



# Teaching MINDFULNESS

## 5 BY 5 SENSORY SCAN

### Lesson Explores

This lesson explores how to teach the concepts of mindfulness to our students using our 5 primary senses.

Mindfulness and mindful awareness practices allow our students to react reflectively rather than reflexively to life's challenges.

Help teach students mindfulness and mindful awareness through the principles of positive psychology. These concepts support student well-being and resilience skills.

**MINDFULNESS 5 BY 5 SENSORY SCAN**  
Using our 5 senses for mindful awareness

**Big Idea**  
This topic explores how our 5 primary senses are used to help us become more aware of the present moment. According to Harvard researchers, our brains are wired to "wander" about 50% of the time. When we feel our thinking move from the present moment to the past or to the future, the goal of mindfulness is to gently bring our attention back to the anchor we have set.

In this lesson, students will practice using each of their five primary senses (see, hear, taste, smell, and touch) to help refocus and maintain attention to the present moment. Each time we can bring our attention back to our anchor, this strengthens our concentration. Like lifting weights for physical fitness, mindfulness helps bring about mental fitness.

**Objectives**  
• Discover mindful awareness by examining the environment (or an object) through the five primary senses  
• Interpret and list observations


**Standards Map**  
This lesson plan has been mapped to the five CASEL Core Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies and the national Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy and Mathematics.

CASEL	COMMON CORE
Self-Awareness Accurate self-perception	CCSS.ELA/LITERACY.L.9-10.6 (Vocabulary Acquisition and Use) Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic words and phrases, including those that signal emotions, or states of being and that are topic.


**5 BY 5 SENSORY SCAN**  
Using our 5 senses for mindful awareness

Name: \_\_\_\_\_


Directions: Calm your body. Try and be still and quiet. Take one minute to be aware of what is going on around you right now. Using your 5 primary senses of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch, write down 5 words or phrases that best describe what you are sensing in the present moment.

What can you SEE? 


1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_  
4) \_\_\_\_\_  
5) \_\_\_\_\_

What can you HEAR (SOUND)? 


1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_  
4) \_\_\_\_\_  
5) \_\_\_\_\_

What can you SMELL? 

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_  
4) \_\_\_\_\_  
5) \_\_\_\_\_

What can you TASTE? 

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_  
4) \_\_\_\_\_  
5) \_\_\_\_\_

What can you TOUCH (FEEL)? 

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_  
4) \_\_\_\_\_  
5) \_\_\_\_\_

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resilience Mindfulness practices enhance our "Thinking by wire" function, increasing attention, and improving problem solving. It helps to control emotions and motivations by increasing awareness by helping the brain determine our emotional and mental, and movement and determines whether this too is the preferred course where it is evaluated before set is blocked by the amygdala and prompts our fight.

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### SENSORY SCAN (PAGE 2)

mindful awareness

It is what we are thinking about with kindness and curiosity. It is agree that mindfulness has three components which

where

now, what is going on around you? One way we can think awareness. This is becoming more aware through your 5 senses: taste, smell, and touch. By paying close attention to attention to the present moment. Each time we can bring our concentration. Like lifting weights for physical fitness,

note to be aware of what is going on around you right now.

of what shapes, objects, images, people, colors, textures,

What do you hear? Listen to not only your sounds but the sounds of others. What about the sounds of flying insects, noises in the hallway, objects in the room, sounds from outside?  
What do you smell? As you breathe in through your nose, what do you notice? Are there scents in the air? What about the smell of perfume, food or trash?  
What do you taste? What does your mouth sense right now? Are there tastes that are in your mouth if you open it just a little?  
What do you feel? What does your body sense? What about the points of contact, edges of your body, skin, clothing? What about inside your body?

Let's take one minute to observe our surroundings. Using your 5 primary senses of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch, write down 5 words or phrases that best describe what you are sensing in the present moment.

#### Wrap-up

What did you notice that you expected? What did you notice that was unexpected? Today we practiced focused awareness through this mindfulness activity. We broadened our ability to observe what was going on around us and payed close attention. This helps us with our attention and self-awareness.

#### Extension Option

The class can complete the Sensory Scan activity. In mindfulness, an anchor is something that helps us strengthen our focus or our ability to pay attention. Our senses are always in the present moment, so they are good anchors. In the middle of this "scan" or walk, students write down the object they are paying special attention to. Using their 5 primary senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch, they record as many details as they notice using these senses.

Teaching Tip:  
This mindfulness activity can be done inside where a classroom setting. It also lends itself well to do outside. Students can do "Mindful Walking" where they walk and observe using their 5 senses and record their observations. As an alternative, 5 By 5 Sensory Scan can be done in a laboratory, where students notice and name sensory experiences of one instance.

