

# Mindfulness (Year 5)

## Unit Overview

### Summary

Children will practice a variety of mindfulness techniques and make links between mindfulness and their emotions with strategies that they can use in everyday life to calm themselves. They will re-visit techniques introduced in previous units such as mindful walking, gratitude wishes and visualisation and be introduced to some new techniques such as mindful doodling and splitting your attention. The lessons aim to deepen mindfulness practice to enable children to shift their own attention to different aspects of their environment and reflect upon and feel empowered to control and change, feelings in their own bodies and minds.

### Prior learning

If children have been following the Striver plan since the beginning, they will have had 6 sessions of mindfulness in each of the previous years. These focused on breathing, sounds, focus objects, breathing buddies, mindfulness jars, gratitude and positive wishes, mindful eating and visualisation. Children may have continued some aspects of mindfulness from these sessions. If pupils have completed the Yoga units, they will recognise some features of mindfulness within yoga practice. The first session recaps some of the techniques introduced last year.

### Teaching Tips

- Timings in the lesson are based on short sessions of 15 minutes.
- You might wish to incorporate these sessions into the school day. For example, a short session after break time to calm and be ready for lessons.
- For most sessions, children should sit in a chair so they can place their feet flat on the floor. Some children might be more comfortable in a more relaxed pose such as reclining on a bean bag but a connection between their body and the Earth is important.
- If possible, dim the lighting though it should not be completely dark.
- Carry out the session in a quiet area so that children can focus on their thoughts with minimal distraction.
- Lessons incorporate the use of a chime sound. This could be from a triangle or xylophone chime with a soft, reverberating sound.
- The aim of this unit is to practice mindfulness exercises introduced in previous years and introduce new mindfulness practices to give children tools to help them focus attention, increase self-awareness and know how to handle anxiety causing situations..
- Some children will find it hard to focus for a full session initially, praise those children for the time that they manage and see whether their ability to focus and pay attention increases over time. Reassure children that it is normal to lose concentration at some points and learning to re-focus their concentration again is a valuable skill. The sessions incorporate variety and children might find some easier or more attention grabbing than others.
- Pick a time when children have been active and are ready to settle down.
- The lessons are written as a script with some suggested actions or activities.

# Lesson 1 - Introduction (Year 5)

## Lesson Overview

### Learning Objectives:

To recap what Mindfulness means and reacquaint themselves with some mindful techniques.

### Success Criteria:

- Pupils understand the aim of practising Mindfulness.
- Pupils explore moving their mind focus and attention to environmental aspects and then back to themselves.

### Key Vocabulary:

Mindfulness, calm, noticing, emotions.

### Equipment & Resources:

- See Teaching Tips section for advice.

This session is slightly longer than the rest of the mindfulness session to give time to the the initial discussion. You could do both parts separately if preferred.

Introduction (10 minutes)

1	Ask children if they remember taking part in some mindfulness sessions in previous years.	<div>TEACHER NOTES</div> <p>If they do, you could ask whether any of the children continued some of the techniques that they practised?</p>
2	Can children suggest how mindfulness is a useful thing to learn to do? You could create a mind-map on the board if you wish with relevant mindfulness words.	<div>TEACHER NOTES</div> <p>You might need to give some prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emotional control.</li><li>• Learning your own mind</li><li>• Ability to change your focus.</li><li>• Attention.</li><li>• Relaxation.</li><li>• Getting you ready to learn.</li></ul>
3	Remind children that mindfulness is a way to understand how your mind reacts to things that happen and practice ways to settle your mind down. It includes exercises to help you develop your concentration, be aware of yourself and calm yourself.	
4	Introduce the idea of a red zone and a green zone. What does it feel like to be in the red zone? Can children suggest physical and mental indications that a person is in the red zone?	<div>TEACHER NOTES</div> <p>For example: Physical: Tense, muscles are tight, jaw is clenched, body looks ready to run or fight (fight or flight mode), lack of eye contact, fast heartbeat. Mental: stressed, overwhelmed, angry, upset, withdrawn.</p>
5	Can children suggest physical and mental indications that a person is in the green zone?	

6

How can a person use mindfulness to move from the red zone to the green zone?

TEACHER NOTES

See whether children can identify that mindfulness gives you a chance to pause, calm, reflect, use your breath. Spend a moment to notice where you are and distract yourself from destructive thoughts.

You might want to give children reminders of the types of activities that they have done in past mindfulness sessions such as breathing, bubble blowing, moving their attention to different environmental aspects such as sounds and smells, mindful walks, visualisation, mind jars and sending good wishes.

