

# MCEF Mindfulness Activities Sheet TEACHER GUIDE

*Created and compiled by Raquel Vigil, MCEF consultant.*

## SYNOPSIS

According to mindful schools mindfulness means “maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment with openness and curiosity” (“What is mindfulness, n.d, para 1). Research has shown that practices of mindfulness can reduce stress, increase focus, decrease emotional reactivity, among other benefits (Mindful schools, n.d). This sheet outlines various mindfulness activities that can be practiced in the garden. We encourage you to use these lessons when teaching in the garden and use the garden space to be a place of mindful practice during your regular class lessons.

### Key Points

- **This first class is very important.** If you set them up to view mindfulness as a special time and they know that the environment changes for mindfulness, every mindfulness lesson will go better. Do not move on to other mindfulness lessons until they understand the instructions and activities of this first lesson.
- **Keep it simple.** When introducing mindfulness, be simple, especially for the youngest classes. Too much talking will not be effective. However, older students benefit from hearing how mindfulness will be relevant to their lives.
- **Set the bar high.** After introducing mindfulness activities consider increasing the time for mindful practices with each lesson.

*Quoted from Mindful Schools (n.d).*

## MINDFUL BODY SCANS

Overview:

The purpose of body scan mindfulness exercises is to bring awareness to your mind and body. The purpose is not to relax your body, however, this often occurs but to relax and draw attention to the present moment.

<b>Prior Knowledge/Anticipated</b>	- We suggest reading the overview of the lesson to familiarize yourself with mindfulness key points. Additionally, we suggest practicing this activity prior to facilitating with students. In the references section
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<p><b>Misconceptions:</b></p>	<p>below, you will find links to audio clips to help with mindful bodies activities</p>
<p><b>Materials:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Singing bowl or bell to open and close activity (optional)</li> <li>- A timer that you can alert you without a sound, i.e your phone or watch.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lesson Procedures</b></p>	<p>This lesson can be adapted for a 10 minute, 20 minute, and 45 minute lesson. Please follow the lesson procedures for each lesson.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Take students into the garden, find a location in the garden that is comfortable to sit.</li> <li>- Explain that before the lesson we are going to do a mindful body activity.</li> <li>- Use the below script to lead students through a mindful bodies activity</li> </ul> <p>Mindful Bodies Script. See the appendix section for a printable version of this script.</p> <p>In a calming voice, tell students:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Begin by bringing your attention into your body.</li> <li>2. You can close your eyes if that’s comfortable for you. If you’d rather, you can always lower and half-close your eyes.</li> <li>3. You can notice your body seated wherever you’re seated, feeling the weight of your body where you sit.</li> <li>4. Take a few deep breaths.</li> <li>5. And as you take a deep breath, bring in more oxygen enlivening the body. And as you exhale, have a sense of relaxing more deeply.</li> <li>6. You can notice your feet on the floor, notice the sensations of your feet touching the floor. The weight and pressure, vibration, heat.</li> <li>7. <b>If you notice any discomfort, pain or stiffness, don’t judge this. Just simply notice it.</b> Observe how all sensations rise and fall, shift and change moment to moment. Notice how no sensation is permanent. Just observe and allow the sensations to be in the moment, just as they are. Breathe into and out from the legs.</li> <li>8. Bring greater attention to your legs where you sit. Notice to pressure, pulsing, heaviness, lightness.</li> <li>9. Notice your back where you are sitting.</li> <li>10. Bring your attention into your stomach area. If your stomach is tense or tight, let it soften. Take a breath.</li> </ol>

