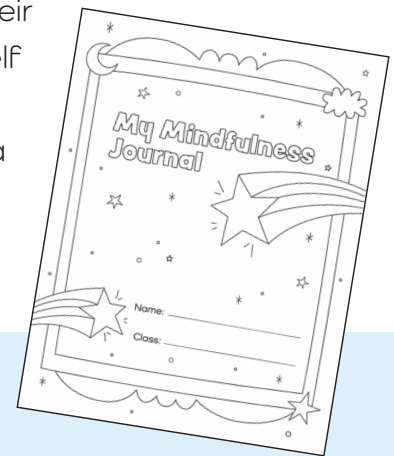


MINDFULNESS JOURNAL

Teacher's Guide

Welcome!

This activity is intended to be an easy and enjoyable way to bring mindfulness strategies into your classroom. The prompts will encourage your students to write, color, breathe, visualize, and reflect on different aspects of their own physical, mental, and emotional wellness. The journal itself is designed to be easy to use in any classroom setting. It can become part of your daily routine, with students completing a different prompt each day of the week, or it can be used as part of a mini-unit or exploration of mindfulness.



What types of prompts are included?

The mindfulness prompts in this journal will help your students explore the following areas:

MINDFULNESS

Awareness of emotions and thoughts, being present in the moment.

EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

Becoming better able to identify our own thoughts/feelings and recognize the feelings of others.

POSITIVE SELF-TALK

Learning how to become aware of our inner dialogue and practice being kind and compassionate with ourselves.

BREATHING ACTIVITIES

Simple but effective techniques students can use at any time to help them focus, be present, and reduce feelings of stress and/or anxiety.

REFLECTION

Taking time to think about previous events, actions, or decisions and recognizing our feelings about them.

How do I begin using the journals with my class?

1 Decide if you will create journals for daily, weekly, or yearlong use.

- Print enough copies for your students.

2 Pass out or display the 'Welcome to Your Mindfulness Journal' page.

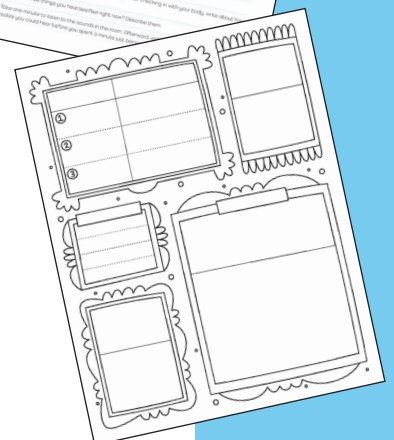
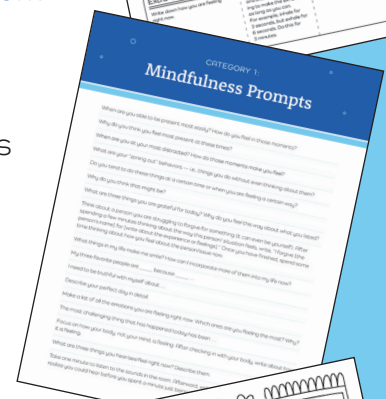
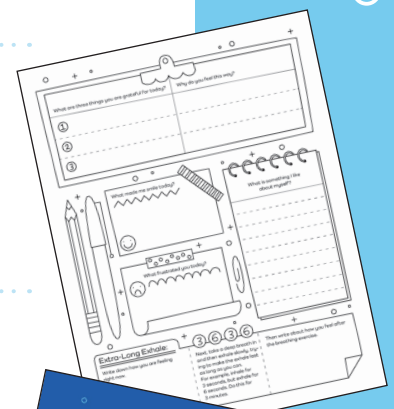
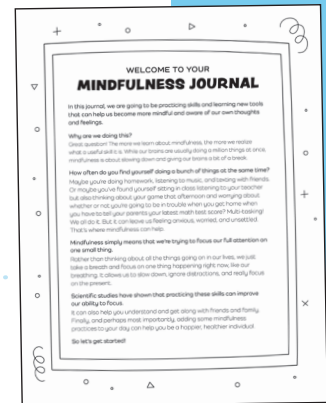
- Read this page with your students or have them read through it on their own.

3 If desired, give students time to:

- Explore the journal on their own.
- Color their front covers and/or begin the first prompt.