Main (7 minutes)

- 1

Can they remember what position they sat in when doing mindfulness sitting?  
Can they get ready for mindfulness now?
- 2

- Find a comfortable sitting position in a chair with your feet flat on the floor\*.
  - Shut your eyes if you are comfortable to do so.
  - Some children will feel more focused if they shut their eyes, others will not feel comfortable doing this. If they do not feel comfortable with eyes shut, they should gaze gently towards the ground, not at other people.
  - Rest your hands gently on your legs.
  - Focus your awareness on the feeling of your feet touching the floor, the strong Earth is supporting you.
  - Try to straighten your back but don't strain upright. Imagine a string coming out of the top of your head with a floating balloon attached to it. The balloon is stretching you gently upright.
  - Relax your shoulders. Bring them up towards your ears then roll them back to relax the muscles.
  - Focus on your mouth and your tongue. Your tongue should be lying relaxed in your mouth, not pushing anywhere. Your mouth should not feel tight and tense, think about how you have your mouth when you are going to sleep; relaxed and not clenched tightly shut.
- 3

Breathe quietly, inhale through your nose, feel your lungs fill and then exhale through your mouth quietly. Sit quietly just concentrating on your breathing for a while.

Clean air coming in to your lungs, feel your lungs expanding like balloons and then silently let the air out again and feel your lungs contracting.

Think about how your body feels when your lungs fill, do they pull your spine up straighter? Does the breath relax your muscles?

Breathe silently for a few moments.
- 4

If your mind wanders and you start to think of other things, try to bring your mind back to just focusing on your breathing.
- 5

Let's try square breathing which is something that you have done before.

  - Imagine a big square shape floating in front of you.
  - You trace the edge of the shape with your finger, begin in the bottom left corner.
  - Go up slowly to the corner.
  - Across.
  - Down.
  - and left, back to the start position.

TEACHER NOTES

See the next step for the guidance that children were given last year.

VARIATION

\*As noted in the teacher's notes, make adaptations for children who cannot sit still in an upright position but encourage contact between the feet and the ground if possible.

VARIATION

If children have a blocked nose, they should breathe in whichever way is most comfortable. Breathing should be quiet.

- 6 You are going to trace the square again, this time just with your mind's eye.
1. Begin in the bottom left and take a breath in while you trace the side up.
  2. Hold the breath in while you trace the top of the square.
  3. Breathe out while you trace the side down.
  4. Hold your breath while you trace the bottom back to the start.
- 7 Repeat this process a couple of times.
- 8 Now, try to lengthen your breath so that you count to 4 in your head while you trace each side.  
This is called square breathing.  
If you feel uncomfortable at any time, just return to normal breathing.
- 9 As you get better at this, your counting will become slower.  
As your lung capacity increases over time, you could count higher than 4.
- 10 Take your breathing back to normal and think about when you think a breath starts, when does it stop?
- 11 We are going to try one more breathing technique, this is called breathing through your spine.  
Imagine your spine in your back. It is made up of 33 small bones called Vertebrae that go from your bottom up to your brain.
- 12 Visualise your spine in your body. I want you to imagine that when you breathe in you are breathing all the way up from the bottom of your spine to the top. You could imagine a lift inside your body travelling upwards, each bone is a floor of the building.
- 13 As your lungs fill with the clean air, imagine the oxygen going to each part in turn, soothing any aches and straightening the bones, stretching your body up to the sky.
- 14 As the breath reaches the top of your head, tilt your head up towards the sun.
- 15 As you exhale, tilt your head forward to its natural position again and feel the vertebrae settling down into a new, calm, unstressed position.
- 16 Repeat this process a few times, each time untangling and straightening the spine. Imagine it getting stronger with your clean breaths.
- 17 I am going to play a chime in a moment, listen to the sound until you can no longer hear it then gently open your eyes and bring your attention back to the room.

Conclusion (3 minutes)

<div>1</div> <div>Ask children to reflect briefly upon how they feel now. Firstly, how does their body feel? Then how does their mind feel?.</div>	
<div>2</div> <div>Did they find it difficult to concentrate on their breathing? Did their mind wander to other things?</div>	<div>TEACHER NOTES</div> <div>Reassure them that this is a normal part of mindfulness. The skill when you begin is to be able to bring your attention back to your breathing when your mind gets distracted.</div>
<div>3</div> <div>Did it help to visualise the breath travelling around a square and through their spine?</div>	
<div>4</div> <div>Do they feel more calm or ready to concentrate on school work now than they usually do at this time?</div>	<div>TEACHER NOTES</div> <div>You are likely to get a variety of positive and negative responses. The hope is that by encouraging children to reflect, they are also supporting peers in recognising and sharing their opinions and similarities. Giving those children who could not get into the experience, through self-consciousness or preoccupations, guidance and confidence in giving it a go another time.</div>

## Lesson 2 - Mindful doodling (Year 5)

### Lesson Overview

#### Learning Objectives:

To try a cooperative mindful doodling exercise and reflect upon how it helps with being mindful.

#### Success Criteria:

- Children have tried mindful doodling and reflected upon the impact of doing this cooperatively.

#### Key Vocabulary:

concentration, silence, cooperation, consideration, compromise.

#### Equipment & Resources:

- See Teaching Tips section for advice.
- The timings for this session are not fixed, if you wish the children to have a longer doodling time then use whatever time that you have.
- Large poster sized or bigger, sheets of paper. Children will be drawing with each other. You could use a roll of wall backing paper that the whole class could use at once or large poster sheets for groups of children.
- Pens/markers (not pencils - there are no mistakes therefore you don't want children to be rubbing things out).
- Space on the floor for children to draw. Tables could be used but this limits the ability of children to share the drawing space as well.
- Doodling examples (**See resource 1**) to show the class.



