists and fingers. They practice firing up the police officer and then calming it down so that the wise leader can work.

How can you do this? Demonstrate taking a few deep breaths while counting to 10. Explain that this small behavior – waiting, breathing, counting – can help the police officer calm down so that the memory keeper and wise leader can work.

Students stand and practice breathing and counting.

Teacher can also shake the clarity bottle before the breathing/counting so that by the time the students have counted to 10 the bottle is clear.

Reflection/Dialogue:

Today we learned about three important parts of the brain: the Amygdala (Police Officer), Hippocampus (Memory Keeper) and the PFC (Wise Leader). Talk to your partner about each part of the brain and what its job is.

We also learned about how sometimes the Police Officer makes it hard for the other parts of the brain to work properly. Use your hands to show your partner how the Police Officer can stop the Memory Keeper and Wise Leader from working properly.

We also learned one way that we can help calm the Police Officer down so that our other brain parts can work well. Talk to you partner about one thing you can do to calm your police officer down.

Journal Prompts/Follow Up

- *Drawing: 2 part page – Draw a picture of a time when you were upset about something (and maybe acted unmindfully). If you can't think of a time when you were, imagine another character doing this and draw that.*
- *On the other section of the page, draw a picture of you (or a character) feeling relaxed and maybe doing something mindfully.*

References:

"Getting Focused: How Our Brains Work." *The MindUp Curriculum: Brain-focused Strategies for Learning-and Living: Grades Pre-K-2*. New York, NY: Scholastic, 2011. 26-33. Print.

Lantieri, Linda, and Daniel Goleman. "Chapter 1: Building Inner Preparedness." *Building Emotional Intelligence: Techniques to Cultivate Inner Strength in Children*. Boulder, CO: Sounds True, 2008. 5-16. Print.

Rechtschaffen, Daniel. "Part I: Why Mindful Education Matters: The Science of Mindfulness." *The Way of Mindful Education: Cultivating Well-being in Teachers and Students*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 2014. Print.

Teacher Reflection:

Students will have a natural curiosity about how their own minds and bodies work. This lesson gives them the language to talk about their brains. It lays the "why" foundation for the mindfulness experiences and lessons to follow.

Mindfulness Lesson: Anchor Breath

Materials/Preparation: Clarity bottle, image of boat in stormy sea with anchor attached, journals or drawing paper, breathing buddies (one per student), chime, quote from Kung Fu Panda on chart paper: "Your mind is like this water my friend, when it is agitated it becomes difficult to see. But if you allow it to settle, the answer becomes clear."	Focus: Students are introduced to the important Core Practice of the Anchor Breath. They practice noticing both their bodily sensations while breathing but also their (distracting) thoughts. They practice acknowledging these thoughts without judgment.
Connection: We've learned that our brains function best when we can calm down the Police Officer and allow the Memory Keeper and Wise Leader to do their jobs. One way to do this is through the Anchor Breath.	
Objective: Students will use the Core Practice of mindful breathing. They will examine how their bodies feel while practicing the Anchor Breath. They will develop an awareness of the distractible mind and begin to find stillness and relaxation in the Anchor Breath.	Introduce, Model, Set the Stage There are so many things in my life that I want to pay attention to! I want to listen to all of you, focus on lessons, practice yoga and running, cook yummy meals, read lots of books... on and on! I'm sure you have lots of things that you need to pay attention to. Turn and talk to your partner about some of the things you want to (or need to) pay attention to. A lot of times I get distracted! Do you? Today, we are going to practice a special type of breathing that will help us to calm our minds and bodies. It will help us when our minds get distracted OR when we are feeling upset or stressed. This will help us pay attention to all the amazing things in life that we want to pay attention to!
Teaching Point: Most of the time, we don't have to think at all about breathing! Our bodies and minds work together to make sure we keep inhaling and exhaling. Today, we are going to concentrate on our breathing and see how it feels to just pay attention to our bodies when we breathe. We will learn how to use our breath to keep ourselves calm and anchored when we are feeling a little stormy inside.	
Why is this important? Every person has the capacity to become aware of mind/body sensations and focus on ways to build this awareness. Brain science shows that this type of mindfulness practice can improve attention, memory and concentration. It can also help students regulate emotions and reactivity.	
Active Engagement: This type of breath (or breathing) is called the Anchor Breath. Does anyone know what an anchor is or what an anchor does? Here's a picture of a boat with an anchor attached. No matter how stormy the sea is where the boat is resting, the anchor keeps the boat steady. The anchor stays calm in the still water at the bottom of the ocean. That's what your anchor breath will do for you. It will help keep you steady and calm no matter how distracted or upset your mind might be. I showed you this clarity bottle before. Do you remember how we used it last time? (Quick reminder about brain science – mixed up brain/clear brain. Demonstrate with bottle. If appropriate, show quote from Kung Fu Panda.) Our Anchor Breath will help to clear our minds so that we can be calm and focused.	

Let's practice the Anchor Breath. First, let's get our bodies ready. Sit comfortably, criss-cross applesauce. Imagine an invisible thread attached to the top of your head. Imagine it pulling you up gently, so that you are sitting tall, like a king or queen. Rest your hands gently on your belly. You can either close your eyes or look down at your lap.

I'm going to ring a chime. When you hear the chime, try to focus your attention on your breathing. You might notice that you can pay close attention to your breathing for a while but then you might have a thought that distracts you from your breath. That's ok. Just notice it and try to come back to your breath. (Ring the chime. Wait for about 1-2 minutes.)

Now gently open your eyes. What did you notice about your breath, your thoughts, your body?

After a few comments, share your reactions (particularly if the following doesn't come up in the dialogue).

I noticed that my belly went out and in. I noticed that my shoulders went up and down. I also noticed that even when I was concentrating on my breath, I started thinking about other things. I thought about what I was having for lunch today! But then I just noticed that I was thinking and told myself it was ok and then started to focus on my breath again. My breath really felt like an anchor in my body, keeping my mind steady and calm even when I was distracted!

Sometimes, we call the Anchor Breath "Belly Breathing." Can you think about why?

We are going to try something today, to help us focus on our Anchor Breath and really understand how it feels in our body.

(Make sure there is space for children to lie down. If necessary, do this in partners – one child lying down, the other child sitting beside, noticing.)

I brought some special "Breathing Buddies" to class today! These little animals will help us focus on our Anchor Breath and notice how our bodies feel.

Spread out and lie down. Put your Breathing Buddy on your tummy. Place your arms down by your sides and relax the hands, arms, legs, neck... For this practice, I'm going to ask you to keep your eyes open. I want you to try and focus on your Breathing Buddy and notice what happens to it as you breathe.

Ring the chime. Wait about 1 minute.

What did you notice about your Breathing Buddy? Your bodies? Your mind? Why do you think that the Anchor Breath is sometimes called a Belly Breath?

(If necessary, switch partners.)

Reflection/Dialogue:

Today we practiced using the Anchor Breath. We learned that it's a way to keep our minds steady even when we are feeling stormy – upset or distracted.

Turn and talk to your partner about something you noticed when you tried the Anchor Breath – either sitting or lying down.

Did you notice anything about your thoughts when you were trying to concentrate on your Anchor Breath?

Journal Prompts/Follow Up**Choices:**

1. Draw a picture of yourself practicing the Anchor Breath at home. Where would you practice?
2. (2 part page) On one side, draw a picture of you when you feel "stormy" (upset, frustrated, very distracted). On the other side, draw a picture of how you feel after practicing your Anchor Breath.

References:

"Focused Awareness: The Core Practice." *The MindUp Curriculum: Brain-focused Strategies for Learning-and Living: Grades Pre-K-2*. New York, NY: Scholastic, 2011. 42-49. Print.

Lantieri, Linda, and Daniel Goleman. "Chapter 3: Exercises to Calm the Body and Focus the Mind for Five- to Seven-Year-Olds." *Building Emotional Intelligence: Techniques to Cultivate Inner Strength in Children*. Boulder, CO: Sounds True, 2008. 39-46. Print.

Rechtschaffen, Daniel. "Part IV: Mindful Education Curriculum - Attention Lessons (Anchor Breath)." *The Way of Mindful Education: Cultivating Well-being in Teachers and Students*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 2014. Print.

Teacher Reflection:

This lesson is an important one in that it establishes significant components of the Core Practice. The idea and language of the Anchor Breath is one that will be used frequently throughout each day. I can imagine that students will connect with the image of the anchor and they will certainly appreciate both the clarity bottle and the breathing buddies. Those "props" will be available to them in the Peace Corner which I hope to establish in my classroom.