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# MINDFULNESS 5 BY 5 SENSORY SCAN

Using our 5 senses for mindful awareness



## Big Idea

This topic explores how our 5 primary senses are used to help us become more aware of the present moment. According to Harvard researchers, our brains are wired to “wander” about 50% of the time. When we feel our thinking move from the present moment to the past or to the future, the goal of mindfulness is to gently bring our attention back to the anchor we have set.

In this lesson, students will practice using each of their five primary senses (see, hear, taste, smell, and touch) to help refocus and maintain attention to the present moment. Each time we can bring our attention back to our anchor, this strengthens our concentration. Like lifting weights for physical fitness, mindfulness helps bring about mental fitness.

## Objectives

- Discover mindful awareness by examining the environment (or an object) through the five primary senses
- Interpret and list observations

## Standards Map

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Self-Management Impulse control Stress management	

## Teacher's Toolbox

Research on mindfulness reveals many benefits affecting our resilience. Mindfulness practices enhance our “flourishing” by building emotional regulation, reducing anxiety, improving immune function, increasing attention, and improving problem solving. Our amygdala which is part of the brain's limbic system. It helps to control emotions and motivations by reacting to fear, danger, and threat. The amygdala functions in mindful awareness by helping the brain determine our emotional responses. It classifies incoming sensory inputs from sight, sound, smell, and movement and determines whether this information is a threat or enjoyable. Input that is enjoyable goes to the prefrontal cortex where it is evaluated before being responded to. Sensory information that is deemed a threat is blocked by the amygdala and prompts our flight, fight, freeze reaction – our body's safety response.

## Materials & Preparation

- 5 by 5 Sensory Scan worksheet (one per student)

## Lesson Directions

1. Distribute the 5 by 5 Sensory Scan worksheets
2. Review directions, complete and discuss as a group



### Teacher Dialogue

*Mindfulness is paying attention to the present moment. It is what we are thinking about with kindness and curiosity, without “judging” the thoughts. Many mindfulness experts agree that mindfulness has three components which include:*

- 1. Paying attention on purpose*
- 2. Being in the present moment – not the past or the future*
- 3. Creating kindness and curiosity*

*Become aware of what you are paying attention to right now. What is going on around you? One way we can think about mindfulness is through something called mindful awareness. This is becoming more aware through your 5 main senses. Think of your five main senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. By paying close attention to each of these senses it helps us to refocus and maintain attention to the present moment. Each time we can bring our attention back to the present moment it strengthens our concentration. Like lifting weights for physical fitness, mindfulness helps bring about mental fitness.*

*Calm your body. Try and be still and quiet. Take one minute to be aware of what is going on around you right now.*

*What do you see? Keep your eyes still. What do they see? What shapes, objects, images, people, colors, textures, do they see?*

*What do you hear? Listen to not only your sounds but the sounds of others. What about the sounds of flying insects, noises in the hallways, objects in the room, sounds from outside?*

*What do you smell? As you breathe in through your nose, what do you notice? Are there scents in the air? What about the smell of perfume, food, or fresh air?*

*What do you taste? What does your mouth sense right now? Are there tastes that are in your mouth if you open it just a little?*

*What do you feel? What does your body sense? What about the points of contact, edges of your body, skin, clothing? What about inside your body?*

*Let's take one minute to observe our surroundings. Using your 5 primary senses of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch, write down 5 words or phrases that best describe what you are sensing in the present moment.*

### Wrap-up

*What did you notice that you expected? What did you notice that was unexpected? Today we practicing focused awareness through this mindfulness activity. We broadened our ability to observe what was going on around us and payed closer attention. This helps us with our attention and self-awareness.*

### Extension Option

The class can complete the **Sensory Snare** activity. In mindfulness, an anchor is something that helps us strengthen our focus or our ability to pay attention. Our senses are always in the present moment, so they are good anchors. In the middle of this “snare” or web, students write down the object they are paying special attention to. Using their 5 primary senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch, they record as many details as they notice using these senses.

#### Teaching Tip:

This mindfulness activity can be done inside within a classroom setting. It also lends itself well to do outside. Students can do “Mindful Walking” where they walk and observe using their 5 senses and record their observations. As an alternative, 5 By 5 Sensory Scan can be done stationary, where students notice and name sensory experiences in one location.

# 5 BY 5 SENSORY SCAN

Using our 5 senses for mindful awareness



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Calm your body. Try and be still and quiet. Take one minute to be aware of what is going on around you right now. Using your 5 primary senses of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch, write down 5 words or phrases that best describe what you are sensing in the present moment.