Introduction (10 minutes)

- 1

Ask children whether they remember doing mindful colouring last year? Did they enjoy the experience? Has anyone continued to do this?
- 2

Explain that today they are doing something similar called mindful doodling. What is doodling? How does it differ from drawing pictures?
- 3

They are also going to be doing this cooperatively but without any talking.

TEACHER NOTES

Show the \*\*\*\*\*Doodling examples\*\*\*\*\*. You can also find video examples of people mindful doodling online. Colours aren't important. The doodling often uses lines and shapes and repeated patters as this is soothing to the mind  
There are no mistakes; if things aren't looking how you wanted, then adapt and change the doodle into something else or keep it different than you imagined.

4 They will be sharing the drawing space and can join their doodle with another person's doodle. Are there any rules that we should make so that arguments don't start?

TEACHER NOTES

Children are going to be trying to do this task silently so rules need to take account of this. For example, if someone joins their doodle to yours, you must let them and then adapt your plans to make the best of the joined doodle. You might have an idea in your mind of where your doodle is going but you need to keep in mind that this might change and that will be okay. Don't start drawing on top of another persons doodle, make the doodling cooperative by doodling a join between one person's doodle and another's. This will be quite difficult for some children. If you foresee problems, you could agree a class sign that someone can give the teacher if they are upset by something and a class sign that means a child should change what they are doing. Children will need to compromise, take other children's perspective and be considerate and this will be particularly hard for some children. Recognise this openly with the class before starting. Let them know that some children will find it hard and that you will support them. This will help them to feel supported rather than admonished if you need to take action. We are all different and some children find this type of thing very hard. Lets try it and see how it makes us feel as a class. Notice your feelings while you are doodling.

Main (7 minutes)

1	Begin the doodling and let children continue in silence for as long as you have available. Be aware of any children who look upset or are struggling and support them. You could start a doodle for a child to continue if they don't know how to start.	
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Conclusion (5 minutes)

1	Spend some time reflecting on the doodling. Did children enjoy it?	
2	Did it feel mindful?	
3	Did it feel different to the usual mindfulness sessions that we do? In what ways?	
4	How did they find the cooperative aspects; did they have to calm themselves or compromise at any point? Hos did they do this?	

# Lesson 3 - Mindful Walk Outdoors (Year 5)

## Lesson Overview

### Learning Objectives:

To practice mindfulness outdoors.

### Success Criteria:

Pupils are developing the ability to control their attention from the overview to the detail and from the external to the internal.

### Key Vocabulary:

attention, noticing, details, focus.

### Equipment & Resources:

See Teaching Tips section for advice.

- The activity for this session will depend upon your school facilities and upon the weather. Ideally the session will take place outdoors and children will be able to take a short walk. This could be through the school grounds or outside the school if this is possible. If you have fields and trees then take a route through them. An alternative is given for an indoor session.
- The indoor session takes place barefoot, ensure that there is space for this and no potential safety issues.

### Introduction (3 minutes)

1	Prepare for your walk and explain to the children that they are going to be taking a mindful walk. If you are staying indoors, children should remove their shoes and socks.	
2	Ask children to find a space to start in and stand up in their space.	
3	Spread their toes on the ground and feel their strong body balancing and the Earth supporting them.	

Main (10 minutes)

<div>1</div> <div>Outdoor Plan (if you are indoors go to step 15)</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask children to be quiet when walking and to keep a space around themselves free - not to walk closely in groups or pairs.</li><li>• Precise timings are not given, decide for yourself when to move through the stages of the walk depending upon the route and the time available.</li><li>• Re-order the foci if your route suits it.</li><li>• Begin the walk and ask children to focus on the feeling of their feet when walking, how does the ground feel beneath their feet; hard, soft, crunchy*</li></ul></div>	<div>VARIATION</div> <div>*This will vary depending upon the ground cover, try to take the children over grass if possible and even twigs and fallen leaves.</div>
<div>2</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stop walking, and listen.</li><li>• Bring your gaze down to the ground or close your eyes.</li><li>• What can you hear around you?</li></ul></div>	
<div>3</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take your attention to the loudest sounds around; cars, other people, machinery etc</li></ul></div>	
<div>4</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Now shift your attention to quieter sounds; can you hear birds or distant planes?</li></ul></div>	
<div>5</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Now shift your attention again, can you hear yourself breathing? Listen to your breathing for a few moments. Can you manage to block out the other sounds and turn your attention fully to your breathing.</li></ul></div>	
<div>6</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Now let's continue the walk. This time try to focus your attention on any smells around you. Breathe deeply through your nose, what can you smell?</li></ul></div>	
<div>7</div> <div><div>Now, look around.</div><div>Can you notice things that you wouldn't normally take notice of?*</div></div>	<div>TEACHER NOTES</div> <div>Use your environment to suggest features, this could include street furniture or signs, water pipe covers, noticing the individual plants and shrubs around, noticing the different types of trees.</div> <div>Encourage children to take notice of things that they would ordinarily miss walking this route in a non-mindful way.</div>
<div>8</div> <div><div>Look up to the sky, watch the sky for a few moments. What do you notice?</div><div>Colour, movement, birds, planes, images in the clouds.</div></div>	
<div>9</div> <div><div>Explain that they are going to be walking back to the school now, try to walk silently, paying attention to things that they wouldn't normally notice whether that is visual, sounds or smells. On return to the classroom they should stay silent and find a place to stand or sit.</div></div>	

