



Mindfulness

During the Mindfulness mini-lessons, students are learning the benefits of mindfulness and being self-aware of thoughts, emotions, their body and the environment. They will explore different strategies to determine which strategies will help them best in daily lives. The key message is learning about emotions and strategies to appropriately manage them helps us make healthier choices.

Lesson Name: Peace of Paper (Mindful Journaling, Part 1)

Unit Name: Mindfulness

Grade Level: 9-12

Lesson Length: 10-15 minutes

Before beginning, teachers should offer accommodations specifically mentioned in a student's IEP to support their ability to participate in the mini-lesson. A sample list of common accommodations and modifications to aid you in selecting appropriate supports for students can be found under "Additional Resources" [here](#).

Lesson Objective(s):

Students will be able to practice mindful journaling as a tool for maintaining or improving their health.
Students will discuss the benefits of mindful journaling on their personal health.

Equipment Needed:

- [How am I feeling? Daily Check-In poster](#)
- Mindful Journaling Sheet

Essential Question (related to objective):

How can mindful journaling help my health?

CASEL Core SEL Competency:

Self-awareness

- Identifying one's emotions
- Linking feelings values and thoughts

Self-management

- Identifying and using stress management strategies

National Standards and Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education:

Standard 4: The physically literate individual exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.

- No specific grade-level outcome identified.

National Health Education Standards & Performance Indicators:

Standard 7: Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

- 7.12.2 Demonstrate a variety of healthy practices and behaviors that will maintain or improve the health of self and others.

Lesson Overview:

Teachers will review the definition of mindfulness. Teachers will also explain that students are learning various tools or healthy practices to better determine which one works best for them. Students will practice mindful journaling. Based on the needs of the community, teachers can replace the word mindfulness with self-awareness throughout the mini-lesson.

Definitions:

Peace of Paper

- Writing down on a piece of paper what you're currently feeling and examine why you're feeling that way.
- Being completely honest and remember to show yourself kindness; it's okay to feel whatever you're feeling (positive or negative).
- Writing thoughts down is a great way to be reflective and bring peace of mind.

Mindful Journaling

- Putting the thoughts and feelings in your head onto paper.
- Writing regularly about yourself, your thoughts/feelings, and your day.

Reflection is taking time to think about

- Something you may have learned,
- Your feelings, or
- Your behavior

Activity Progression:

This mini-lesson is a great addition to the beginning or closing of an already existing lesson.

To start the mini-lesson, have students check in using the How am I feeling? Daily Check-In Poster.

Example script: “Before we get started let’s check-in with ourselves. It’s healthy for us to take time to see how we are feeling. So, let’s look at our Daily Check-In poster and see how we are feeling today, right now in class.

[Give students a few minutes to think about how they are feeling. They can share out if they would like or keep their response to themselves.]

If you would like to share how you are feeling right now you can or it not, that’s okay too! I’m feeling [insert a heart color] because [then a reason you are feeling this way].

A lot of times our feelings can change how we might act, so it’s helpful to be mindful of how we are feeling.”

Review mindfulness to students.

Example script: “We’ve been talking about mindfulness, or self-awareness, and we’ve been learning and practicing different skills. Being mindful is when you pay full attention to your thoughts, emotions, body and environment. You’re focused on the present – not thinking about what has happened or what will happen. And we are doing this without judgment and being kind to ourselves. We’ve also been discussing how being mindful of our own feelings is an important part of taking care of our mind and body. Today we are going to practice a tool that gets a little deeper into looking at our feelings.”

Introduce Peace of Paper, mindful journaling, and the definition of reflection. Peace of Paper and mindful journaling are the same concept. Here is how to distinguish between the two within health. moves. minds.: Peace of Paper is used more infrequently while mindful journaling is done regularly. Teachers may choose not to separate the two skills/terms and may use the term Peace of Paper as a synonym for mindful journaling.

Example script: “Mindful journaling or Peace of Paper, which is more fun name for mindful journaling, is a tool we are going to try out today. It’s super simple, you are just writing whatever you are feeling or thinking about in your head and getting it onto paper. You can use it anytime. Mindful journaling is one tool you can use to better manage stress and anxiety, and to improve your mood. Writing about yourself and things that are happening in your life provides a healthy outlet for your thoughts and feelings. Health professionals believe that journaling can even help you articulate what you are feeling more clearly.

