

Mastering Mindfulness

Lesson Objective:

- Students will learn and practice three mindfulness techniques: body scan, mindful walking, and visualization.
- Students will understand how mindfulness can help them manage stress, stay focused, and improve emotional awareness.

Materials Needed:



- Copy of Chapter 2: Mastering Mindfulness
- Space for mindful walking (playground/gym/open space in classroom)
- Paper and pencils for reflection
- Markers and poster paper for the activity
- Optional: Calm background music for visualization exercise
- Home Connection Letter

Introduction to the Topic (10 minutes)

Greeting Outline:

- Welcome the children and have them sit in a circle (if applicable)
- Briefly discuss what it means to manage stress, stay focused and improve our awareness of things both inside ourselves and outside ourselves.

Greeting and Circle Time Teacher Script

1. Warm Welcome and Opening Discussion:

- “Good morning, everyone! Today, we’re going to learn more about a skill that will help us manage stress, stay focused, and improve our awareness: mindfulness.”
Wait for the children to settle.

2. Discussion Starter

- “Has anyone experienced something called “stress”? How does “stress” feel for you? When are sometimes you might have felt “stress”? Does stress help or hurt your focus on things that are important?” Wait for a few children to respond and acknowledge their answers.
- “Right, many of us have experienced stress before and it can feel different for each person. However, when things are very stressful, it can sometimes be hard to concentrate and focus on things that are important. In the chapter we’re about to read, Ollie and his friends learn new mindfulness techniques that help

them handle the pressures of fifth grade. Let's see what we can learn from them."

Read the Chapter (15 minutes)

Story Time Outline:



- Read chapter 2 aloud
- Ask questions during key parts in the story.

Story Time Teacher Script:

1. Prepare the Students for the Story:

- "The second chapter in our novel *The Star Squad: Navigating Fifth Grade Adventures* is called "Mastering Mindfulness" (Read the chapter aloud, pausing at key moments to ask questions and engage the children.)

2. Read the Chapter with Emphasis on Key Moments:

- **While reading**, pause during key moments.
- **Ask Questions:**
 - How did Ollie, Harriet, and the others feel at the start of the chapter?
 - What mindfulness techniques did Mr. Jenkins teach the class?
 - What is a body scan, and how did it help Ollie and Harriet?
 - Why did Buzz find mindful walking useful?
 - How did Sammy use the body scan to recognize and release tension?
 - What was Benny's experience with mindful walking?
 - Why did Maya appreciate using mindfulness at her new school?
 - What did Buzz imagine during the visualization exercise?
 - How can practicing mindfulness help the friends as they navigate fifth grade?
 - How did the group use their new mindfulness techniques by the end of the chapter?

Chapter 2: Mastering Mindfulness

As the second week of fifth grade began, Ollie, Harriet, Benny, Sammy, Buzz, Betty, and Maya were already feeling the pressure of their new responsibilities. With more advanced lessons, new expectations, and extracurricular activities on their plates, it was easy to feel overwhelmed. The friends had learned about mindful breathing in fourth grade, but now, it seemed like they needed something more to help them stay focused and calm.

During their morning meeting, Mr. Jenkins noticed the students' restless energy. "Good morning, class," he began with a warm smile. "Today, we're going to talk about mindfulness—something you learned a little bit about last year. But now that you're in fifth grade, it's time to take it up a notch."

The friends exchanged curious glances.

"Mindfulness is more than just focusing on your breath," Mr. Jenkins continued. "It's about being aware of your thoughts, emotions, and what's happening around you without getting overwhelmed by them. I'm going to teach you a few advanced mindfulness practices that will help you find focus and calm, especially when things start to feel stressful."

Expanding Their Mindfulness Practices

Mr. Jenkins introduced three new mindfulness techniques: body scan, mindful walking, and visualization. Each of these practices built upon the mindful breathing they had already learned, adding more ways to stay grounded.

The Body Scan

"Let's start with a body scan," Mr. Jenkins said, inviting the class to close their eyes and take a comfortable seated position. "As you breathe deeply, I want you to focus on different parts of your body, starting from your feet and moving up to your head. Notice if there's any tension or if certain areas feel relaxed."

Ollie, always the planner, found himself noticing the tightness in his shoulders that he hadn't realized was there. As he breathed, he imagined the tension melting away, leaving him feeling lighter.