- 10
- Finish the walk back to the classroom.
- 11
- When you return to the classroom, ask children to close their eyes if they can and focus once again on their breath.
- 12
- Notice whether the walk has changed their breathing rate?
- 13
- Can they focus on their breathing taking breaths that inflate their chest and tummy, holding for a moment and then breathing out once again, quietly through their mouth.
- 14
- Continue like this until you feel that your breath is calm. I will ring the chime to signal it is time to return your attention to the room.
- 15
- Indoor Plan (skip to the lesson conclusion if you spent the session outdoors; the indoor session could be followed at a future opportunity)**  
Ask children to walk slowly around the area focusing on the way the ground feels beneath their feet. Gravity pushing them down and the Earth supporting them.  
Do this for a minute.
- 16
- Now concentrate on the way their feet move when they walk. Focus on the way the heel touches the floor and the rest of the foot rolls onto the floor.  
Walk like this for a minute.
- 17
- Can children spread their toes when they touch the floor and stretch out every toe.  
Continue to walk mindfully for a while.
- 18
- When you walk, think now about how your spine is stretching or curving. Pull in your tummy muscles if you can and feel these muscles helping to hold your spine up straight.
- 19
- Continue to walk with your tummy muscles supporting your spine. Now roll your shoulders back so the top of your spine is straight and tall and your chest is opened up, how does it feel? Stop and take some breaths like this, your spine supported by your tummy muscles and straightened by your shoulders. Take some deep breaths, full of energy.
- 20
- Now, standing on the spot, children should alternate bringing their body-weight onto their heels with toes raised and then onto their toes with toes spread, then raise heels to tip-toe and reverse and repeat.  
Concentrate on how this feels.

TEACHER NOTES

As well as walking mindfully, you are trying to increase children's heart rates in this part of the walk so it does not have to be slow and meditative walking.

21 Explain that you are going to ask them to move more quickly in a moment. When they hear the chime they should do this. When they hear the chime for the second time, they should stop and stand still.

22 When they stop, ask the children to bring their focus to the breathing and notice if it has changed due to the faster activity?

23 Can they try to bring their breathing back to the slow deep breathing and notice how this makes their body and mind feel. Having eyes closed may help with this.

24 Give children time to calm their breathing before proceeding.

VARIATION

Depending upon the space available, this might be running, jogging, fast walking or dancing. Instruct children as to the best method.

VARIATION

You can use music as an alternative to the chime if you wish. When the music stops, they should stop.



Conclusion (2 minutes)

1	Were children able to control their attention to bring their focus onto the various external and internal objects/sounds/smells?	
2	Did their mind wander at times and were they able to regain their focus?	
3	Does it feel good to be able to be in control of your attention and focus?	

# Lesson 4 - Gratitude (Year 5)

## Lesson Overview

### Learning Objectives:

To focus on sending thoughts and gratitude as part of mindfulness.

### Success Criteria:

Pupils can make attempts to empathise with others' feelings and take on another person's perspective.

### Key Vocabulary:

positive thoughts, caring, gratitude.

### Equipment & Resources:

- See Teaching Tips section for advice.
- Children did a mindfulness gratitude lesson 3 years ago, they might remember some aspects of it.

Introduction (3 minutes)

<div>1</div> <div>Find a comfortable sitting position in a chair with your feet flat on the floor*.</div>	<div>VARIATION</div> <div>*As noted in the teacher's notes, make adaptations for children who cannot sit still in an upright position but encourage contact between the feet and the ground if possible.</div>
<div>2</div> <div>Shut your eyes if you are comfortable to do so.</div>	<div>TEACHER NOTES</div> <div>Some children will feel more focused if they shut their eyes, others will not feel comfortable doing this. If they do not feel comfortable with eyes shut, they should gaze gently towards the ground, not at other people. They can close their eyes at any time if they feel comfortable to do so.</div>
<div>3</div> <div>Rest your hands gently on your legs.</div>	
<div>4</div> <div>Focus your awareness on the feeling of your feet touching the floor, the strong Earth is supporting you.</div>	
<div>5</div> <div>Try to straighten your back but don't strain upright. Imagine a string coming out of the top of your head with a floating balloon attached to it. The balloon is stretching you gently upright.</div>	
<div>6</div> <div>Relax your shoulders. If they feel curved inwards, try to roll them back and relax the muscles.</div>	
<div>7</div> <div>Focus on your mouth and your tongue. You tongue should be lying relaxed in your mouth, not pushing anywhere. You mouth should not feel tight and tense, think about how you have your mouth when you are going to sleep; relaxed and not clenched tightly shut.</div>	

Main (10 minutes)

- 1

Breathe quietly through your nose, feel your lungs fill and empty. Sit quietly just concentrating on your breathing for a while.