	<p>11. Notice your hands. Are your hands tense or tight. See if you can allow them to soften.</p> <p>12. Notice your arms. Feel any sensation in your arms. Let your shoulders be soft.</p> <p>13. Notice your neck and throat. Let them be soft. Relax.</p> <p>14. Soften your jaw. Let your face and facial muscles be soft.</p> <p>15. Then notice your whole body present. Take one more breath.</p> <p>16. Be aware of your whole body as best as you can. Take a breath. And then when you're ready, you can open your eyes.</p> <p>Quoted from <i>Greater Good Science Center, 3-Minute Body Scan and 5-minute mindful body.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Debrief Questions (optional)</b></p> <p>Have students answer one or all the questions as a journal exercise, in a pair-share, or in a large group.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How was this exercise for you? Was it hard or easy? Why?</li> <li>2. Did your mind wander? If so, what did you do to bring your attention back?</li> <li>3. What did you notice about yourself and your environment during this activity?</li> </ol> <p>Once you have completed the exercise a number of times, we recommend using Making Caring Common's (2018) debriefing questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you notice any progress in your mindfulness practice? Has it gotten easier or harder? Do you notice any benefits? Has the experience changed in any way?</li> <li>2. How might mindfulness practice—noticing your emotions, thoughts, and environment around you— lead to a more caring classroom? Or more caring for your environment?</li> <li>3. Do you think you could use a mindfulness exercise outside of the classroom and garden? In what situation might it be helpful?</li> </ol>			
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">10 minute exercise</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">20-30 minute exercise</td> <td style="width: 33%; text-align: center;">Extending the lesson further</td> </tr> </table>	10 minute exercise	20-30 minute exercise	Extending the lesson further
10 minute exercise	20-30 minute exercise	Extending the lesson further		

<p><b>Extensions</b></p>	<p>Between each prompt of the mindful bodies scan, give a 30-sec pause.</p> <p>Debrief question one with students using think-pair-share</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Between each prompt of the mindful bodies scan, give a 1-minute pause.</li> <li>- Once the lesson is complete, have students debrief in journals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Between each prompt of the mindful bodies scan, give a 2-minute pause, increasing the time students sit with the activity.</li> <li>- Once the lesson is complete, have students debrief in journals.</li> <li>- Have student share out their reflections using a <a href="#">fishbowl</a> strategy.</li> </ul>
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**REFERENCES AND RESOURCES**

Greater Good Science Center (2017, March 6). *A 3-Minute Body Scan Meditation to Cultivate Mindfulness*. Retrieved from <https://www.mindful.org/a-3-minute-body-scan-meditation-to-cultivate-mindfulness/>. Accessed September 9th, 2019

Making Caring Common (2018). For Educators: Mindfulness Strategies. Retrieved from <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b7c56e255b02c683659fe43/t/5bd7baa4652dea87190c5e41/1540864677727/mindfulness.pdf>. Accessed September 12th, 2019

Mindfulness Practice (n.d). *Greater Good in Action*. Retrieved from: <https://ggia.berkeley.edu/#filters=mindfulness>

Meditation Life Skills. (n.d). *5-Minute Mindfulness Body Scan Meditation Script & Mp3*. Retrieved from <https://www.meditationlifeskills.com/5-minute-mindfulness-body-scan-meditation-script-mp3/>. Accessed September 9th, 2019

Smookler, E. (2019, April 11). *Mindful*. Beginner’s Body Scan Meditation. Retrieved from <https://www.mindful.org/beginners-body-scan-meditation/>. Accessed September 12th, 2019

Teaching Tolerance (n.d). *Fishbowl: Teaching Strategy*. Retrieved from <https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/teaching-strategies/community-inquiry/fishbowl>. Accessed September 12th, 2019

## Mindful Bodies Script.

In a calming voice, tell students:

- Begin by bringing your attention into your body.
- You can close your eyes if that's comfortable for you. If you'd rather, you can always lower and half-close your eyes.
- You can notice your body seated wherever you're seated, feeling the weight of your body where you sit.
- Take a few deep breaths.
- And as you take a deep breath, bring in more oxygen enlivening the body. And as you exhale, have a sense of relaxing more deeply.
- You can notice your feet on the floor, notice the sensations of your feet touching the floor. The weight and pressure, vibration, heat.
- **If you notice any discomfort, pain or stiffness, don't judge this. Just simply notice it.** Observe how all sensations rise and fall, shift and change moment to moment. Notice how no sensation is permanent. Just observe and allow the sensations to be in the moment, just as they are. Breathe into and out from the legs.
- Bring greater attention to your legs where you sit. Notice to pressure, pulsing, heaviness, lightness.
- Notice your back where you are sitting.
- Bring your attention into your stomach area. If your stomach is tense or tight, let it soften. Take a breath.
- Notice your hands. Are your hands tense or tight. See if you can allow them to soften.
- Notice your arms. Feel any sensation in your arms. Let your shoulders be soft.
- Notice your neck and throat. Let them be soft. Relax.
- Soften your jaw. Let your face and facial muscles be soft.
- Then notice your whole body present. Take one more breath.
- Be aware of your whole body as best as you can. Take a breath. And then when you're ready, you can open your eyes.