Mindfulness Routines to Use Throughout the Year--Mozian

1. 4 day Color Patterns

Day 1: trace the patterns with your finger

Day 2: using a marker trace the border of the entire pattern

Days 3 & 4: color in the entire pattern

2. Belly breaths out of classroom transitions (i.e specials, lunch, dismissal)

3. Slow counts from 10 to 0 as you send them off to start a task (don't get to your chair before 0 or after 0)

4. Chimes after announcements, after recess, after choice time

5. Emergency Breath chart posted in room (stop, name my feeling, breathe, think)

6. Read, Draw, Relax (after recess)

7. Feelings thermometer

8. Puzzles (at arrival)

9. Snow globes (nothing is clear until you calm down) (for the peace corner)

10. Color our feelings chart

11. Read Alouds: Peaceful Piggy, Listening Walk, Silence, I am an Artist.

12. Movement tasks:

Weight lifter (tension going up, release tension coming down)

Washing machine (arms swinging around body)

Tic Toc like a clock, until I find my center

Blowing up your bubble

Alligator breath

Mindfulness Lesson Planning Sheet--Lesson 1

Materials/Preparation: Previously made read aloud chart. Chart paper.	Focus: Identifying and expressing feelings
Connection: Do you remember when we showed the feelings of _____ (main character from When Sophie Gets Angry, A Bad Case of Stripes, Recess Queen, etc.). It helped us understand why _____ (Sophie) was behaving a certain way. We understood Sophie!	
Objective: Students will identify and express a feeling.	Introduce, Model, Set the Stage <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Post the read aloud chart that shows character names and the corresponding emotion visual and review each character's feeling. 2. Using body language and/or facial expression the teacher will exhibit the feeling of one of the characters (without telling the class which character/feeling) 3. Students will identify the character and feeling. 4. Teacher shows another feeling (using body language and facial expression) to show another feeling that is not listed on the chart. 5. Students will again identify the feeling. 6. Teacher may want to give cues as to what experience precipitated the feeling. 7. Teacher solicits other feelings we've all had at one point; charts these on easel with visuals.
Teaching Point: Today I want to teach you how to express a feeling because it can help our friends understand us better. It also makes us feel good to share how we feel!	
Why is this important? It's important to share our feelings because it helps us clear our heads. When you have a clear head, you can think better!	
Active Engagement: Students partner up and repeat the procedure of using body language/facial expression to see if their partner can identify the feeling. (They will no longer need to use the character feelings, but rather choose a feeling they've had in the past) For needier students, they can continue to identify/express the character feelings as charted. (5 to 7 minutes)	
Reflection/Dialogue: After 5 to 7 minutes, class gathers back to the meeting area. Discussion: why is it important for you to show/share your feelings? How does it help you? How did it help the characters in the stories?	
Journal Prompts/Follow Up Students will continue to add to our class read aloud chart and the feelings chart. Students will make emotion visuals (happy face, sad face, worry face, etc.) to use when necessary. Students will use this activity as a routine after recess.	

References: Various read alouds.

Teacher Reflection: This could be a useful routine to incorporate after recess, at the start of the school day, or at the end of the school day.

Mindfulness Lesson Planning Sheet--Lesson 2

Materials/Preparation: drawing paper, markers/crayons, previously made chart of student illustrations that depict times when they were not focused	Focus: Losing/increasing attention
Connection: Let's review the chart we made about the time we were not focused (chart might have illustrations of kids daydreaming, forgetting to clean up snack, shouting at a friend, etc.) We all lose our attention from time to time!	
Objective: Students will illustrate pictures of things they can do to regain focus.	Introduce, Model, Set the Stage 1. Use one of the 'unfocused' examples from the chart. 2. Oh--this is me daydreaming. Yep, I still do that even as an adult. Yikes, sometimes I do it when I read! But as soon as I notice it, I do something very clever to help me focus again. 3. Teacher draws a sketch of her re-reading a page. 4. What do you think I am doing in the picture? Solicit responses from students 5. Let's try it again. Yesterday, I was in a meeting and woops--I started staring out the window. Yikes, I missed the information from the meeting. What could I have done? 6. Solicit responses (direct them towards keeping your eye on the speaker at all times) 7. Teacher sketches a pair of eyes. 8. Discuss new scenarios and/or previous experiences in which students can/did pay attention.
Teaching Point: Today, I want us to learn what we should do if we lose our focus.	
Why is this important? It is important to stay focused during the day in order to be ready for learning.	
Active Engagement: Students will work independently and illustrate ways to pay attention. (10 to 15 minutes)	
Reflection/Dialogue: After 10 to 15 minutes, class gathers back to the meeting area. Discussion: why is it important pay attention? How does paying attention make us better learners?	
Journal Prompts/Follow Up Students will continue to add to both charts. Explicitly teach new strategies (i.e. counting slowly from 5, using a squeeze ball, stretching a body part, counting belly breaths, repeating directions, asking a friend, etc.)	

References: This lesson idea came from my own frustration of dealing with my inattention! :)

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Teacher Reflection: These charts can be posted in the front of the meeting area for teacher and student reference.

*Note: This includes a
sequence of 4 lessons*

M. Nolan/Grade 4/July 2014

Mindfulness Lesson Planning Sheet

(Day 1)

Materials/Preparation: Mindfulness Journal (Optional)	Focus: Understanding the meaning of mindfulness and how we get our bodies ready to practice mindfulness
Connection: Today I am going to talk to you about something called mindfulness. How many of you have heard of the word “mindfulness?” (Assess the number of students who raise their hands) What does the word “mindfulness” mean to you? What do you think of when you hear the word? Take a minute to talk to your partner and share your ideas. (After a couple of minutes, have two or three volunteers share with the class).	
Objective: The students will learn the definition of mindfulness The students will learn what a mindful body is and practice putting on mindful bodies	Introduce, Model, Set the Stage “Mindfulness helps us to notice what is happening in the present moment. It helps us to be aware of ourselves, our feelings, and the world around us. Mindfulness can help us focus better on our work or an activity, it can help us to calm down when we are upset or frustrated, and it can help us appreciate when we are happy and satisfied. We’re going to practice mindfulness in our classroom this year, and even if this idea feels unclear to you right now, it will become more clear with more practice.”
Teaching Point: “Today I’m going to teach you about mindfulness and what it means to be mindful as we go through each day.”	
Why is this important? “Mindfulness is important because it helps us pay close attention to many things. It helps us to calm down when we are angry, sad or frustrated. It helps us notice when we are happy or grateful, too. It also helps us to focus in school, sports, music, or any other activities we do.”	
Active Engagement: “There are a couple of very important things that we can do that help us be mindful. The first thing that we can do is to let our bodies be very still. I want you to sit cross-legged as comfortably as you can, but sit up tall so the shoulders – not slouchy. This will allow your breathing to flow fully and	

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comfortably as you sit.

Let's try that now. (Let everyone find their tall, comfortable body)

The second thing automatically happens when we get still. What is the noise like in here right now once we are all still? (It is very quiet)

Now we have still bodies and quiet bodies. That's what we call our "mindful bodies."

Now, let's close our eyes and just sit like that for one minute." I will ring the chime to get us started and I will ring it again in a minute's time to bring our quiet sitting time to a close. You may keep your eyes open during this work or you may close them – however you feel most comfortable.

(Ring chime and sit quietly for one minute. Ring chime to signal the end of one minute.)

Reflection/Dialogue:

"So how did it feel? Was it easy or hard to sit quiet and still for one minute?"
(Let volunteers share their thinking with the class)

"This is one of our core mindfulness practices. We won't have to be still and quiet all the time, but I will often ask you to get your mindful bodies on and this is what you can do."

Journal Prompts/Follow Up

Mindfulness journal – Write an entry about how it felt to sit quietly without moving. Tell whether it was easy or hard and why you think that was.

References:

Mindful Schools – Integrating Mindfulness into Education
Mindfulschools.org

Teacher Reflection:

SEL in Mamaroneck: Districtwide - Summer Course Projects

Mindfulness Lesson Planning Sheet

(Day 2)

Materials/Preparation: Chime Mindfulness Journal (optional)	Focus: Introduction to Mindful Listening
Connection: Yesterday we talked about what mindfulness is and we practiced putting on our mindful bodies.	
Objective: The students will practice mindful listening by focusing on the sound of the chime from beginning to end.	Introduce, Model, Set the Stage There are a lot of things we can learn to be mindful of. Today we are going to practice being mindful of sound. I brought something to help us with that. (Take out chime)
Teaching Point: There are a lot of ways for us to be mindful. Today I'm going to teach you how to be mindful of sound.	
Why is this important? This is important because it helps us to be more focused and strengthens our listening skills, which helps us in all areas of our work and play.	
Active Engagement: Would you like to hear what the chime sounds like? Before I ring it, let's begin by getting our mindful bodies ready. Let's sit criss-cross-applesauce, shoulders straight and tall. Let's be as still as we can be and let the quiet surround us. (Ring chime) Great job. Would you like to hear it again? This time get your mindful ears on. That means you listen very carefully, the whole time. See if you can pay attention from the very first moment you hear the bell all the way to the end. Raise your hand quietly when the sound is gone. (Ring chime)	

Let's try one more time with our eyes closed. Let your eyes close gently. Listen just like you did before to the entire sound from beginning to end. This time, don't raise your hand when the sound ends, just remain quiet and still.