Harriet, who was always full of energy, struggled to stay still at first, but as she worked her way through the body scan, she noticed that her legs, which had been jittery, began to feel calm.

Buzz, always full of creative energy, found that paying attention to his body helped him realize just how fidgety he was. The body scan gave him a moment to settle down.

Sammy, ever in tune with his emotions, felt the practice helping him relax. He noticed that his breathing became deeper and more even as he moved through the scan.

Benny, who was naturally steady, found it easy to focus on each part of his body and release any tension.

Betty, ever the problem-solver, appreciated how this practice gave her a tool to use when she felt anxious. She made a mental note to use the body scan whenever she felt nervous before a test.

Maya, new to mindfulness but eager to learn, enjoyed the feeling of calm that spread through her as she followed along. It was a new experience for her, but one she could see herself using.

Mindful Walking

Next, Mr. Jenkins introduced mindful walking. He took the class outside to the playground and asked them to walk slowly, paying attention to each step.

“Feel the ground beneath your feet,” he said. “Notice how your body moves with each step. Try to keep your mind focused on the sensation of walking.”

Harriet loved being outside, and mindful walking gave her a way to channel her energy. She focused on how her feet felt as they touched the ground, noticing details she had never paid attention to before.

Buzz, who often found himself daydreaming, noticed how the practice kept him in the present moment. Instead of thinking about his next project, he paid attention to how his legs moved and how the breeze felt on his face.

Ollie, ever the planner, found that mindful walking helped him clear his mind. When he had a lot to think about, this practice would help him take a break from his thoughts.

Benny, always steady, enjoyed the peacefulness of mindful walking. It was a simple way to stay calm and focused.

Betty found that walking slowly and mindfully helped her feel more grounded, especially when her thoughts felt scattered.

Sammy, who loved nature, appreciated how the practice made him notice the little things around him—like the sound of the wind or the rustling of leaves.

Maya, still getting used to mindfulness, found the practice calming. It helped her let go of her nervousness and focus on something simple.

Visualization

The last practice was visualization. Mr. Jenkins asked the class to close their eyes again and imagine a calm place—somewhere they felt safe and relaxed.

“Picture all the details of your calm place,” he said. “What does it look like? What sounds do you hear? How does it make you feel?”

Ollie imagined being at his family’s cabin by the lake. He could see the water sparkling in the sunlight and hear the gentle lapping of the waves. It made him feel peaceful.

Harriet pictured herself on a soccer field, not during a game, but just kicking the ball around. It was a place where she felt free and at ease.

Buzz visualized being in his room, surrounded by his art supplies, where he could create without distractions.

Sammy pictured a forest trail where he often went hiking with his family. He could hear birds chirping and feel the cool shade of the trees.

Benny imagined himself sitting on a dock at his favorite fishing spot, where the water was always calm and the sky stretched on forever.

Betty visualized herself in the library, surrounded by books and the quiet atmosphere that always helped her think clearly.

Maya, new to this practice, pictured the park in her old neighborhood. She remembered the feeling of sitting under a big oak tree, where she had always felt safe.

Putting Mindfulness into Practice

The next day, the friends decided to put their new mindfulness techniques to the test. They each chose a different practice to try when they felt stressed or distracted.

Ollie used the body scan when he felt overwhelmed by his homework. It helped him relax and tackle his assignments one step at a time.

Harriet practiced mindful walking before soccer practice to calm her nerves and focus on her game.

Buzz used visualization to clear his mind when he felt too distracted to concentrate on a project. It helped him find his focus.

Sammy practiced the body scan when he felt frustrated. It helped him recognize where he was holding tension and release it.

Benny used mindful walking whenever he felt restless. It helped him stay calm and grounded.

Betty practiced visualization before tests. It helped her find a calm place in her mind and approach her work with a clearer head.

Maya, still exploring these new practices, found that mindful walking helped her feel more comfortable in her new school. It gave her something simple to focus on when she felt nervous.

Reflecting on Their Progress

At the end of the week, the group gathered under their favorite tree to talk about what they had learned.

“I didn’t realize there were so many ways to practice mindfulness,” Harriet said, stretching her legs out. “The body scan really helped me calm down.”

Buzz grinned. “Visualization is my favorite. It’s like taking a mini-vacation in my mind.”

Betty nodded. “And now we have more tools to use, not just when we’re stressed, but anytime we need to stay focused.”