4 Each day you use the journal, choose one prompt from the page or from the list of additional prompts.

- If using the pages with prompts already included, have the students answer one or multiple prompts each day.
- If using the blank pages so you can choose the prompts each day, display and/or read the prompt aloud.
- Give students time to complete the prompt.
- If desired, ask if students want to share their responses, but do not require it.

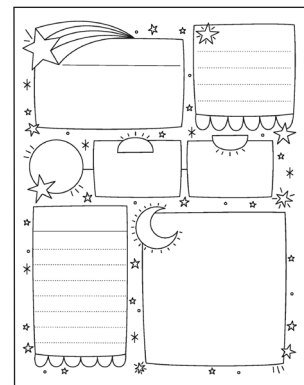
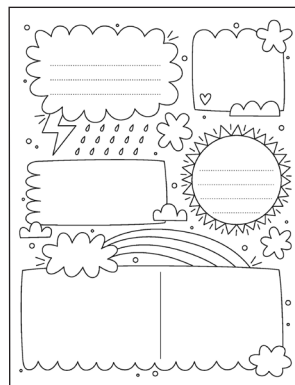
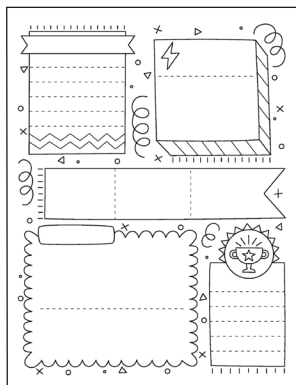


Our classroom schedule is already so full. How can I fit in this mindfulness activity?

One of the best aspects of these prompts is their flexibility. You can complete these prompts/activities at various times throughout the day.

SOME POSSIBLE SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION MIGHT INCLUDE:

- As a bell ringer or start-of-class activity.
- As an early-finisher activity.
- Part of a “choice-board”-type lesson where students can choose which activity they would like to complete and/or at which time.
- In a “mindfulness center” or “calm-down corner.”
- After lunch or recess when students often struggle with transitioning from active/loud activities to calm/focused ones.
- At the end of the school day.
- Independently — a teacher could assign students several prompts at the start of the week and ask them to complete their journals during free/quiet time throughout the week.



CATEGORY 1:

Mindfulness Prompts

When are you able to be present most easily? How do you feel in those moments?

Why do you think you feel most present at these times?

When are you at your most distracted? How do those moments make you feel?

What are your “zoning out” behaviors — i.e., things you do without even thinking about them?

Do you tend to do these things at a certain time or when you are feeling a certain way?

Why do you think that might be?

What are three things you are grateful for today? Why do you feel this way about what you listed?

Think about a person you are struggling to forgive for something (it can even be yourself). After spending a few minutes thinking about the way this person/ situation feels, write, “I forgive [the person’s name] for [write about the experience or feelings].” Once you have finished, spend some time thinking about how you feel about the person/issue now.

What things in my life make me smile? How can I incorporate more of them into my life now?

My three favorite people are _____ because _____ ...

I need to be truthful with myself about ...

Describe your perfect day in detail.

Make a list of all the emotions you are feeling right now. Which ones are you feeling the most? Why?

The most challenging thing that has happened today has been ...

Focus on how your body, not your mind, is feeling. After checking in with your body, write about how it is feeling.

What are three things you hear/see/feel right now? Describe them.

Take one minute to listen to the sounds in the room. Afterward, write about three things you didn’t realize you could hear before you spent a minute just being present in this space.

CATEGORY 2:

Emotional Awareness Prompts

What's going on with me right now is ...

What do I need to let go of?

Something that happened to me in the past was ...

I wish I could meet/know ...

Something that makes me uncomfortable is _____ because ...

My feelings about death are ...

What made your day better today?

What made you angry today?

When I'm sad, I tend to ...

If you could have three wishes to help your life, what would you wish for and why?

Who is/was the best adult you ever knew? How did they make you feel?

If you could have one superpower, what would it be, and how would it change your life?

What is one thing that makes you happy?

What is the one thing you want your future self to know about you?

What is the best advice you have ever received? Who gave you that advice, and why was it valuable to you?

If I asked your friends what is the one thing that they find special about you, what would they say and why?

What are you most worried about in any aspect of your life? Why do you think this one is the biggest worry?

If you were to write a story about your life so far, what would you title it and why?

Positive Self-Talk Prompts

What do I love most about myself?

Think about the thoughts that go through your head when you feel bad about yourself. Now imagine those thoughts are going through your best friend's head about themselves. Write them a short note explaining why they don't have to feel that way.