(Ring chime)

You don't need a chime to listen mindfully. We can listen this carefully to any sound. There are lots of sounds around you all the time. If you listen very carefully, you might hear things you don't normally hear. Let's keep our mindful bodies on, with our eyes closed, and listen to the sounds around us. You might hear sounds in the classroom or outside, or even in your own body.

(Listen mindfully for about 1 minute)

Reflection/Dialogue:

Raise your hand if you would like to share. How did it feel? What sounds did you notice around you? (Respond to the quieter sounds that are shared and how quiet it had to be in order to hear them.)

You have just learned how to pay attention better. In mindfulness, we learn how to focus and pay attention to many things. Do you think it's important to be able to focus? Why? When could you use mindful listening?

We will try this again (tomorrow). Now that you've learned mindful listening, see if you can remember to listen to sounds around you the rest of today and tomorrow. You might stop and listen while you are on the playground, or in the classroom, or at home.

Journal Prompts/Follow Up

HW – Practice mindful listening at home for 1-2 minutes. Find a quiet place in your house, put on your mindful body and just spend a little bit of time listening to the sounds around you at that moment. Write an entry in your mindfulness journal. How did it feel to sit and listen mindfully? What did you hear? Did any sounds surprise you? If so, what?

References:

Mindful Schools – Integrating Mindfulness into Education
Mindfulschools.org

Teacher Reflection:

Mindfulness Lesson Planning Sheet

(Day 3)

Materials/Preparation: -Parts of Brain Poster (Mind Up Curriculum) -Brain Action/Situation Cards (9) -White board quick-response paddles/markers -Student partnerships in place	Focus: Understanding the three main parts of the brain's limbic system and the role of each of those parts.
Connection: "In our last mindfulness lesson we practiced putting our mindfulness bodies on and listen really carefully to our surroundings. Today I'm going to introduce you to some of the main parts of the brain and the job that each of these parts is responsible for doing. Once we understand this part of our brain better, we can help the brain to react in a way that is most productive for us."	
Objective: The students will learn the names and locations of the three main parts of the brain's limbic system what each of these parts is responsible for. The students will identify the part of the brain that is at work in a variety of everyday actions/situations.	Introduce, Model, Set the Stage Show the poster of the brain and identify the three main parts (of the limbic system). The Prefrontal Cortex- Your brain's wise leader – The learning, reasoning, and thinking center of the brain. We use this part to analyze and compare things, calculate numbers, predict what's going to happen next in life (and in our reading!). The hippocampus – It helps us manage our response to fear and threats, it helps us to manage the space around our bodies, and it's the storage space for learning and memories. The amygdala - is our brain's "security guard." It tells us when there is danger. It protects us from threats. When calm, it helps to send information on to the PC, but when it is stressed or fearful, it blocks our thinking and reasoning and sends us into a fight, flight or freeze response. This is an automatic response our ancient
Teaching Point: Today I am going to teach you about three important parts of our brain's limbic system and the job that each of these parts is responsible for doing.	
Why is this important? This is important to us because once we understand how the brain works we can help it to do its job better and work really well for us in different situations.	

	<p>ancestors used to keep themselves alive when threatened.</p> <p>Quickly review the three parts and give examples of everyday activities we might participate in and explain which part of the brain is responsible for that activity. (ex. The prefrontal cortex helps me figure out how to build the Empire State Building out of Legos because it's my problem solving part of the brain. My hippocampus helps me remember the name of my Kindergarten teacher because it helps me with memories. This part also helps me manage my space and how to use it, such as making sure the lands inside the box during boxball. And my amygdala is my brain's security guard so it helps to warn me about dangers or threats, for example, if a ball was coming directly at me, my amygdala would help me jump out of the way so I don't get hurt.</p> <p>Review the three parts of the brain one last time and the role that each part has.</p>
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Active Engagement:

Action Card Activity: "Now we're going to play a little game. I am going to show you a series of cards. Each card has an action written on it. You will work with your partner to identify the part of the brain that manages the action on the card I show you. When you and your partner are in agreement, I want you to write the abbreviation for the part of the brain you chose (PC, H, A) on the paddle and raise it so I can see it. Your partner and you may disagree-that is okay, you can each write the answer you choose on your paddle. Once all paddles are up, I will reveal the correct answer and will ask a volunteer to explain why that is the correct answer."

Reflection/Dialogue:

"So what have we learned today about the brain (the limbic system)? (Have student volunteers share the names of the parts of the brain and the roles they play.) Once we understand the parts of the brain and how our brain works, we can use that knowledge to help ourselves be clear thinkers and problem solvers."

Journal Prompts/Follow Up

Independent (or Partner) Classwork or Homework: Complete "Brain Power!" activity sheet. Label the brain diagram with the three parts and tell how it helps you.

References:

The Mind Up Curriculum (Grades 3-5): Scholastic

Teacher Reflection:

Vocabulary posters or a chart: amygdala; fight, flight, or freeze response; hippocampus; limbic system; prefrontal cortex

In preparation for this lesson, student partnerships should be organized. A lesson on effective student partnerships should precede this lesson.

Activity/situation cards for active engagement should be pre-made and large enough for all to see and read easily. A graphic might be included.

Some ideas for cards:

PC: working on a jigsaw puzzle, solving a math problem, predicting what happens next in a story, comparing the heights of the Empire State building and the Chrysler building, building a robot, etc.

H: jumping rope with plenty of space around you, riding a bicycle, the time you went to the zoo with your grandparents, jumping in the box during a game of hopscotch, etc...

A: jumping at a sudden, loud noise; panicking before giving a speech; suddenly forgetting ones lines when performing a play due to nerves; running from a burning building; angrily lashing out at your brother for taking your toy; sweaty hands and high heart rate as you begin taking a test; etc.

Mindfulness Lesson Planning Sheet

(Lesson 4)

Materials/Preparation: Glitter bottle Chime Students' Mindfulness Journals	Focus: Understanding how our amygdala works and applying mindfulness strategies to keep it calm
Connection: Yesterday we talked about the three parts of the brain's limbic system and how each part helps us think. Today we will spend a little more time thinking about our brain and how our actions can help the brain make sound decisions.	
Objective: The students will learn how our brain reacts to stressors The students will practice mindful sitting/ mindful listening to help remain calm and focused	Introduce, Model, Set the Stage Shake up the glitter bottle and explain that sometimes our amygdala goes into high alert and reacts with that reflexive fight, flight or freeze response. This can scatter the information in our brains (like the glitter in the bottle) so that we can't think clearly.
Teaching Point: Today I'm going to teach you a little more about the amygdala and how it works. Then we'll practice a mindful strategy to help us support the amygdala, (and the other two parts of our limbic system, to help us be calm and clear thinkers, especially when feeling worried or stressed.	Q. Can anyone name a time when you felt so worried or anxious that your mind was working like this shaken bottle? What helped you think more clearly? (taking a deep breath, counting to ten, etc.)
Why is this important? This is important because when our amygdala is calm, we think more clearly make sound, reasonable decisions for ourselves rather than be ruled by our emotions, especially in stressful situations. By calming our amygdala, we become problem solvers rather than reactors.	That's right. Lets let our bottle take a deep breath or count to ten. Watch how when we give the bottle time to process and become still and quiet, the materials in the solution settle and the solution clears. This is a good way to think about how, when we give ourselves time to process a difficult situation, the information in the brain settles and clear thinking and reasoning take over that reactionary response our amygdala creates. Let me model it another way. (Use the hand model to represent the prefrontal cortex and the amygdala and show how the amygdala reacts and prevents the PC from problem

	<p>solving and reasoning through calmly and clearly.)</p> <p>Next, show how when we take steps to calm our amygdala, the PC can get to work and help us to problem solve and make sound decisions. One name for this is mindfulness or being mindful.</p>
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Active Engagement:

So today we are going to practice relaxing our amygdala. Right now, our amygdalas are working positively for us. They are not reacting as if there is danger around us, but we can still work on training the amygdala to remain calm and relaxed.

One way to do this is to put on our mindful bodies and sit quiet and still for a minute or so. We can also practice mindful listening by focusing on the sound of the chime, and then the sounds of our room, while we breath in and out in a relaxed way.