Ollie, always the planner, added, “Mindfulness is about more than just feeling calm. It helps us stay in control, even when things get challenging.”

Benny, ever steady, smiled. “And we can use these practices anytime, anywhere. That’s what makes them so helpful.”

Sammy, thoughtful as always, said, “It’s like having a toolbox for our minds. Whatever we need, we have a way to handle it.”

Maya, feeling more at home with her new friends, spoke up. “I’m glad we’re learning this together. It’s helped me feel less nervous about starting at a new school.”

As the friends looked forward to the rest of fifth grade, they felt confident that their new mindfulness skills would help them stay focused and calm, no matter what challenges lay ahead. And with each practice, they knew they were becoming more aware, more capable, and more ready for whatever came next.

3. Post-Chapter Teacher Script

- **Teacher:** “Well, Mindfulness strategies seemed to really help Ollie and his friends. Maybe they’ll be helpful for us too.”

4. Post-Chapter Questions

These questions encourage children to think deeply about what they listened to and how mindfulness techniques might be helpful to them.

- Why do you think Mr. Jenkins wanted to teach the class more advanced mindfulness techniques?
- How does the body scan help you become more aware of your body?
- Why is mindful walking helpful when you’re feeling restless?
- How can visualizing a calm place help when you’re stressed or distracted?
- How might practicing mindfulness before tests or big events be beneficial?
- What other situations could mindfulness help with outside of school?
- Why is it important to notice where your body holds tension, like Sammy did?
- What emotions did Maya experience, and how did mindfulness help her feel more comfortable?
- How can we remind ourselves to use mindfulness when we’re feeling overwhelmed?
- What’s one mindfulness technique you’d like to use more often, and why?

Do an Activity (20 minutes)

- Students will practice three mindfulness techniques: body scan, mindful walking, and visualization, to experience different ways to manage stress and stay focused.

Activity: 3 Mindfulness Practices (20 minutes)

1. Introduce Activity

- “Now that we’ve learned about mindfulness in the story, we’re going to practice the techniques Ollie and his friends used. We’ll try a body scan, mindful walking, and visualization. Let’s start by practicing each one as a class.”

2. Mindfulness Exercises

Body Scan

- If you have soft background music, you can play it during this exercise.
“Alright everyone, we’re going to start with the *body scan* exercise. I’d like everyone to sit comfortably in your chairs or on the floor. You can close your eyes or keep them softly focused on a spot in front of you.

First, take a deep breath in through your nose, and slowly breathe out through your mouth. Let’s do that again. Breathe in... and out. One more time, breathe in... and out.

Now, we’re going to begin focusing on different parts of your body, starting from your feet and moving up to your head. As I guide you, notice if you feel any tightness or relaxation in each part. There’s no need to change anything—just notice what’s happening in your body.

Start by focusing on your feet. Feel them resting on the floor. Notice if they feel heavy or light, warm or cool. Just observe.

Now, move your attention to your legs. Feel them resting on your chair or the floor. Notice any sensations in your legs. Are they relaxed or tense? Just observe without judgment.

Next, bring your focus to your stomach. As you breathe in and out, notice how your stomach moves. Is it relaxed? Or is there any tension there?

Now, focus on your chest. Feel the air filling your lungs as you breathe in and out. Notice if there’s any tightness or if it feels light and open.

Move your attention to your shoulders. We often carry a lot of tension here. Notice if your shoulders are relaxed or if they're feeling tight. Try to let them relax, letting go of any tightness.

Now, focus on your arms and hands. Notice how they feel resting on your lap or by your side. Are they relaxed? Just observe.

Finally, focus on your face. Notice if you're holding any tension in your jaw, forehead, or around your eyes. Let your face relax.

Take one more deep breath in... and out. Slowly bring your awareness back to the room. When you're ready, open your eyes.

Great job, everyone. That was our body scan. Remember, you can use this whenever you need to check in with how your body is feeling or when you need to relax.”

