



MindUP Booster Lesson

Lesson B: Mindful Listening

Grades 4 – 5

Length of Lesson: 20 – 30 minutes

Objective of Lesson B: Students cultivate focused and present-moment awareness by becoming aware of the thoughts and working with distractions.

Summary of Unit 2 – Lessons delivered by teacher

Objective of Unit 2: Through mindful observation of the senses, students sharpen their attention and use sensory experiences to enhance memory, problem solving, relationships, creativity and physical performance.

- Lesson 7 – Students focus on the taste of food to make it a mindful, healthy experience.
- Lesson 9 – Students learn balancing postures that foster awareness of how healthy movement practice can improve physical, emotional, and social well-being.

Lesson Overview

1. Defining Mindful Listening: 3 – 5 min.
2. Thumbs Up: 3 min.
3. Cooling out-breath: 3 min.
4. Vanishing Tone: 3 min.
5. Guess that Sound: 7 – 10 min.
6. Wrap Up – 2 min.

Lesson Materials and Preparation

Materials:

- Set of Mystery Containers – 2 (you have two sets in case you need a co-docent or teacher to help you walk around the room with the same container for all students to hear)
- List of items in Mystery Containers
- Chime – 1

Preparation: Determine sitting/standing location for each activity – on carpet or at desk.

For Parent Review: Facts from MindUP lesson 4

- **Mindful activities help** train the prefrontal cortex to pay attention, absorb details and think clearly.
- **Having a calm state of mind can** increase attentiveness, engagement, competence, and achievement are only possible when a learner's brain is in a receptive state, allowing for calm and mindful response.
- **Mindful Listening helps us** choose which sounds to focus our attention on and helps us to be thoughtful in the way we hear and respond to the words of others.
- **Mindful Listening can assist** with following directions, resolving conflicts with discussion, building friendships, listening critically to news/ads, media.



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DEFINING MINDFUL LISTENING (3 – 5 min.)

Hello everyone, my name is _____ and today is our second MindUP booster lesson for this year! Let's start the lesson by reviewing what it means to be mindful. **Can anyone help me define mindfulness and associated actions?**

Yes, you all have a good memory - those are good answers and some great ideas on mindful behavior.

Mindfulness is about exploring and knowing what is happening inside and around you. Mindfulness helps us by training our attention to what is happening right now. These skills are helpful for us at school, with friends, managing our feelings, and resolving conflicts.

There are many ways to practice being mindful, last time we focused on awareness and breathing. Today we are going to practice being mindful of sound and work on our mindful listening muscles. **Does anyone have an idea when it is important to engage in mindful listening?** Great answers! Yes, practicing mindful listening can help us follow directions, develop our memory, and help us focus when there are distractions.

THUMBS UP (3 min.)

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE: Students check in with themselves and communicate non-verbally to the group how they are feeling.

Before we dive into the activities, **let's do a quick self-reflection with where are right now.** We can feel a lot of different ways – happy, sad, tired, excited – and there is no wrong way to feel. Our feelings change, you probably feel different now than you did this morning and you might feel different later in the day.

Take a deep breath and notice how you are feeling right now. I'm going to ask you a question, and everyone will share their answers at the same time by using their thumb. **I will go over the question and how respond first, when I say, "GO" then you can respond with your thumb answer.**

Is it easy to sit still right now, or is it hard? If it's **hard** – point thumb down to the ground (*model*); if it's **easy** – point thumb up to the ceiling (*model*); if it's in **between** – point thumb sideways (*model*).

One, two, three, GO! Keep your thumb pointing so we can all look around the room to see how everyone is feeling right now. There is no right or wrong way to feel – just important to check in with ourselves.

Very interesting – thank you for sharing!



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COOLING OUT-BREATH (3 min.)

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE: Students practice intentional breathing to practice letting distracting thoughts go and being present in the moment.

PREPARATION: Determine if you want the students sitting on the carpet or at their desks.

Before we start mindful listening let's begin with a mindful breathing exercise focusing on a long out-breath. **Sit with your back straight and your body relaxed, resting your hands gently on your knees.** Breathe naturally for 2 breaths. *Pause.*

On the next breath I will count your inhale and exhale. **Breath in – 1, 2, 3, 4 and out – 1, 2, 3, 4.** *Continue for 2 more breaths adjusting your pace (count for shorter or longer).*

Now breathe in for **two counts – 1, 2 (pause)** and out for four counts – 1, 2, 3, 4.

On your next inhale go back to your **natural breathing for 3 breaths.**

Great job. **When you are feeling anxious or upset you can focus on a long exhale breath and it will help you feel calmer and more relaxed.**

VANISHING TONE (3 min.)

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE: Students prepare themselves for an auditory awareness activity.

PREPARATION:

- Chime
- Determine if you want the students sitting on the carpet or at their desks.

Now that we have calmed down our bodies with a breathing exercise, it is time to warm up with a mindful listening activity. There are a lot of things that we can learn to be mindful of. **Today we are going to practice being mindful of sound. Let's warm up by practicing with this chime.** Try to pay attention from when I ring the chime until the sound is gone. Raise your hand when the sound is gone. **Ring Chime.**

Let's do it once more with our eyes closed. Listen to the entire sound and raise your hand when you can't hear it anymore. Sometimes the sound will be shorter or longer. **Ring Chime** (*Determine if you want a short or long tone*).

Excellent! Let's do it once more. **Ring Chime** (*Determine if you want a short or long tone*).

Who can share with me how they feel now? Is your body relaxed? Is your mind busy or quiet?

Great job! I think we are ready for the final activity.



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GUESS THAT SOUND (7 – 10 min.)

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE: Students practice focused listening through an auditory awareness activity.

PREPARATION:

- Set of Mystery Containers – 2 (you have two sets in case you need a co-docent or teacher to walk around the room with the same container for all students to hear).
- List of items in Mystery Containers
- Determine if you will ask a co-docent or teacher to walk around the room with the same container for all students to hear.
- Determine if you want the students sitting on the carpet or at their desks.

For the last activity today, we will play a mindful listening game called, “Guess that sound.” I have a set of mystery containers with me today that have different items inside. **The goal today is to focus on the sounds these mystery containers make and see if we can guess what is inside.**

For everyone to be able to hear the sounds, **we need to be very quiet and still.** Let’s close our eyes or gaze gently at the floor/desk. I will shake one mystery container at a time. **In the beginning, I want everyone to listen carefully and once you think you know what is inside, silently raise your hand.** At the end I will call on a few helpers to guess what is inside.

Shake container #1 for about 30 seconds while encouraging students to remain silent (If using a teacher or co-docent, have them shake the same container as they walk around the room).

I will call on 2 – 3 students to help me guess what is inside. *Call on 1 – 2 students to guess.* Great guesses! The item in the container was _____. **Repeat this for all containers.**

WRAP UP (2 min.)

Now that we are all done, let’s wrap up the activity.

Who can share with me:

- Were you surprised by any of the sounds?
- What was it like to hear the different sounds with your eyes closed?
- What did you notice during the activity (in your body, in the room, in your mind, etc.)?

Thank you for practicing mindful listening with me today. Remember you can use these skills anytime you need to refocus.

REFERENCES

- Greenland, S. K., & Harris, A. (2016). *Mindful games: sharing mindfulness and meditation with children, teens, and families.* Boulder: Shambhala.
- The Hawn Foundation. (2011). *In The MindUP Curriculum: Brain-Focused Strategies for Learning and Living.* New York, NY: Scholastic.