I will use the chime to signal the start of our quiet and still time. Once I ring the chime, focus on the sound of it until you can't hear it any longer. Then focus on the sounds of the classroom – try to listen mindfully to the sounds around you. See if you can pick up on the slightest sound you can hear. I will chime again to signal the end of our quiet and still time.

So sit criss-cross-applesauce, shoulders tall, arms comfortable. Remember, you may close your eyes, but you don't have to.

(Ring chime)

Reflection/Dialogue:

So how did that go? What did you notice about the sounds of our classroom? How did it feel to sit and listen mindfully? How do you think this helps to calm our amygdala? (It relaxes us so our brains can think clearly/problem solve) When do you think it would be helpful to use this practice? Why?

Journal Prompts/Follow Up

Mindfulness Journal: Draw a picture of yourself when your amygdala was activated. Below your picture, describe the situation in words. Explain whether your amygdala reacted to real danger or alerted you to a situation that wasn't an actual threat.

Or

Make a comic strip of your amygdala and your PC talking. What would one character say to the other?

References:

Mind Up Curriculum (Grades 3-5); Scholastic

Teacher Reflection:

-In place of mindful listening, teacher can teach mindful breaths to calm and relax

-Lesson 5 can be on Mindful and Unmindful situations – Mind up – Lesson 3

Julia Aiello

July 2014

Course: **Mindfulness in Education**

Teaching Our Students Techniques for Self-Awareness, Calm, Compassion and Focus

Sequence of Lessons for Fall 2014:

Sept 4-12

- Introduction to Mindfulness- What is it? How will it help us this year? How can we best create a mindful environment in our classroom? Create Class Chart
- Introduce concept of mindful bodies. Paying attention to sound- introduce chime and it's purpose
- Introduce Breath Awareness activities
- Incorporate movement activities in as well- Standing, noticing your body and how it feels, Knees bent, shaking, washing machine, (slapping yourself lightly) suction cups, *Sumo Wrestler*, weight lifter (tension going up, controlled exhale going down), etc.

I will be following the MindUp Curriculum lessons in order. Due to scheduling, it will be most realistic to get through one full 30-40 lesson every other week. We will do short, breathing/relaxation exercises everyday.

Week of:

Sept 15-19 MindUp Lesson #1

Sept 29-Oct 3 MindUp Lesson #2

Oct 14-17 MindUp Lesson #3

Oct 27-31 MindUp Lesson #4

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Nov 10-14 MindUp Lesson #5

Dec 9-13 MindUp Lesson #6

*Lessons 7-15 will begin upon returning from winter recess.

Mindfulness Lesson Planning Sheet

Materials/Preparation: Brain Chart Glitter Jar BrainPower Activity sheets Student Journals	Focus: How the brain works- understand the purpose
Connection: Yesterday we kicked off our mindfulness discussion by talking about what mindfulness is all about. It's really has to do with noticing our feelings, the things around us and being present/in the moment. This year we will focus on mindfulness. We talked about how it can help us relax and reduce stress. It can help us do better in school, sports, dance, etc.	
Objective: Students identify the amygdala, the hippocampus, and the prefrontal cortex (PFC) and understand their purpose. A connection will then be made to how the brain plays a role in stress response and mindfulness	Introduce, Model, Set the Stage: <i>Show the students photos of Derek Jeter, Mark Sanchez, Mia Hamm (or any famous athletes of your choice).</i> In order for these athletes to be successful they have to exercise their minds as well as their bodies. By learning about their brain and participating in MindUp lessons this year, we will become stronger, smarter and more confident just like these athletes we admire and look up to! Put your thumb up if you've ever been in a stressful situation or felt really anxious about something. Have you ever wondered what was actually happening in your brain when you were experiencing this stress? I am going to explain this to you. Watch me as I show you how you can identify the amygdala, the hippocampus, and the prefrontal cortex (PFC) on our <i>Getting to Know and Love Your Brain</i> poster. The amygdala is a pair of almond shaped structures that reacts to fear, danger and threat. It acts as our brain's "security guard" protecting us from threats. When you are in a positive emotional
Teaching Point: Today I am going to teach you about three very important parts of the brain called the amygdala, the hippocampus, and the prefrontal cortex (PFC). We will learn where these parts of the brain are located, what their purpose is and how they help us regulate our responses to stress.	
Why is this important? This is so important because when we understand how the brain controls reactions to stress and dangers we can better control how we respond to these stressful moments and make mindful choices when coping them.	

state, the amygdala sends information on to the conscious and reasoning brain. When you are in a negative emotional state, the amygdala prevents this information from being passed on. Blocking your ability to reason. The hippocampus are these two twin crescent-shaped parts of the brain that are located in the central part of the brain behind each ear. They store memory and learning. All of this information is fed to the prefrontal cortex—the learning reasoning and thinking part of the brain. This area controls are decision making, focuses our attention, allows us to understand, learn new things and make smart decisions. Show the class the water bottle model of how this actually works. Now that we know about these three important parts of the brain we can understand how are brains respond to stress and can prepare us for creating a calm mind and making thoughtful decisions. I will demonstrate how this works with the glitter jar. *Now I will share out a few scenarios that students can identify the brain parts and their functions (read scenarios from MindUp lesson #1).*

Active Engagement:

- Invite students to give example of times when their amygdala alerted them to real danger (e.g., reacting to screeching tires or the smell of smoke) or when it made them worried about something stressful but not dangerous, (e.g., a presentation, performing on stage, etc.) Talk about how their reactions impacted their abilities to think and plan.

Reflection/Dialogue:

- Have students complete BrainPower! Activity with a partner.
- Share in their own words the function of each part of the brain

Journal Prompts:

- Draw a picture of yourself when your amygdala was activated. Below your picture, describe the situation in words. Explain whether your amygdala reacted to real danger or alerted you to a situation that wasn't an actual threat.

References:

The MindUp Curriculum Grades 5-8

Brain-Focused Strategies for Learning—and Living Lesson #1

Mindfulness Lesson Planning Sheet

Materials/Preparation: Chart paper Index cards Mindful or Unmindful? Activity sheets Student Journals	Focus: Mindful Awareness
Connection: Yesterday we learned that three very important parts of the brain called the amygdala, the hippocampus, and the prefrontal cortex (PFC). We learned where these parts of the brain are located, what their purpose is and how they help us regulate our responses to stress.	
Objective: Students define and describe the difference between mindful and unmindful thoughts and actions and apply the concept of mindful awareness to their own lives.	Introduce, Model, Set the Stage: Today we're going to understand the difference between mindful and unmindful thoughts and actions. We all are familiar with making friends. A mindful approach to making friends would be getting to know someone before deciding whether to be friends with them. An unmindful approach would be deciding not to be friends because you dislike the person's taste in clothes. Put your
Teaching Point: Today I am going to teach you how to understand the difference between mindful and unmindful thoughts and actions and also how apply the concept of mindful awareness to your own lives.	thumb up if you've ever been on either side of this situation. Turn and talk to your partner about this. How did you feel? How do you think the other person felt? The Amygdala does not make a distinction between perceived threats and actual dangers. It can trigger "false alarms" and make us

Why is this important?

This is so important because when we understand the difference between mindful and unmindful thoughts and actions we can identify times when our amygdala is more in charge than our PFC. Reflecting on unmindful decisions gives us an opportunity to make ourselves and the people around us safer, healthier and happier.

react in ways that are unwarranted and potentially problematic (unmindful response). When we take the time to process what's coming into our brains, we create a time buffer between the input and response. This gives our PFC time to analyze and make good decisions (mindful response). Now we are going to read some examples from the Mindful or Unmindful? Cards.

We'll do a couple as a whole class and then break up into small groups to discuss the rest (pick one mindful and one unmindful to talk about before sending the kids off to work on the rest). Have the students reflect on reach card and talk about what is happening in the brain with each scenario.

Active Engagement:

- Invite students to think of a time when they really thought through a decision and made a mindful choice. Have a few volunteers share with the class.

Reflection/Dialogue:

- Remind students that all of us are occasionally unmindful. Through practice—really thinking about what we’re doing and saying—we can more often make mindful choices that will help ourselves and those around us.
- End the lesson by creating a class set of “I am mindful” statements to post and serve as a reminder of the mindful approach we will take this year.

Journal Prompts:

- Think of a time when you have acted unmindfully. How could you have acted more mindfully? Draw a box and divide it in half. On one side, draw or write about the time that you were unmindful and on the other side, show how you could have changed the way you acted.