Clean air coming in to your lungs, feel your lungs expanding like balloons and then silently let the air out again and feel your lungs contracting.

Think about how your body feels when your lungs fill, do they pull your spine up straighter? Does the breath relax your muscles?

Breathe silently for a few moments, in through the nose and out through the mouth.
- 2

If your mind wanders and you start to think of other things, try to bring your mind back to just focusing on your breathing.
- 3

We are currently filling our bodies with nourishing air that helps our well being. We can also fill our minds with good and uplifting thoughts. Focusing on good things will make you feel good.
- 4

Think of something that has made you happy recently. It could be something that happened or something that someone said to you.
- 5

Can you remember the feeling that it gave you?
- 6

Did you feel grateful for the thing that happened, can you remember the feeling of gratitude? If it was something nice that a person did for you, how did it make you feel towards them? Take some breaths while you try to imagine the feeling.
- 7

Think of three things in your life that you are grateful for. I will give you a few moments to quietly think of these things.
- 8

Now try to think of a time that someone said something nice to you about yourself, maybe about something that you did such as helping them or perhaps they told you that you were good at something. Maybe you did some good work and your effort was recognised.
- 9

Imagine them whispering it into your ear now. Imagine your heart warming up with happiness and pride.
- 10

Now think of someone that you know who you think could do with some help and support. Maybe they are struggling in school and having a hard time, perhaps they are someone who is not feeling well.

VARIATION

If children have a blocked nose, they should breathe in whichever way is most comfortable. Breathing should be quiet.

TEACHER NOTES

You might want to give some of your own examples to help children e.g. "I'm grateful for this lovely sunny weather", "I'm grateful for the love and hug that my own child gave me this morning when they told me to have a nice day".

- 11

Think of something nice that you could say to them that might help them. Imagine your good thoughts travelling up into the sky and appearing as a whisper in the persons's ear. Take a few breaths while you imagine your good thoughts going to your person.
- 12

Imagine their heart warming up as your thoughts reach them.
- 13

Try to grasp the good feeling again. Imagine some that you love whispering something nice to you and you returning their nice wishes to them. Take a few calm breath to enjoy this feeling.
- 14

When you hear the chime, it is the sign to open your eyes and bring your attention back to the classroom.
- 15

Ring the chime.

TEACHER NOTES

Give some example good thoughts e.g. "I want you to have a lovely day.", "I want you to have lots of friends", "You are special to me", "You are a lovely person".

Conclusion (2 minutes)

<div>1</div> <p>Think of the person who needed help, how would the help that you gave them make them feel. Is it possible to be having a hard time but also to feel thankful for something?</p>	<div>TEACHER NOTES</div> <p>The thought pattern you are trying to encourage is that when children are faced with challenges, disappointment and negative feelings, they do still feel these feelings but can also balance them with the positive.</p> <p>The idea isn't to banish bad feelings but to bring them into proportion and manage them. It is possible to feel two feelings at once.</p>
<div>2</div> <p>How did it make you feel to think of the things that you are grateful for?</p>	<div>PUPIL TALK</div> <p>Children could give their examples if they wish.</p>
<div>3</div> <p>Do you think that the person in need of help would find this harder? Do you think they could find something to be grateful for? Even when you are not feeling great, it can help your mind to spend some time thinking of things to be grateful for. If you are really struggling with this then that is a sign to seek some help for someone. Who could you speak to?</p>	

# Lesson 5 - Dividing Attention (Year 5)

## Lesson Overview

### Learning Objectives:

To investigate dividing attention between more than one input at a time and relate this to developing their brains.

### Success Criteria:

Children have an understanding of how attempting to focus on more than one thing at a time can affect the outcome.

Children understand that they can train their brains to be able to do new things through repeated practice.

### Key Vocabulary:

attention, focus, neurons, connections, interference.

### Equipment & Resources:

It would be worth spending a little more time on the session today so that children have the opportunity to try all of the activities. Otherwise select one activity to focus on and reflect on this activity.

- Making Connections in the brain (**See resource 2**) to display on the whiteboard.
- Poems or story books for Activity 2.
- For Activity 3, each group will need a small ball and a pointer (a stick).

### Required Downloads

[Attention Test file](#) for Activity 3. Clicking the link will download a pdf with multiple pages. Each group will need a print out of these. Cut the pages in half so only one word appears on each page.

### Introduction (5 minutes)

1	Today we are going to do some investigations into how our brains work rather than the usual mindfulness session.	
2	We are going to do some brain exercises. Have any of you done brain exercises before?	
3	<b>Answer:</b> You all have because you are constantly exercising your brain and training it every time you think.	
4	You brain is pattern-based. It contains more brain cells (neurons) than there are stars in the Milky Way. Around 100 billion!	
5	Between these neurons are billions of connections. Each time you think, you are creating a path connecting neurons and the more you make the same connections between different neurons, the easier and quicker the signals travel along the same path.	
6	Show the children the image *****Making Connections in the brain***** to demonstrate what this means.	