What can you SEE?



- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

What can you HEAR (SOUND)?



- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

What can you SMELL?



- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

What can you TASTE?



- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

What can you TOUCH (FEEL)?



- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

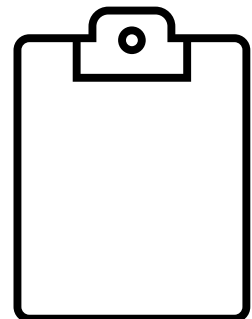
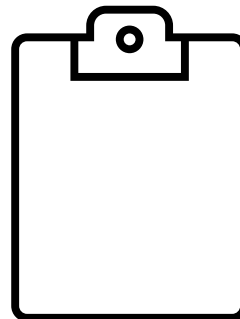
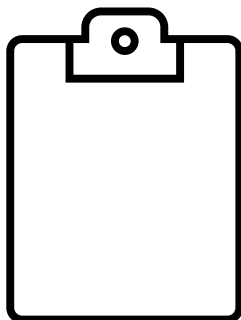
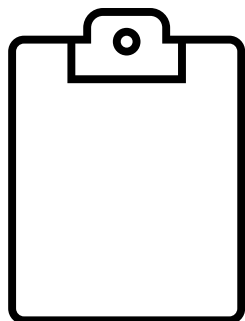
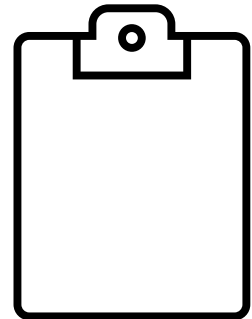
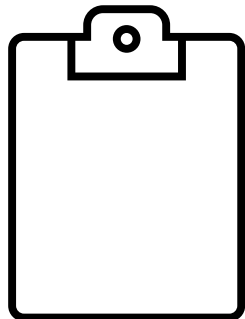
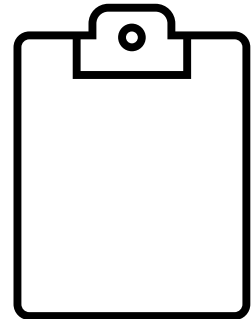
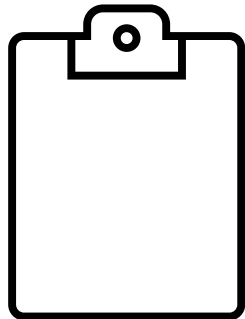
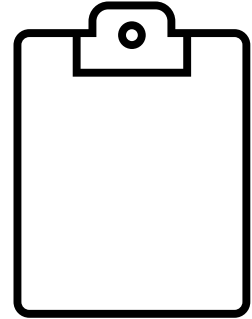
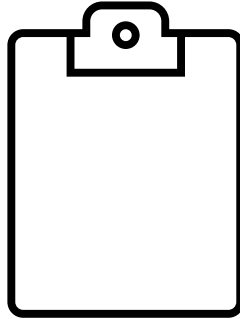
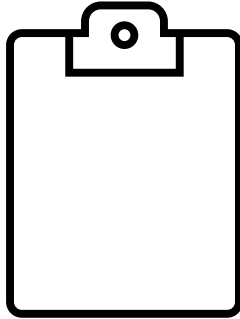
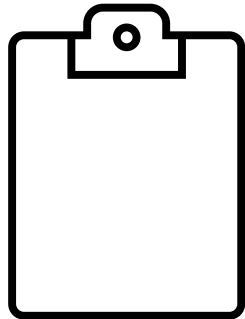
# SENSORY SNARE



Using your senses to make mindful observations

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: In mindfulness, an anchor is something that helps strengthen our focus or our ability to pay attention. First, identify an object you will focus on. In the middle of this "snare" or web, write down this object you are paying special attention to. Using your 5 primary senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch, write down as many details as you notice using these senses on the miniclipboards. (Use the back of this paper if you run out of room.)





# ABOUT POSITIVELY MOXIE

Molly (a junior high school counselor and former elementary school teacher) and Jill (a school-based occupational therapist) have teamed up to empower teachers, counselors, therapists, and parents who want to teach young people the skills needed to better coach their brains for greater well-being and resilience.

We are influenced by the science of positive psychology, counseling techniques, self-regulation, cognitive behavioral therapy, sensory processing, executive functioning, and brain science! We understand our students and youth need as many “tools” in their toolbox as we can give them.

Molly and Jill are passionate about creating relevant, high quality, and actionable resources to address well-being and resilience skills for students!



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