References:

The MindUp Curriculum Grades 5-8

Brain-Focused Strategies for Learning—and Living Lesson #2

Mindfulness Lesson Planning Sheet

Materials/Preparation: <u>Mindup Curriculum</u> Diagram of the brain Baking soda and a bowl of water	Focus: Introduction to mindfulness/9 th grade
Connection: In order for students to understand why mindfulness can help them, they need to have a basic understanding of how the brain works. Our brains serve as a map for showing us how we learn and why we behave the way we do. Neuroscience provides us with information that can help us all to be happier and healthier.	
Objective: Student will identify the three parts of the brain: the amygdala, the hippocampus and the prefrontal lobe on a diagram and explain what each part of the brain is responsible for. In addition, students will discuss how the three parts of the brain work together and how simple mindfulness techniques can help reduce stress and improve focus in and out of the classroom.	Introduce, Model, Set the Stage Introduce: <i>Think of a time when you have felt stressed out. What were your physical reactions?</i> <i>Did you say and/or do something in that moment that you later regretted?</i> <i>Do you know the neuroscience behind why you felt and acted the way you did?</i>
Teaching Point: Today we will identify the three parts of the brain: the amygdala, the hippocampus and the prefrontal lobe on a diagram and discuss what each part of the brain is responsible for. In addition, we will discuss some simple mindfulness techniques that can help reduce our stress and improve focus in and out of our classroom.	Model: Teacher will model how the brain processes information under stress with a clear bowl filled with water and baking soda. The stirred bowl is how the brain processes information under stress. The settling solution represents the calming mind. Bits of information at first seem so chaotic; now flow in a clear direction, some of them to the PFC for thoughtful decision-making.
Why is this important? In order for some students to buy into mindfulness, they need to have an understanding of how the brain works. Knowing how the brain responds to stressful situations is key in mindful	Set the Stage: Teacher will explain, with the help of a diagram, how the limbic system controls emotion and motivation deep inside the brain. A key part of the limbic system is the amygdala. The amygdala is a pair of almond shaped structures that react to

education.

fear, danger and threat. The amygdala regulates our emotional state by acting as the brain's "security guard," protecting us from threats. When a student is in a positive emotional state, the amygdala sends incoming information to the conscience, thinking, reasoning brain. When a student is in a negative emotional state (stressed out) the amygdala prevent the input from passing along, effectively blocking higher-level thinking and reasoned judgment. The incoming stimuli and signals are left for the amygdala itself to process as an automatic reflexive response of "fight, flight or freeze".

Information from the limbic system is fed to the prefrontal cortex – the learning, reasoning, and thinking center of the brain. This highly evolved area of the brain control our decision making, focuses our attention, and allows us to read, write, compute, analyze, predict, comprehend, and interpret.

Active Engagement:

Think of a time when you have felt stressed out. What were your physical reactions?
Teacher will ask students to share their reactions.

Did you say and/or do something in that moment that you later regretted?

Do you know the neuroscience behind why you felt and acted the way you did?

Summary: *A way that some people have found helpful in managing their stress in by learning how to be mindful. One way to be mindful is to just take a moment and check in with how you are feeling and just breathe. Next time we will try this and see what you think about it. Perhaps this will help you manage your stress and increase your focus and concentration in class.*

References: The Mindup Curriculum Brain-Focused Strategies for learning-and Living
by Scholastic

ISBN-12: 978-0545-26714-4

SEL in Mamaroneck: Districtwide - Summer Course Projects

Mindfulness Lesson Planning Sheet

Materials/Preparation: <u>Mindup Curriculum</u>	Focus: Introduction to Mindup Core Practice/9 grade
Connection: It takes just moments for students to cue their minds to relax and refocus. In this mini lesson students will be introduced to the Core Practice, which can help them to quiet their minds and get them ready to learn.	
Objective: Today we will learn to use our breathing in order to quiet our amygdala and focus our PFC.	Introduce, Set the Stage In this two-minute exercise we will learn to control our breath in order to quiet our amygdala and focus our PFCs.
Teaching Point: The Core Practice can put students in control of their mental and physical energy. By concentrating on their own breathing and how they feel, students can calm their minds and get ready to focus on their learning.	
Why is this important? Simple mindfulness techniques can help reduce stress and improve focus in and out of the classroom.	
Active Engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Sit in a comfortable position - try to sit up in your chair and place your feet on the floor.</i>• <i>Close your eyes or look down at the floor.</i>• <i>Notice your breath coming in and going out. Don't try to control it.</i>• <i>Feel your stomach rising and falling.</i>• <i>Now see if you can breath a little more slowly and a little more deeply.</i>• <i>If your mind gets distracted, it is ok. If this happens try to concentrate on your breath again</i>• <i>Now open your eyes.</i>	
Discussion: <i>How did this breathing exercise feel? Did you mind quiet down? How difficult was it to focus your mind on your breathing?</i>	

Summary: *A way that some people have found helpful in managing their stress in by learning how to be mindful. One way to be mindful is to just take a moment and check in with how you are feeling and just breathe. Perhaps this has helped you manage your stress and increase your focus and concentration in class.*

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Mindfulness Lesson Planning Sheet – Amy Rosen, July 28, 1024

Class Opening Exercises

<p>Materials/Preparation: No special materials necessary.</p> <p>Preparation: students need to understand that the first 3-4 minutes of class will be spent focusing our minds and bodies.</p>	<p>Focus: Sensory exploration – “Getting into the zone”</p>
<p>Connection: Playing a string instrument with a relaxed physical awareness</p>	
<p>Objective: Students will practice attentive body awareness</p> <p>Students will focus their minds in the present moment by using mindful movement</p>	<p>Introduce, Model, Set the Stage:</p> <p>“I’m sure many of you have heard of sports stars or performers who say “they are in the zone” while they were performing. That’s another way of saying they were totally mindful – totally aware of the present moment.</p> <p>You may have experienced it yourself – playing soccer, dunking a basket, dancing or playing your instrument.</p> <p>The more mindful we are of our bodies, the less our thoughts tie us up, the more relaxed we are. Then – believe it or not – we will have a better sound on our instruments and enjoy playing more!”</p>
<p>Teaching Point: Building awareness of muscle sensation to understand tension versus relaxation.</p>	
<p>Why is this important? Musicians can create an enormous amount of physical tension through playing. String players should play with as much relaxation and natural weight in their arms and hands as possible. Playing with tension produces a rough tone and can cause future muscle injuries. (Not to mention, student enjoyment of playing decreases with tension.)</p>	
<p>Active Engagement:</p> <p>To learn the language of our bodies:</p> <p>Raise one hand, then close your eyes</p> <p>Do you feel your hand?</p> <p>Think about how your hand feels? Is it heavy, light, solid, cold, hot? Does the temperature change as you think about it?</p> <p>Shake your hand around. Does it feel loose and relaxed?</p> <p>Do the same with the other hand.</p> <p>PAUSE</p>	

Reflection/Dialogue:

What did you feel around your hand? What changes if any?

Do you think you can keep that relaxed manner in your hand and arm while we play?

Follow Up-In each successive rotation/lesson: start each lesson with one of the following physical exercises:

1. Zip-up, shake hands out, twist body, zip-up other side, shake hands – (relax shoulder, trunk of body)
2. Suction cup exercise – create suction cups with hand, move up and down each arm and both shoulders (relax arms and shoulders)
3. Washing machine – twist trunk while hands gently slap side of body as move (relax trunk of body and hands)
4. Weight lifter – feel like lifting a very heavy dumbbell, feel muscles in shoulders and upper arms. Then feel like lifting a bubble. Feel change and relaxation in shoulders and arms. (relax arms and shoulders)
5. Tree pose – balance and focus mind in body

References:

Hawn Foundation, MindUp Curriculum Scholastic

Lantieri, Linda, Building Emotional Intelligence, Techniques to Cultivate Inner Strength in Children, 2009, Sounds True Publications

Rechtschaffen, Daniel, The Way of Mindful Education, 2014, Norton and Company

Teacher Reflection:

Transitions are difficult for students. The act of the 3rd, 4th and 5th graders walking in the halls (alone) to my room, frequently creates an “unmindful,” excitable set of behaviors. My hope is that through focusing exercises out in the hall before coming into my room for lessons and the few minutes of focusing mind and body at the very beginning of lessons, will allow us all to have a most productive 30 minute lesson.