Main (10 minutes)

<div>1</div> <p>We are going to try a few activities* that will hopefully make some new connections in your brains. They all require you to divide your attention.</p>	<div>VARIATION</div> <p>If you need a shorter session, select one of the following activities instead of all of trying to do all of them.</p>
<div>2</div> <p>Some children will find dividing attention a lot harder than others. Remind the class that this is not a competition, you are not interested in how well people do compared to other but just want to give every one the opportunity to try.</p>	<div>TEACHER NOTES</div> <p>Children with ADHD are more likely to find this particularly hard.</p>
<div>3</div> <p><b>Activity 1 - Head and tummy clapping</b> Many children might have tried this before. The aim is to rub your tummy and pat your head at the same time. Get children to practice in pairs so that one partner can watch the other and see whether they are managing not to rub their head and pat their tummy. Can they do this rotating the hand on their tummy in the opposite direction?</p>	
<div>4</div> <p><b>Activity 2 - Listening to two things at once.</b> Children need to be in groups of three, they will take turns at each role. <b>Child 1 (the listener):</b> Their job is to listen to the reader and the communicator and talk to the communicator. <b>Child 2 (the reader):</b> They need to select a piece of text that the listeners is not familiar with and whisper the text into the listeners ear so that the communicator cannot hear it. <b>Child 3 (the communicator):</b> They have to pick a topic of conversation e.g. what you did on hoiday, you favourite meals etc and try to have a conversation with child 2. Children should take turns to try the different roles and spend a few minutes on each turn. <b>In the report back session:</b> In the communicator's opinion did they have a normal conversation with the listener, in the listener's opinion was it hard to carry on a conversation when they were also having their ear whispered into? Did they understand anything of the book that was read to them?</p>	
<div>5</div> <p><b>Activity 3 - Words and ball</b> Children need to be in groups of three, they will take turns at each role. <b>Child 1:</b> Their job is to hold the ball and move it to different positions opposite child 3. <b>Child 2:</b> Their job is to hold up the word cards one after the other so that child 3 can see them. <b>Child 3:</b> They must follow child 1's ball with the pointer as well as being aware of the words on the cards. When the word in the middle of the screen is the same as the colour in which it's written, they should clap. Continue the test for 30-60 seconds then swap roles <b>In the report back session:</b> This activity requires you to use visual and motor skills at the same time, was this difficult to do? Which task was hardest; pointing, reading, matching or clapping?</p>	<div>TEACHER NOTES</div> <p>Children with colour blindness will find this hard, suggest that they do not worry to much about whether they are correct; scores aren't being collected and no one will be watching to see if they are correct.</p>



Conclusion (2 minutes)

<div>1</div> <p>Depending upon the activities selected, ask children to report back on their experience. Does trying to do more than one thing at a time make it slower or harder to do the individual things? This is called <b>interference</b>.</p>	<div>VARIATION</div> <p>Have you ever tried to brush your teeth while doing something else and then realised that you were just brushing the same tooth over and over while your attention was elsewhere?</p>
<div>2</div> <p>Being able to divide your attention is important in allowing you to be efficient in your life. For example, you need to be able to look at and read the whiteboard and still understand what the teacher is saying.</p>	
<div>3</div> <p>Ask children to imagine that one of the things trying to grab their attention were all sorts of worries about a situation - even imagine someone whispering in your ear, "you are going to fail, you are stupid, you haven't worked hard enough", all the way through a test. It makes it even harder to succeed. So as well as training ourselves to attend to more than one thing at a time, mindfulness also helps you to train your brain to tune out some thoughts and ideas in order to improve well being. All these thing are part of training your brain in a health way.</p>	

## Lesson 6 - Guided visualisation (Year 5)

### Lesson Overview

#### Learning Objectives:

To try guided visualisation.

#### Success Criteria:

Pupils have experienced how their own imagination can take them to a relaxing place and make them feel better.

#### Key Vocabulary:

Visualisation.

#### Equipment & Resources:

- See Teaching Tips section for advice.
- Children might enjoy this session lying down, ideally outdoors on grass.
- You could use a lavender spray as part of the visualisation exercise; it should be a silent spray rather than an aerosol. You can make a lavender spray by mixing some water with a little lavender essential oil in a spray bottle.

Introduction (3 minutes)

- 1

Ask children to think back to the mindful activities that they have done over the past weeks.
- 2

Make a list of the aspects of mindfulness that they have explored. They can add things that they have tried outside the sessions as well.

Breathing and types of breathing.

Doodling

Gratitude and kind wishes

A mindful walk
- 3

If you have chosen to do the activity lying down, then direct children as to where to lie down.

If children are to be seated, then direct them to get into a position for mindfulness as in previous weeks and move to the main section.
- 4

Notice your body lying down. Everything should be relaxed. If you have followed the yoga lesson you will recognise this as Savasana pose. Their body relaxed, feet floppy.
- 5

Rest your arms by your sides.

VARIATION

- If seated:
- Find a comfortable sitting position in a chair with your feet flat on the floor.

Shut your eyes or gaze gently towards the ground, not at other people.

Rest your hands gently on your legs.

Focus your awareness on the feeling of your feet touching the floor, the strong Earth is supporting you.