Mindful Walking

- “Now, we’re going to try *mindful walking*. We’ll walk slowly and pay attention to every step we take. The goal is to focus on how our bodies move and how our feet feel as they touch the ground.
- First, let’s all stand up quietly and find a space where you can walk without bumping into anyone. Once you’re ready, stand still for a moment and feel your feet on the ground. Notice how your body feels as you stand there—your weight, how your feet connect with the floor.
- Now, begin walking slowly. As you take each step, focus on how your foot lifts off the ground and how it touches the floor again. Feel the ground beneath your feet as you walk. Pay attention to every part of the movement—lifting, stepping, placing.
- As you walk, notice how your legs feel with each step. How does your body shift as you move? Are your steps heavy or light?
- Keep your attention on the feeling of your feet touching the ground. If your mind wanders, that’s okay. Just gently bring your focus back to your steps.
- Let’s keep walking mindfully for a few more moments, focusing on each step... each movement... being aware of how our bodies are moving.
- Now, slowly bring your walking to a stop. Stand still again, noticing how your feet feel on the ground. Take one more deep breath in... and out.
- You can return to your seats now. That was mindful walking—an easy way to focus and calm your mind. You can do this whenever you need to relax or refocus.”

Visualization

“Now we’re going to try a *visualization* exercise. This is where we use our imaginations to picture a calm, peaceful place where we feel safe and relaxed.

Everyone, sit comfortably, close your eyes, and take a deep breath in... and out. Breathe in... and out.

Now, I’d like you to imagine a place that makes you feel calm and happy. This place can be real, like a park or your home, or it can be a place from your imagination, like a quiet beach or a magical forest. Picture it in your mind as clearly as you can.

Start by imagining what this place looks like. What do you see? Are there trees, water, mountains, or a cozy room? Look around in your mind and notice all the little details.

Next, imagine the sounds of your calm place. Do you hear birds chirping, waves crashing, or maybe the sound of the wind? What are the calming sounds you hear in your peaceful place?

Now, think about how it feels to be there. Is there a gentle breeze? Is the sun shining on your skin? Imagine how it feels to be in this safe and peaceful place.

Take a moment to really enjoy being in your calm place. This is a space where nothing can bother you. You’re safe, relaxed, and calm.

Whenever you feel stressed or overwhelmed, you can come back to this place in your mind. It’s always there when you need a break or a moment of peace.

Now, take one more deep breath in... and out. Slowly, start to bring your attention back to the room. When you’re ready, open your eyes.

That was visualization. It’s a great way to take a break when you’re feeling stressed or when you need a moment to refocus. You can imagine your calm place anytime, anywhere.”

3. Reflection

Have students reflect on which mindfulness practice they liked best by writing or drawing their experience.



“Now that we’ve tried all three practices think about which one felt best for you. Draw or write about your experience and how you felt during each technique.”

4. Wrapping it Up

- “We’ve practiced three different mindfulness techniques today: body scan, mindful walking, and visualization. Think about how each of these can help you when you’re feeling stressed or distracted. Mindfulness is something we can use anytime—at school, at home, or anywhere. The more we practice, the better we get at staying calm and focused.”

Wrap Up the Lesson (5 minutes)

1. Review and Reflection Overview:

- Review what they learned about mindfulness techniques
- Ask a few children to share which technique they liked the best and where and when might they try it out.

Review and Reflection Teacher Script

1. Gather in a Circle for Reflection:

- “Let’s all come back together in a circle.”
- “I’d like a few of us in the class to share which mindfulness



technique they enjoyed the most and where they think they might try it the next time they are feeling out of sorts and a bit stressed.” Listen to a few responses and provide positive reinforcement.

2. Closing

- “Great job on giving something new a try! Sometimes new things can feel uncomfortable, but I’m really proud of you all for trying the mindfulness techniques out.”

Home Connection Letter

1. Sending Information Home:

- “Before you go, I have a letter for you to take home to your caregiver. It explains that we talked about managing stress and using 3 different mindfulness techniques to manage our stress.”
- Hand out the letters as the children prepare to leave. “Great job, everyone! I’m so proud of how well you learned this new strategy.”

Parent Letter

Sending Information Home:

- Provide each child with a letter to take home to their parents explaining the lesson.

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Today in class, we learned about mindfulness techniques to help us manage stress, stay focused, and be more aware of our emotions and surroundings. We practiced three techniques: body scan, mindful walking, and visualization. Each of these tools helps students stay grounded and calm, especially when they feel overwhelmed by schoolwork or other responsibilities.

We encourage you to ask your child about the mindfulness techniques they practiced today. They might enjoy sharing a body scan, trying mindful walking around your home or yard, or even guiding you through their favorite visualization.

Thank you for your support as we continue learning new skills to help us navigate fifth grade with confidence!

Best regards,