Mindfulness Lesson Planning Sheet – Amy Rosen, July 28, 1024

Class Opening Exercises

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Mindfulness Lesson Planning Sheet – Amy Rosen, July 28, 1024

Mindful Attention - Outside Hall Exercises

<p>Materials/Preparation: Glitter Jars, packets of papers, anchor chart</p> <p>Preparation: Explain to students the expected behavior process for waiting outside my room for their lesson.</p>	<p>Focus: Mindful attention and actions</p>
<p>Connection: Transitioning is very difficult for children. Students walk to my room alone and their unmonitored behavior may deteriorate in the halls. Students are learning to monitor their own behavior for respectful waiting/transitioning.</p>	
<p>Objective: Students work together to create a quiet, respectful environment for the previous lesson to finish.</p>	<p>Introduce, Model, Set the Stage: I will explain that another lesson will be finishing up when they come to start their lesson. A table will be waiting in the hall. There will be one activity for each of them to do while they wait. I will change the activity for each rotation. The anchor chart on the wall will explain which of the activities they are to participate in for this rotation.</p>
<p>Teaching Point: Mindful attention helps students become aware of distractions. Self-awareness of thoughts and actions cultivates impulse control.</p>	
<p>Why is this important? Waiting outside for a lesson is really the beginning of the lesson. If students behave respectfully, quietly and patiently, the entrance into and the tone of the whole lesson will be more thoughtful and attentive.</p>	
<p>Active Engagement: Shake the glitter jar. Watch while the glitter settles to the bottom. Breathe deeply and quietly and focus totally on the glitter settling.</p>	
<p>Reflection/Dialogue: How did you feel as you watched the glitter settle? Do you feel your body slowing down?</p>	

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Follow Up-In each successive rotation/lesson: Papers attached -

1. Mindful or Unmindful? Student marks each activity as mindful or unmindful.
2. Violin "Mandala" – student silently traces the outline of the violin mandala with his/her finger while waiting for lesson.
3. Optimistic/Pessimistic Thoughts – student writes one behavior which might occur during his/her instrument lesson; then defines the difference between what an optimistic thinker and a pessimistic thinker would say about handling the problem.
4. Four-Land Maze – student follows the notes equaling 4 beats with his/her finger to the 4 at the end of the maze.
5. Instrument Mandala - student silently traces the outline of the instrument mandala with his/her finger while breathing deeply.
6. Melody Maze - student follows the maze with his/her finger to the end.
7. Guitar and Drum Mandala - student silently traces the outline of the instruments with his/her finger while breathing deeply.

References:

Hawn Foundation, MindUp Curriculum Scholastic

Lantieri, Linda, Building Emotional Intelligence, Techniques to Cultivate Inner Strength in Children, 2009, Sounds True Publications

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Teacher Reflection:

Transitions are always difficult for students. The act of the 3rd, 4th and 5th graders walking in the halls (alone) to my room, frequently creates an "unmindful," excitable set of behaviors. My hope is that through focusing exercises out in the hall before coming into my room for lessons and the few minutes of focusing mind and body at the very beginning of lessons, will allow us all to have a most productive 30 minute lesson.

Glitter Jars

Shake the glitter jar.

Watch while the glitter settles to the bottom.

Breathe deeply and quietly and focus totally on the glitter settling.

Mindful or Unmindful?

Mark M in each box that describes Mindful acting and U in each box that describes Unmindful acting.

Violin Mandala

Silently trace the outline of the violin mandala while waiting for your instrument lesson. Focus and breathe while you do that.

Optimistic/Pessimistic Thoughts

Write one behavior which might occur during your instrument lesson. Tell how an optimistic thinker would handle it and how a pessimistic thinker would handle it differently.

Example:

Behavior – I do not understand the bowing action Ms. Rosen is teaching.

Optimistic Thinker: If I take my instrument out and try the bowing at home once or twice for a couple of days, I am sure I will get it.

Pessimistic thinker: I am not able to do the motion, so I won't try.

Four-Land Maze

Follow the path of 4 beats with your finger. Try to reach the big number 4 at the end. Focus and breathe while you do that.

Instrument Mandala

Silently trace the outline of the instruments while waiting for your instrument lesson. Focus and breathe while you do that.

Melody Maze

Follow the path with your finger. Focus and breathe while you do that.

Guitar and Drum Mandala

Silently trace the outline of the instruments while waiting for your instrument lesson. Focus and breathe while you do that.

Name _____

Date _____

Mindful or Unmindful?

Mark M in each box that describes Mindful acting and U in each box that describes Unmindful acting

	M or U?		M or U?
Waiting quietly in the hall for your lesson to begin		Carefully putting away my instrument in its case	
Calling your adult at home to bring your instrument to school		Listening to someone and not speaking while they are playing a section of music	
Practicing a new skill until you feel your body improving		Asking another student to leave the seat next to you open because you saved it for someone else	
Not clearing my chair and stand after orchestra practice		Talking during lessons	
Playing my instrument while the conductor is speaking		Daydreaming or "tuning out" to what is happening around you	
Having my music folder at each lesson		Running in the hall from my class to the music room	

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Name _____

Date _____



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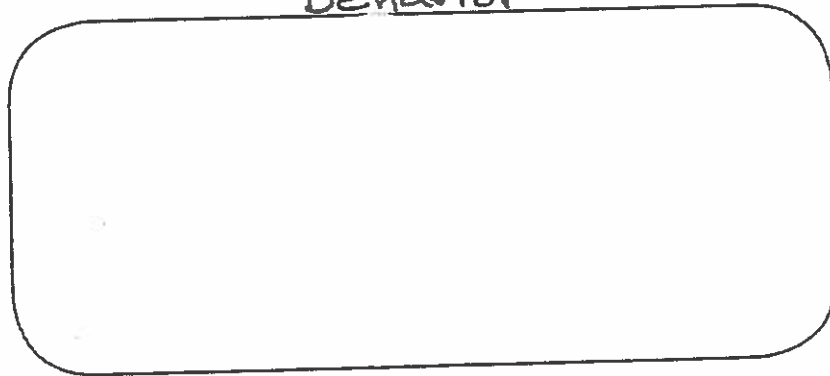
Name _____

Date _____

Optimistic/Pessimistic Thoughts

Behavior

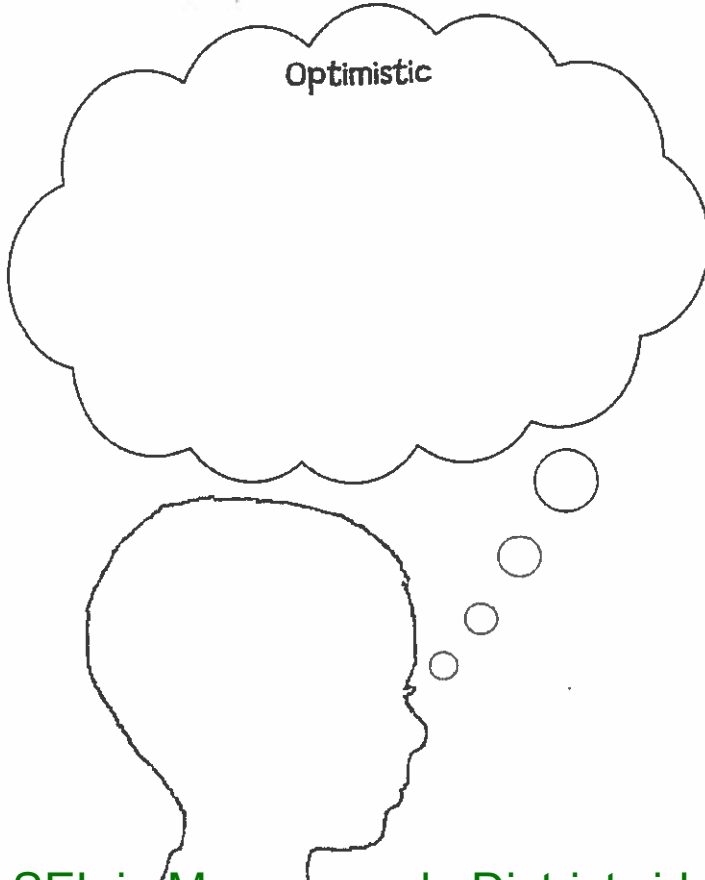
Write one behavior which might occur during your instrument lesson. Tell how an optimistic thinker would handle it and how a pessimistic thinker would handle it differently.



What does the optimistic thinker say?