## MINDFUL LISTENING

**Overview:**

“Mindful listening is achieved by sitting quietly—listening to the soothing voices of nearby trees, birds, and rustling grasses—calms us and deepens our appreciation for the life around us.” (Sharing Nature, n.d.). In this lesson, a sound mapping activity is used to engage students in active listening, drawing attention to the garden environment.

<b>Prior Knowledge/Anticipated Misconceptions:</b>	- N/A		
<b>Materials:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Garden sound map (attached below)</li> <li>- Pencils</li> <li>- Timer</li> </ul>		
<b>Lesson Procedures</b>	<p>This lesson can be adapted for a 10 minute, 20 minute, and 45 minute lesson. Please follow the lesson procedures for each lesson.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Take the class out to the garden and introduce the activity.</li> <li>- Hand out the garden sound mapping worksheet, give directions.</li> <li>- Tell students to find a spot alone in the garden to complete their sound activity.</li> <li>- Tell students that you recommend that they close their eyes occasionally and cup their hands behind their ears to amplify the sounds.</li> <li>- Designate the amount of time desired.</li> <li>- Gather students when activity is over to debrief.</li> </ul> <p>Debriefing questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How was the activity for you? What did you notice? Hear?</li> <li>2. What sounds were the most familiar to you?</li> <li>3. What sound had you never heard before? What sounds surprised you?</li> <li>4. What sound did you like best? Why?</li> <li>5. Did listening to the sounds in the garden change how you experienced the garden? How?</li> </ol> <p>Questions adapted from by Sharing Nature (n.d) “Sound Map”</p>		
	10-15 minute exercise	20-30 minute exercise	Extending the lesson further
	- Give students 10-minutes to fill out their maps.	- Give students 20-minutes to fill out their maps.	- Have students do sound mapping in different parts of the school and compare their maps.

<p><b>Extensions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Debrief question one with students using think-pair-share.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Debrief all questions and have students write responses in their journals.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Focus debriefing questions on differences between environments</li><li>- Consider doing sound mapping along with a body scan activity. Discuss the ways these activities change how the garden is experienced.</li></ul>
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**REFERENCES AND RESOURCES**

Sharing Nature (n.d). *Sound Map*. Retrieved from <https://www.sharingnature.com/sound-map.html>. Accessed September 12th, 2019.

**Garden Sound Map**

Directions: The dot in the middle of the paper represents you. Listen for sounds that you hear in the garden and represent each different sound with a different symbol. Each time you hear the same sound record it with the same symbol. If you hear a different sound, write a different symbol. Keep track of your symbols in your sound map legend.

Space in front of you

Space to the left of you



Space to the right of you

Space in behind of you

Sound Map Legend

## MINDFUL EATING

**Overview:**

According to Altman, et al. (n.d). Mindful eating is:

- Allowing yourself to become aware of the positive and nurturing opportunities that are available through food preparation and consumption by respecting your own inner wisdom.
- Choosing to eat food that is both pleasing to you and nourishing to your body by using all your senses to explore, savor and taste.
- Acknowledging responses to food (likes, neutral or dislikes) without judgment.
- Learning to be aware of physical hunger and satiety cues to guide your decision to begin eating and to stop eating.

This exercise uses the practice of eating to engage in mindfulness in the garden. Students are given prompts that ask them to slow down and notice what they are eating.