Mindful journaling also provides us an opportunity to reflect. When you reflect you are taking time to think about something you may have learned, your feelings or your behavior. After you have journaled about something, you can even look back at what you wrote and reflect on those feelings. Maybe there’s a pattern you notice allowing you to learn more about yourself.”

Have students get out a sheet of paper. Give students 5-7 minutes to practice mindful journaling. Students can choose to write freely, or they use one of the provided prompts below. To help relax students, try playing some relaxing music.

- What are three things you are grateful for in this very moment? Why are you grateful for these things?
- How are you feeling in this very moment? Why are you feeling this way?
- Write about your day or week so far. What happened and how did you feel?

After the time is up, ask students their thoughts on the experience. Could they see this being something they do regularly? Did they find it challenging?

Remind students the more they practice something the easier it becomes and the more likely you will see the benefits, and this is true for all the skills they've been practicing. Provide some tips for journaling.

- **Try to write regularly.**
 - There are benefits to journaling even if you don't write every day, but the more consistent you are the more likely you are to see the positive benefits of journaling
- **Write or draw whatever feels right to you.**
 - There's no right or wrong way to journal. In fact, you can even draw! The idea is to just write what you're feeling and to express or share what you experience. Some people even like bullet journaling in which you essentially jot down quick notes instead of writing long sentences. But whatever your preference, do what works for you!
- **Make it easy.**
 - You can journal on your phone, or maybe keep a small notebook in your book bag or locker. Keep your journal on your nightstand. Maybe there's a journaling app online.
- **Build it into your routine.**
 - Maybe try journaling in the morning right after you wake up or before bed as a part of your nighttime routine. Maybe this is something you do after you get home from school or after you eat dinner.

Example script: "Alright, how did mindful journaling feel for you? [Allow students to respond.] Remember even if this didn't feel that great for you, that's okay! Every skill may not feel like the right fit. The more you practice a skill the easier it becomes, or you end up finding a way to make it to work for you. We will practice this a few more times in class and this is something you can do at home as well."

At the end of class have students check in with themselves again.

Modifications/Differentiation:

- Allow students to draw in addition to writing.
- Allow students to write their thoughts in bullet points/short phrases.
- Provide students with journaling prompts or sentence starters.

Checks for Understanding:

- What are some benefits of mindful journaling?
- How could you see some of the benefits being a positive effect in a person's life?



Daily Mindful Journaling Sheet (Teacher Version)

In blue italics you will find instructions for each section to explain to students. Students should aim to fill out each section, even if they don't have anything to write. If they choose to leave a section blank one day they should try to not leave it blank the next day. If they are struggling to find something to write, they can fill out the sections they can then put it aside and come back to it later.

Today's Date _____		Today's Weather <i>Circle the day's weather. If you like you can add the daily temperature.</i> 	
My favorite part of today was... <i>In this section, write a highlight of your day.</i>	My least favorite part of today was... <i>In this section, write a part of your day that could have been better.</i>	Something I'm thinking or feeling right now in this moment... <i>In this section you can write about anything you want.</i>	
And it made me feel... <i>Then take time to acknowledge how it made you feel.</i>	And it made me feel... <i>Then take time to acknowledge how it made you feel.</i>		
Right now, in this moment I'm grateful for... <i>Here write something you are grateful for at the moment you're journaling.</i>		Something I did to take care of my mind: <i>In this section, write something you did for your emotional or mental wellness. This could be a self-care activity or one of the mindfulness skills we have been practicing like a Kindful or Mindful Minute.</i>	
		Something I did to take care of my body: <i>In this section, write something you did for your physical health. This could be some kind of physical activity or something nutrition related.</i>	

Overall today was...

In this section, color in or mark your rating for the day. 10 would be a really great day and 1 would be a day you're ready to be over with.

I'm ready for this day to be over.



Best day ever!



Daily Mindful Journaling Sheet

Fill in the sheet about your day. Try to fill out each section. If you are having trouble finding what to write take a break and try again later.

Today's Date		Today's Weather	
My favorite part of today was...	My least favorite part of today was...	Something I'm thinking or feeling right now in this moment...	
And it made me feel...	And it made me feel...		
Right now, in this moment I'm grateful for...		Something I did to take care of my mind:	
		Something I did to take care of my body:	

Overall today was...

I'm ready for this day to be over.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

Best day ever!