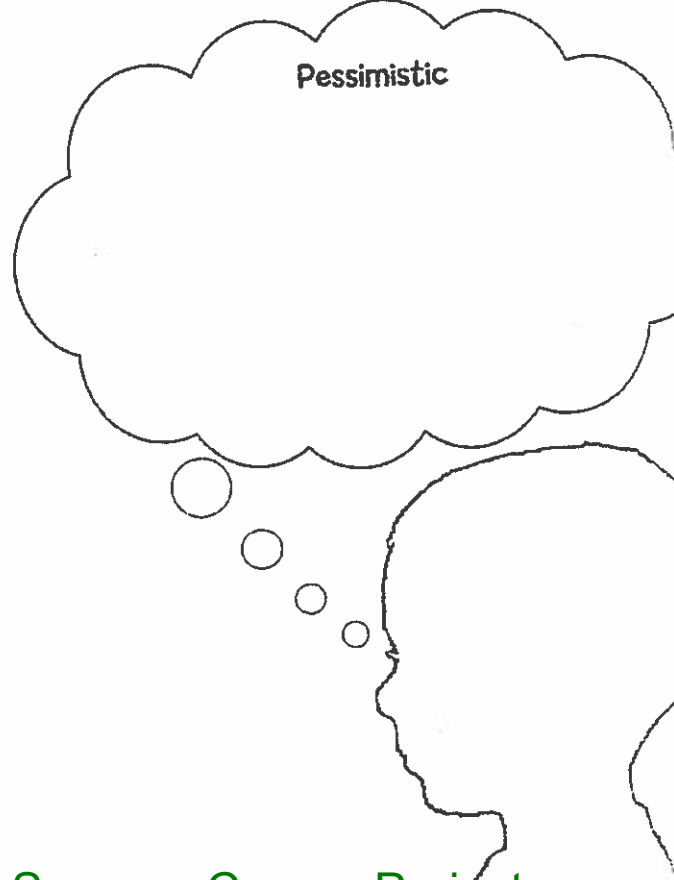
Optimistic



What does the pessimistic thinker say?

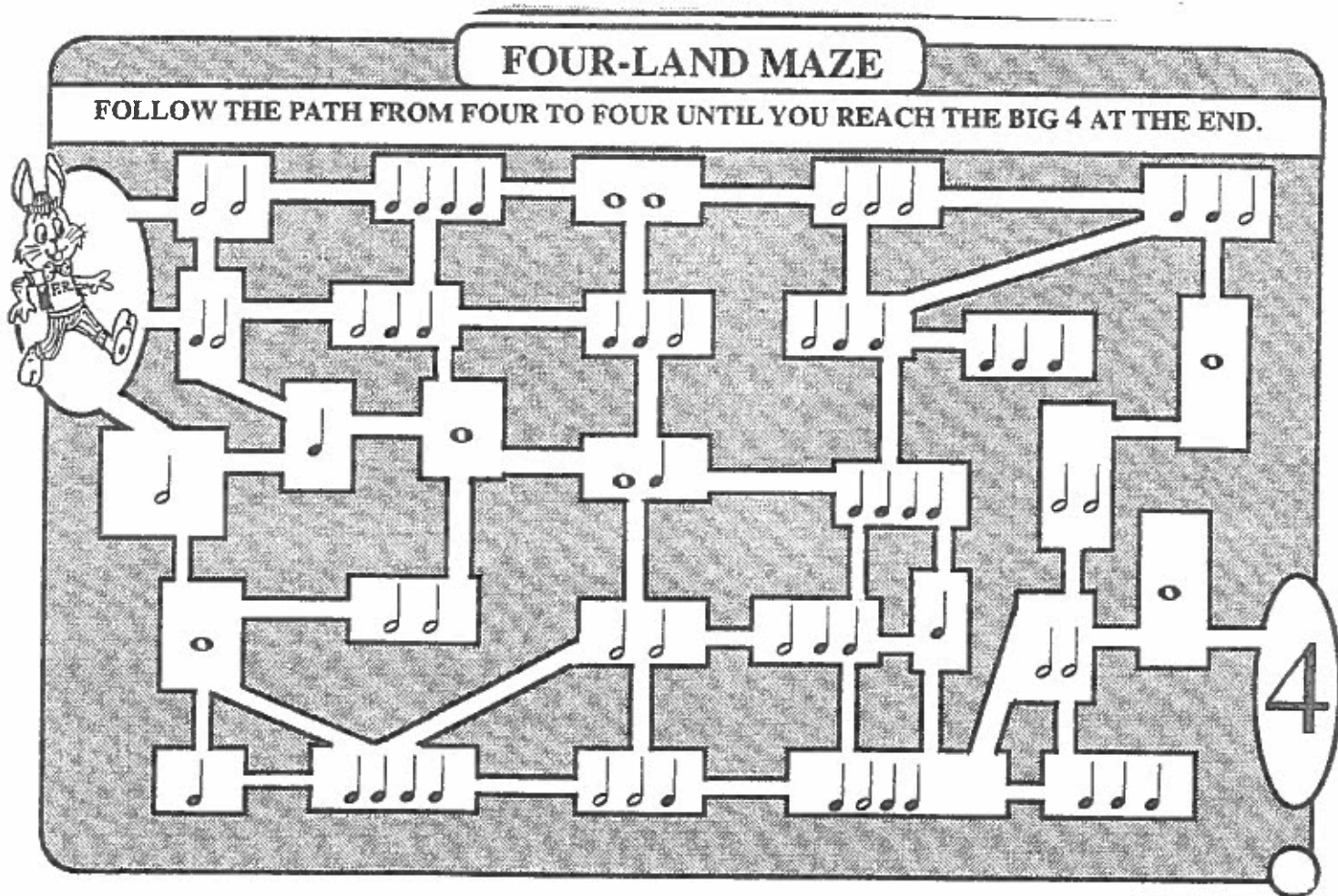


Pessimistic



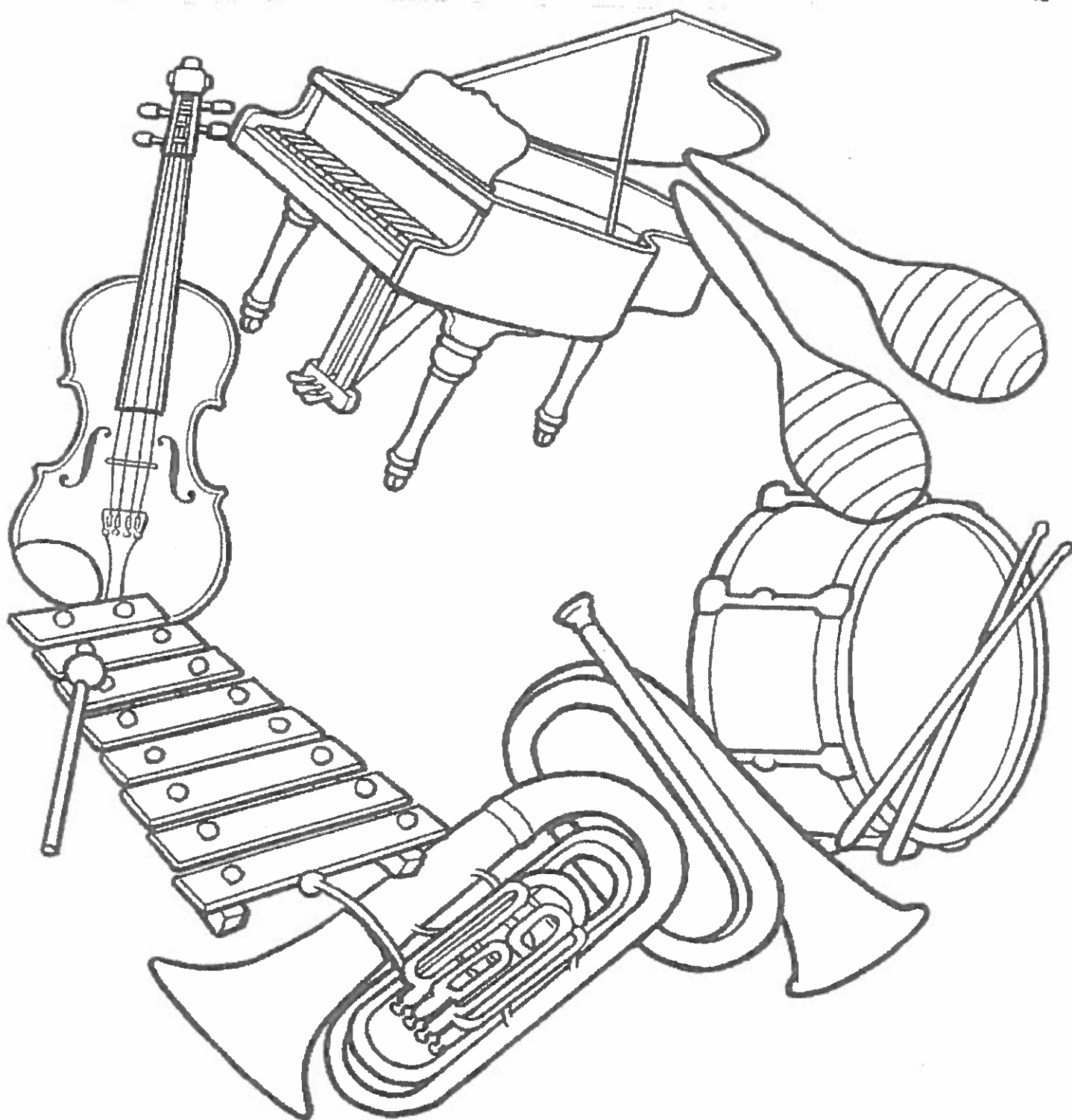
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Name _____