I'm a good person because ...

A compliment that made me smile was _____ because ...

I'm proud of ...

What makes me feel at peace is ...

What is one activity that cheers you up no matter what?

What is your best inner quality?

Pay yourself a compliment. What compliment was it, and why do you deserve it today?

What is something you would STOP doing if you felt more confident?

What new thing would you try if you knew you couldn't fail?

Write a short thank-you note to your body for all it does for you each day.

What are three things in your life that make you unique?

What are five things you know you're good at.

Write about a time when you received recognition for your hard work and achievement. How did it make you feel?

What does it mean to you to have high self-esteem?

CATEGORY 4:

Breathing Activities

Extra-Long Exhale:

For one minute, write about how you are currently feeling. Next, take a deep breath in and then exhale slowly, trying to make the exhale last as long as you can. For example, inhale for 3 seconds, but exhale for 6 seconds. Do this for 3 minutes. Then write about how you feel after the breathing exercise.

Belly Breathing:

For one minute, write about what feelings feel “biggest” in your brain/body right now. Next, place one hand on your stomach and one hand over your heart. Breathe in and out through your nose, paying attention to whether your stomach, chest, both, or neither move as you breathe. With the next few breaths, try to focus on breathing the air deeper into your lungs. Can you make your chest rise while your stomach stays still? For the next few breaths, try the reverse. Can you breathe so that your stomach rises and falls with each breath, but your chest remains still? After 3-5 minutes, write about the emotions you feel now. If they changed, why do you think that happened?

Wave Breathing:

Take one minute to write about something that is currently bothering you. Next, take a deep breath in through your nose. As you inhale, imagine that a warm, pleasant wave is washing over you. Exhale slowly, blowing the air out through your mouth. As you do, imagine that all the thoughts and feelings about what was bothering you are being carried away little by little by the breath. Repeat for approximately 3-5 minutes, each inhale/exhale comforting you and taking away a little more of what is bothering you. Afterward, write about how you feel now.

Equal Breathing:

Shut your eyes and spend one minute focusing on your normal breathing. Listen to the air coming into and out of your body. Then, inhale slowly, counting to four as you do so. Then exhale for the same four-second count. Each time you breathe in and out, be aware of the feeling of fullness and emptiness in your lungs at the count of four during the inhale and exhale. Afterward, write about this exercise. Was it challenging to stay focused? What did you do when you realized your mind had drifted? Do you feel different now than when you began? How so?

Box Breathing:

Exhale to a count of four. Hold your lungs empty for a four-count. Inhale to a count of four. Hold your lungs empty for a four-count. Exhale and begin the pattern over again. After repeating this cycle for approximately 3-5 minutes, write about how you are currently feeling.

CATEGORY 5:

Reflection Prompts

How does it feel to be your current age?

.....

What do you wish people knew about you?

.....

What is your earliest memory? How do you feel about it?

.....

What is your most treasured possession? Why does it mean so much to you?

.....

When was the last time you helped someone? What did you do?

.....

What is the one thing you'd like to go back in time and change?

.....

What has caused you happiness and joy this week?

.....

How would you like to be remembered by those around you?

.....

What would you like to do more of?

.....

What would you like to do less of?

.....

What is one way you show people you love that you care about them that you could also do for yourself?

.....

What is one thing you like about your body?

.....

What is one piece of advice you were given and didn't take, but wish you had?

.....

How do you handle having a bad day? What is good about your method of dealing with bad days? What would you like to do differently?

.....


What is your favorite photo of yourself? Is it a selfie? Are you with other people? Describe it and explain why it's your favorite.

.....

What three values do you truly believe are the most important in your life (e.g., honesty, kindness, justice, loyalty, intelligence, etc.)



WELCOME TO YOUR **MINDFULNESS JOURNAL**




In this journal, we are going to be practicing skills and learning new tools that can help us become more mindful and aware of our own thoughts and feelings.

Why are we doing this?


Great question! The more we learn about mindfulness, the more we realize what a useful skill it is. While our brains are usually doing a million things at once, mindfulness is about slowing down and giving our brains a bit of a break.

How often do you find yourself doing a bunch of things at the same time?



Maybe you're doing homework, listening to music, and texting with friends. Or maybe you've found yourself sitting in class listening to your teacher but also thinking about your game that afternoon and worrying about whether or not you're going to be in trouble when you get home when you have to tell your parents your latest math test score? Multi-tasking! We all do it. But it can leave us feeling anxious, worried, and unsettled. That's where mindfulness can help.