Try to straighten your back but don't strain upright.

Relax your shoulders. If they feel curved inwards, try to roll them up and back to relax the muscles.

Focus on your mouth and your tongue. Your tongue should be lying relaxed in your mouth, not pushing anywhere. Your mouth should not feel tight and tense, think about how you have your mouth when you are going to sleep; relaxed and not clenched tightly shut.

6	Scan your body from your feet to your head, making sure that the muscles are relaxed.	
7	Stretch your shoulders away from your ears to relax your shoulders.	
8	Check that your face muscles are relaxed and your jaw is not clenched.	

Main (10 minutes)

1	Breathe quietly through your nose, feel your lungs fill and empty. Clean air coming in to your lungs, feel your lungs expanding like balloons and then silently let the air out again and feel your lungs contracting. Think about your body relaxing more as you exhale. Breathe silently for a few moments	
2	Feel yourself lying on some soft grass. There is a gentle breeze and the weather is warm.	
3	You can feel the sun gently warming your body.	
4	Watch the sky, notice the colours and any clouds, what direction are the clouds moving in?	
5	Can you see shapes in the clouds?	
6	Listen for any sounds around you, you are in a quiet place. Can you hear birds? Maybe you hear the trees or the sea? Think about a relaxing place that you would want to be.	
7	You stand up and look around you, you are in a field of grass and flowers. To your left is the sea. Listen to the waves gently lapping the shore, watch the waves come in ... and out ... and in, over and over. You are breathing in time with the rhythm of the sea.	
8	Look along the coast, you can see a smooth stone path up ahead, it leads a short way up a hill. You can't see what is over the hill. You walk onto the path. Feel the smooth, cool stones beneath your feet. As you walk, you spread your toes and the stones massage your feet.	
9	Walk to the top of the hill and gaze at the scenery around you. The path leads to a castle a little distance ahead. Look back towards the sea and the field. Stop and listen to the sounds around you; the sea, the calls of birds, the breeze through the grass, even the quiet buzz of insects in the field.	
10	You walk towards the castle. It looks like a welcoming place. What details can you see? Can you see turrets and towers? Perhaps there is a moat and drawbridge. Any gates are open and welcoming.	
11	You reach the big wooden door of the castle, you knock using the big door knocker and the door swings open. You know that no one is there, you are alone in this adventure.	
12	You walk into the castle. You notice that it is cooler inside than out in the sun. Look around, imagine what you see.	

- 13
- Ahead of you are some wide marble stairs with carpet on them. You walk up the stairs, feel the carpet beneath your feet. As you walk up the stairs, you realise that you feel quite tired. You become aware of a bag that you have been carrying on your back, it is heavy.
- 14
- At the top of the stairs are several rooms, their doors are open and the rooms are all empty.
- 15
- You walk on the carpet and come to a stone spiral staircase, light is shining down from the room above. You feel the warmth on your face and realise that you are feeling cold from the shade of the castle. You walk carefully up the spiral stairs, holding onto a rope that is fixed along the wall.
- 16
- Your bag feels very heavy now. You really want to remove it.
- 17
- You reach a small room at the top of the staircase. You are at the top of one of the castle towers. You look around. The floor is carpeted, there are big windows which are open and face the sea. Facing the window is the comfiest chair that you have ever seen.
- 18
- You remove your heavy bag and immediately feel lighter.
- 19
- You go and sit in the chair and sink in to it, the chair is like a hug, comforting you and refreshing you.
- 20
- You look out to the sea, you can see the sun reflecting and twinkling on the waves. You feel very relaxed.
- 21
- You are aware of the distant calls of sea birds. Listen to the rhythm of the waves again, in ..... and out..... in ....and out.  
Sit for a while, breathe with the rhythm of the sea. Inhale the fresh sea air through your nose and exhale quietly through your mouth.  
Sit for a while and enjoy the relaxing feeling of sitting and breathing.
- 22
- Imagine a distant chime calling you back as you slowly bring your attention back to the class.
- 23
- Breathe quietly until you hear the chime again.