<b>Prior Knowledge/Anticipated Misconceptions:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Check with the farm to see which crops are ready to eat.</li> <li>- Consider harvesting the crop together or having the crop pre-harvested</li> <li>- Make sure you check in with students to make sure they don't have allergies</li> </ul>
<b>Materials:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Food crop from the garden</li> <li>- Pens</li> <li>- Journals</li> <li>- Mindful eating script (see below)</li> <li>- Mindful eating worksheet (see below)</li> </ul>
<b>Lesson Procedures</b>	<p>This lesson can be adapted for a 10 minute, 20 minute, and 45 minute lesson. Please follow the lesson procedures for each lesson.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Harvest food from the garden or direct students to choose a food from a crop in the garden.</li> <li>- Gather students together, this can either be in the garden or back in the classroom.</li> <li>- Use the mindful eating script and worksheet to lead students through the mindful eating activity</li> <li>- Debrief activity</li> </ul> <p>Debriefing questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How was this experience the same or different from how you normally eat?</li> <li>2. What, if anything, surprised you about the experience?</li> </ol>

	<p>3. What did you notice about the food in terms of sight, touch, sound, smell, and taste?</p> <p>4. What thoughts or memories popped up while doing this exercise?</p> <p>5. What is one tip for yourself that you are going to take from this experience to apply to your eating habits in the future?</p> <p>Debriefing questions adapted from Duke Integrative Medicine (n.d) <i>Mindful Eating Exercise</i>.</p>		
<p><b>Extensions</b></p>	<p>10 minute exercise</p>	<p>20-30 minute exercise</p>	<p>Extending the lesson further</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Simply guide students using the script verbally, only pausing occasionally</li> <li>- Don't use the worksheet.</li> <li>- Debrief only question number three.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Take longer pauses between each prompt.</li> <li>- Direct students to use the worksheet to record their observations.</li> <li>- Debrief one or all the questions as a large class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Take longer pauses between each prompt</li> <li>- Direct students to use the worksheet to record their observations</li> <li>- Ask students to write down their responses to the debriefing questions</li> <li>- Consider creating a mindful meal, where groups of students lead the class through different prompts with different foods.</li> </ul>

**REFERENCES AND RESOURCES**

Altman D, Ahmala D, Baerten C, et al. (n.d). The Principles of Mindful Eating. *The Center for Mindful Eating*. Retrieved from <http://thecenterformindfuleating.org/Principles-Mindful-Eating>. Accessed September 12th, 2019

Duke Integrative Medicine (n.d). *Mindful Eating Exercise*. Retrieved from <https://www.dukeintegrativemedicine.org/dukeimprogramsblog/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/08/Mindful-Eating-Transcript.pdf>

U.S Department of Veterans Affairs (2016, September). *Whole Health for Pain and Suffering: An Integrative Approach*. Retrieved from <http://projects.hsl.wisc.edu/SERVICE/courses/whole-health-for-pain-and-suffering/Script-Mindful-Eating.pdf>. Accessed September 12th, 2019

The Mindful Diet (n.d). *A Mindfulness Eating Exercise: Simple Instructions*. Retrieved from <https://www.mindfulnessdiet.com/program/articles/a-mindfulness-eating-exercise-simple-instructions>. Accessed September 12th, 2019 .