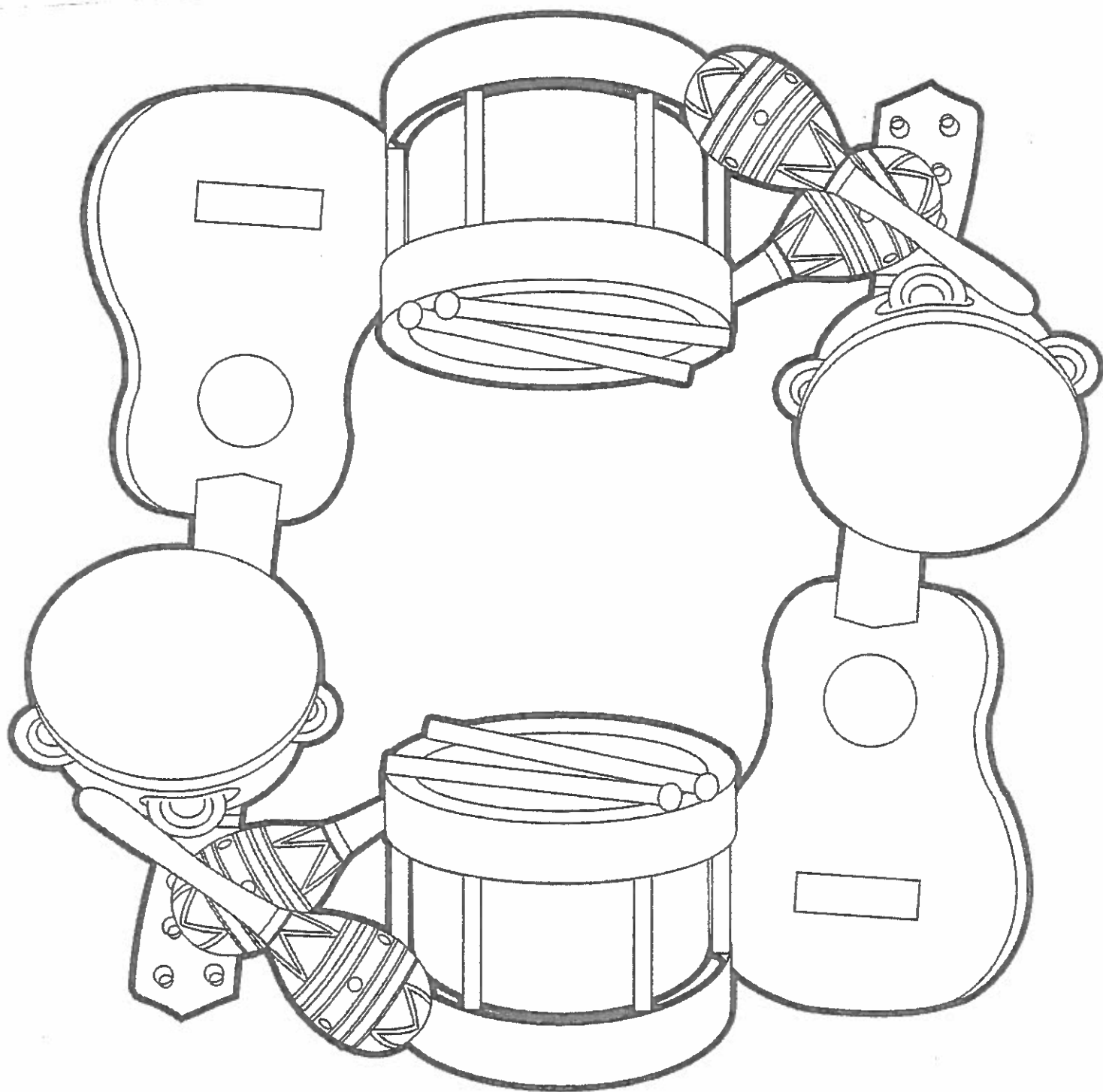
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Name _____

Date _____



SEL in Mamaroneck: Districtwide - Summer Course Projects

Mindfulness in Education Summer Course

July 22, 23 and 24, 2014

Liz Slade

Requirements for Completion:

- 15 meeting hours
- Two lesson plans
- Written sequence of proposed lessons for the fall

Course Participants and Requirements Completed as of 8/26/14

Participant	15 Meeting Hours	Written Assignment
Julia Aiello	x	x
Holly Filardi	x	X
Alyssa Mascaretti	x	x
Sara McGuinness	x	
Christine Mozian	x	x
Maggie Nolan	x	x
Nell Plunkett	x	X
Amy Rosen	x	x
Bernadette Tyler	x	x

Participants who have not completed assignments will be doing so in the coming weeks. I will notify Personnel as each additional participant completes requirements.

SEL in Mamaroneck: Districtwide - Summer Course Projects

Mindfulness in Education Summer Course Participant Sign In

Date 7-24-14

Bernadette Tyler

Alyssa Mascaretti

Amy Posen

Christie, Rozian

Holly Finkel

Nell Plunkett

Maggie Nolan

Sara McSwinnery

Julia Aiello

Mindfulness in Education Summer Course

Participant Sign In

Date 7/23/14

Garry Rosen
Bernadette Tyler
Christine Mangan
Maggie Nolan
Nell Plunkett
Alyssa Mascaretti
Holly Filardi
Sara McSummers
Julia Aiello

Mindfulness in Education Summer Course

Participant Sign In

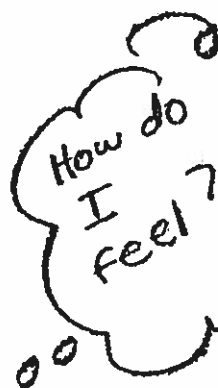
Date 7/22/14

Bernadette Tyler
Alyssa Mascaretti
Nell Plunkett
Holly Filardi
Julia Aiello
Christine Mozian
Maggie Nolan
Amy Posen
Sara McGuinness

Emergency Breath

If I am wound up...

- Stop



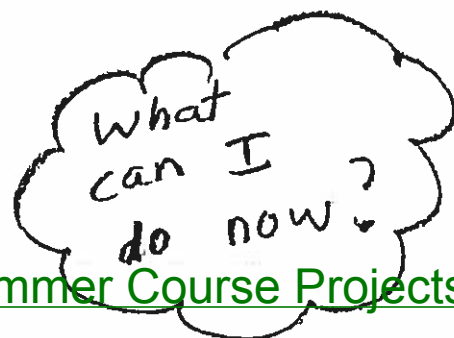
- Name my feeling



- Breathe



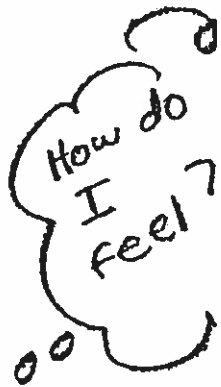
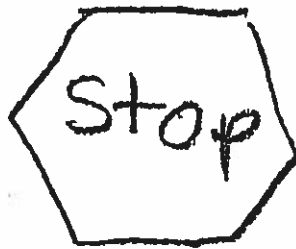
- Think



Emergency Breath

If I am wound up...

- Stop



- Name my feeling



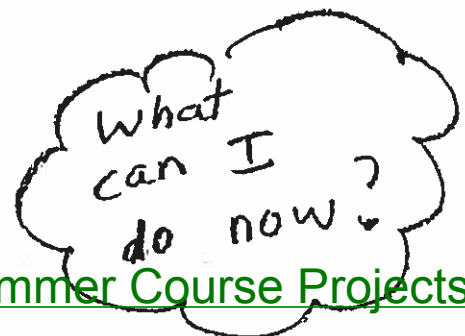
- Breathe



- Think



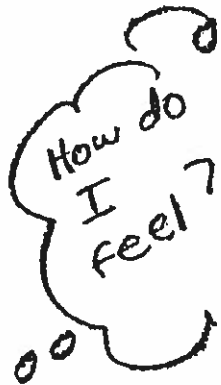
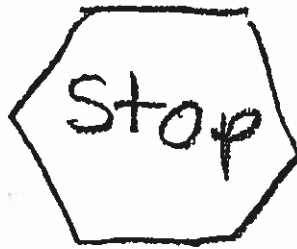
...



Emergency Breath

If I am wound up...

- Stop



- Name my feeling



- Breathe



- Think



...