TEACHER NOTES

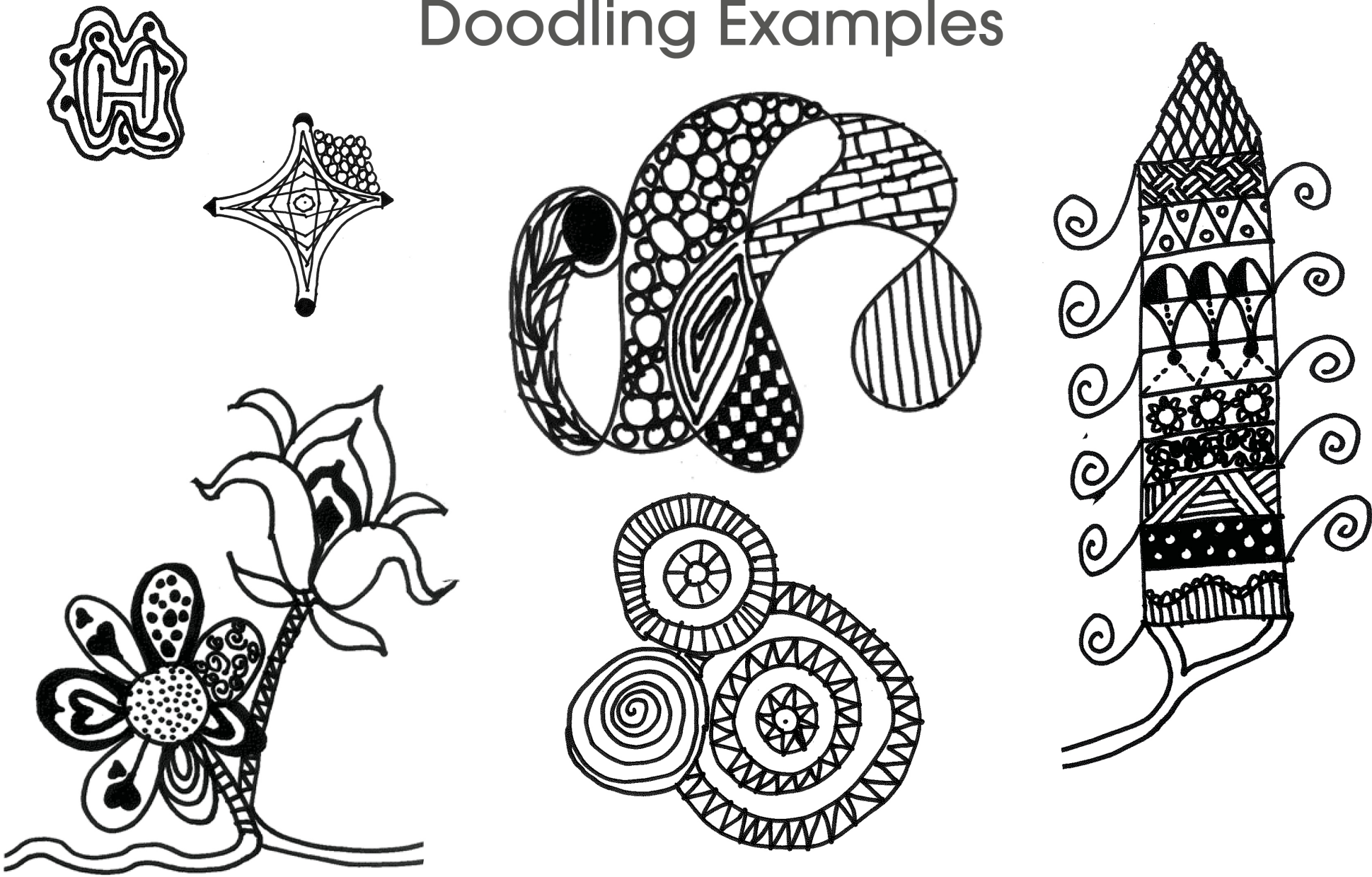
Ring the chime.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

1	Ask children how they are feeling. Did they enjoy the visualisation? Did they manage to get absorbed into it and keep other thoughts out of their mind?	
2	Reflect upon how powerful their minds are; they can take adventures like this whenever they wish just by taking a mindful journey.	
3	Could they use visualisation on their own to relax themselves? Has anyone tried this to get to sleep?	



# Doodling Examples



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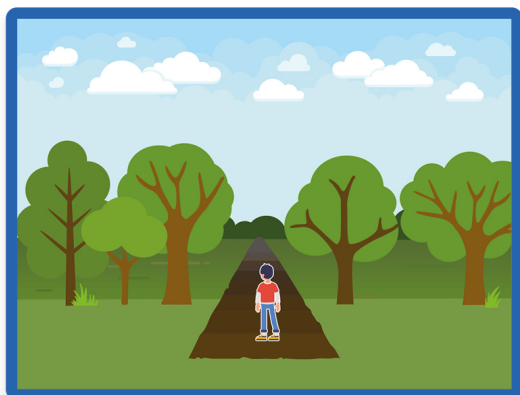


# Making Connections in the brain

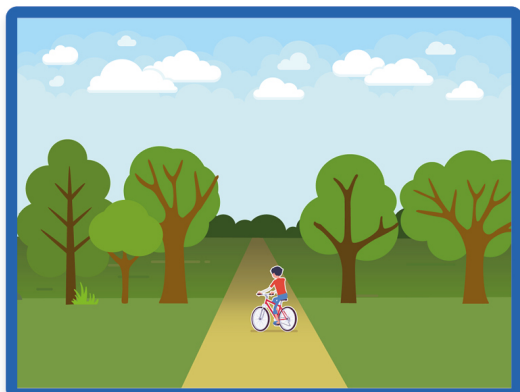
Your brain is pattern-based. You create the patterns by the way that you think. Making new connections between the neurons is like making a path through a forest.



The first time, you need to use a lot of effort to clear a path through the trees that you can fit through.



Having made the journey once, it gets easier.



Over time, you wear down a path and then you can run.



If you don't use the path, stinging nettles will begin to grow, then plants and it will become over-grown again. But it will still be easier to find the paths than the very first time where you had to clear the trees.