

Mindfulness

Topic

Mindfulness

Aims

- Provide reading and speaking practice around the topic of mindfulness
- Teach or review a set of mind-related activities, e.g. judging, paying attention. Expand students' ability to make comparisons with more advanced comparative and superlative structures.

Age / level

Teenagers and adults at CEF level B1+/B2

Time

50 minutes

Materials

Worksheet (3 pages)

Introduction

This lesson was devised to mark Mindfulness Day, held on September 12th. However, it could be used at any time of year as this is not specifically mentioned.

The lesson begins by looking at a definition of mindfulness and finding out what students already know. They then read a text about mindfulness, before focusing on vocabulary and grammar from the text.

Finally, they carry out a mindfulness activity themselves and discuss the experience.

The text used in the student worksheet for this lesson is available with interactive exercises for learners on our LearnEnglish website at <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/magazine/mindfulness>

Procedure

1. Lead in (5 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 1: Ask students to read the definition and discuss the questions. • Briefly discuss as a class.
2. Reading (15 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 2: Ask students to read the text and check their ideas. Let them discuss what they found in pairs. • Exercise 3: Ask them to read the text again and make notes under the headings. Let them compare their ideas in pairs and then discuss as a class. Find out if any of them already practice mindfulness and, if so, ask them for their opinions or experience. <p>Answers</p> <p>A. Examples of NOT being mindful: driving somewhere without remembering the journey, eating more biscuits than you intended, staying up late binge-watching TV.</p> <p>B. Examples of being mindful: noticing a beautiful sunset, really listening to someone, being more aware of our own feelings.</p> <p>C. Reasons life is busier now: technology, multi-tasking, working longer hours.</p> <p>D. Benefits of mindfulness: reduces stress and depression, better concentration, memory and focus, managing pain better, even losing weight.</p>
3. Vocabulary (5 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 4: Ask students to try and match the activities to the definitions. Let them check in pairs, then check as a class. <p>Answers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Judging – (B) having a bad opinion of something or someone. 2. Paying attention – (C) watching, listening or thinking about something carefully. 3. Worrying – (E) thinking about unpleasant things that might happen. 4. Binge-watching – (D) watching lots of TV episodes at once. 5. Multi-tasking – (A) doing two or three things at the same time. <p>Ask students which of these activities will make you feel more or less stressed (all of them except paying attention are likely to make you feel more stressed. Paying attention helps because you are focused on just one thing.)</p>

<p>4. Focus on comparative structures (20 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 5 <p>Ask the students to complete the sentences using the words in the box. They can use each word more than once. These are examples of more complex comparative and superlative sentences, which are used frequently in English, but not always taught. Let students check together and then check as a class.</p> <p>Answers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Have you ever eaten far/many more biscuits than you meant to?</i> (we can't use much here because biscuits are countable. Far, much and many are all ways of adding emphasis to a comparative structure.) 2. <i>Have you stayed up much/far later than you planned?</i> 3. <i>When we live this way we are not as awake as we could be.</i> 4. <i>For most people life is getting busier and busier.</i> (using two comparatives in this way adds emphasis). 5. <i>The more we do the more stressed we feel.</i> (This is a set structure- The + comparative... the + comparative to compare two things with each other). • Exercise 6 <p>Ask students to rewrite the sentence using the words in brackets. This is to give further practice in using the structures in exercise 5.</p> <p>Answers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The more people practice mindfulness, the better they deal with problems. 2. Mindfulness isn't as difficult as many people think. 3. I have felt far less stressed since I started practicing mindfulness. 4. He is getting more and more stressed every day. 5. The quieter it is the easier it is to concentrate.
<p>5 Mindfulness activity (10 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise 7: <p>Ask students to close their eyes and just relax. You could ask them to take a few deep breaths. Then ask them to listen carefully and mentally note all the different sounds they hear. If any other thoughts come into their minds, they should just go back to focusing on counting the sounds. After 2-3 minutes, they can open their eyes and discuss what they heard with their partner.</p> • How did the exercise make them feel? Any calmer? Discuss as a class.

Contributed by

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