Mindfulness simply means that we're trying to focus our full attention on one small thing.



Rather than thinking about all the things going on in our lives, we just take a breath and focus on one thing happening right now, like our breathing. It allows us to slow down, ignore distractions, and really focus on the present.

Scientific studies have shown that practicing these skills can improve our ability to focus.

It can also help you understand and get along with friends and family. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, adding some mindfulness practices to your day can help you be a happier, healthier individual.

So let's get started!





My Mindfulness Journal

Name: _____

Class: _____

Three important people in my life are ...	because ...
①	
②	
③	

A compliment that made me smile was ...
because ...

I wish I could meet/know ...

When was the last time you helped someone?
What did you do?

Belly Breathing:
For one minute, write about what feelings feel "biggest" in your brain/body right now.
Next, place one hand on your stomach and one hand over your heart. Breathe in and out through your nose, paying attention to whether your stomach, chest, both, or neither move as you breathe. With the next few breaths, try to focus on breathing the air deeper into your lungs. Can you make your chest rise while your stomach stays still? For the next few breaths, try the reverse. Can you breathe so that your stomach rises and falls with each breath, but your chest remains still? After 3-5 minutes, write about the emotions you feel now. If they changed, why do you think that happened?

Describe your perfect day.

If you could have one superpower, what would it be?
How would it change your life?

What made your day better today?

Why did that make your day better?

Equal Breathing:

- Shut your eyes and spend one minute focusing on your breathing. Listen as you breathe in and out.
- Inhale slowly for a count of 4.
- Exhale slowly for a count of 4.
- Each time you breathe in and out, pay attention to how your body feels.

Take a minute to write about how you felt before Equal Breathing and how you feel now. Do you feel different? In what way?

I'm proud of ...

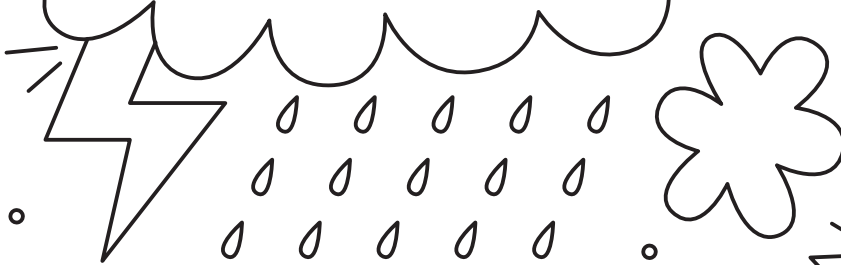
The most challenging thing that has happened today...

.....

.....

.....

Who or what made today better for you? How?



What is one thing that makes you happy?

.....

.....

.....

.....

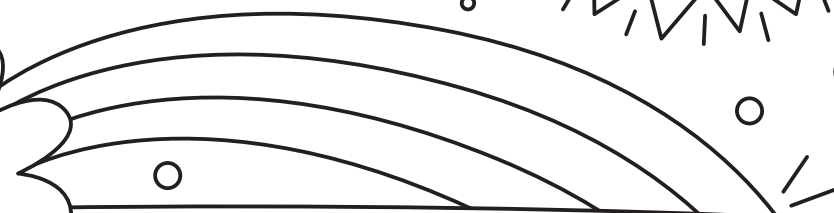
What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?

Wave Breathing:

- Take one minute to think about anything that is currently worrying/bothering you.
- Next, take one deep breath in through your nose. As you do, imagine a warm, pleasant wave washing over you.
- Breath out slowly through your mouth.
- As you do, imagine that wave heading back out to sea, slowly taking all the worries or bothers you thought about before with it.
- Repeat this for 3-5 minutes, with each inhale comforting you and each exhale washing away a few more worries.

Write about how you felt before Wave Breathing and how you feel now. Do you feel different? In what way?

.....



Focus on how your body, not your mind, is feeling. After checking in with your body, write about how it is feeling.

What is one thing you like about your body?

What would you like to do...

More of?

Less of?

Write a short thank-you note to your body for all it does for you each day.

Box Breathing:

Exhale to a count of four. Hold your lungs empty for a four-count. Inhale to a count of four. Hold your lungs empty for a four-count. Exhale and begin the pattern over again. After repeating this cycle for approximately 3-5 minutes, write about how you are currently feeling.