## Mindful Eating Script

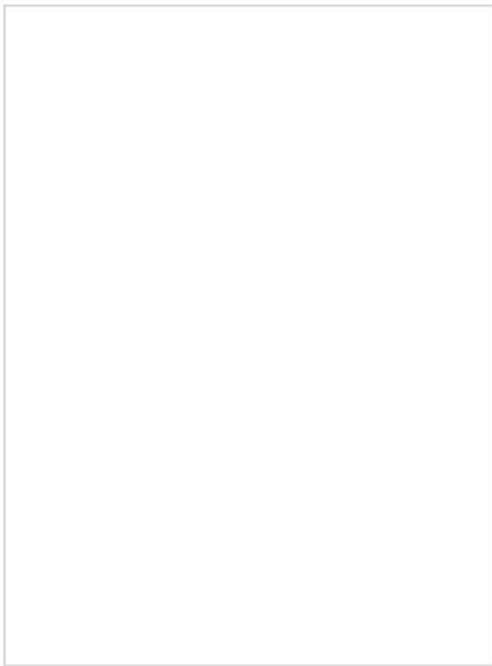
- Begin by exploring this little piece of food, using as many of your senses as possible.
- First, look at the food. Notice its texture. Notice its color. **(Optional) direct students to record their observations on the student worksheet.**
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- Now, close your eyes, and explore the food with your sense of touch. What does this food feel like? Is it hard or soft? Grainy or sticky? Moist or dry? **(Optional) direct students to record their observations on the student worksheet**
- Notice that you're not being asked to think, but just to notice different aspects of your experience, using one sense at a time. This is what it means to eat mindfully.
- Before you eat, explore this food with your sense of smell. What do you notice? **(Optional) direct students to record their observations on the student worksheet**
- Now, begin eating. No matter how small the bite of food you have, take at least two bites to finish it.
- Take your first bite. Please chew *very* slowly, noticing the actual sensory experience of chewing and tasting. Remember, you don't need to think about your food to experience it. You might want to close your eyes for a moment to focus on the sensations of chewing and tasting, before continuing.
- Notice the texture of the food; the way it feels in your mouth.
- Notice if the intensity of its flavor changes, moment to moment.
- Take about 20 more seconds to *very slowly* finishing this first bite of food, being aware of the simple sensations of chewing and tasting.
- It isn't always necessary to eat slowly in order to eat with mindfulness. But it's helpful at first to slow down, in order to be as mindful as you can.
- Now, please take your second and last bite.
- As before, chew very slowly, while paying close attention to the actual *sensory* experience of eating: the sensations and movements of chewing, the flavor of the food as it changes, and the sensations of swallowing.
- Just pay attention, moment by moment.
- **(Optional) direct students to record their observations on the student worksheet.**

*Mindful Eating Script* courtesy of The Mindful Diet (n.d). A *Mindfulness Eating Exercise: Simple Instructions*. Retrieved from <https://www.mindfulnessdiet.com/program/articles/a-mindfulness-eating-exercise-simple-instructions>. Accessed September 12th, 2019.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

In the space provided below, draw the food you will be eating.



## MINDFUL JOURNALING

**Overview:**

All the mindfulness practices described here can incorporate a mindful journaling exercise. See the other lesson outlines for details. Below describes a mindful study of a plant exercise for a garden specific activity.

<b>Prior Knowledge/Anticipated Misconceptions:</b>	- N?A		
<b>Materials:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Paper</li> <li>- Pens</li> <li>- Pencils</li> </ul>		
<b>Lesson Procedures</b>	<p>This lesson can be adapted for a 10 minute, 30 minute, or longer. Please follow the lesson procedures for each lesson.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Direct students to choose a plant to investigate</li> <li>- Hand out worksheet and designate an amount of time you want students to complete the activity.</li> <li>- Tell students to reflect on the experience by writing a story in their journals.</li> </ul>		
<b>Extensions</b>	10 minute exercise	20-30 minute exercise	Extending the lesson further
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Choose a plant and direct students to fill out the worksheet with a neighbor or discuss verbally.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Direct students to choose their own plant.</li> <li>- Give students the worksheet to fill out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use this lesson as a jumping off point for creating an art project, essay, poem, etc.</li> </ul>

### REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Calming Moment (n.d). 6 ways to garden mindfully and find your inner calm  
 Retrieved from <https://www.calmmoment.com/mindfulness/7-ways-to-garden-mindfully-and-find-your-inner-calm/>. Accessed September 12th, 2019

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Study a plant in the garden

Find a plant in the garden. Find somewhere quiet to sit and start by taking a few deep breaths, then begin to examine the plant. Pay attention to each part of the plant in turn – how do the petals, leaves, and stems look in this moment? Is the center of the plant flat or curved? Are the leaf edges smooth or serrated? If you feel your mind start to wander, simply bring your attention back to your breathing for a few seconds, then return to the exercise.

