

Bērol®

5 fun mindfulness activities to support a calm classroom



What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is about training the brain to focus on the present moment rather than worrying about past or future events which may or may not happen. It encourages a person to switch on all of their senses to foster greater awareness, attention and curiosity of what is happening now. Mindfulness promotes the ability to deal with emotions, behaviours and situations so that a person is better equipped to choose their response.

Why mindfulness in schools?

Mindfulness has gained greater popularity in recent years, particularly with its use among young people. There is growing evidence that practising mindfulness in schools can bring about significant benefits to behaviour and learning by impacting on self-regulatory abilities. It is something the whole school can get involved with, and is particularly beneficial around times when it might be necessary to refocus attention e.g. around SATs/assessment time, at the start and end of term or following a big school event.

Ready to get started?

Here are five fun mindfulness activities you can try straight away with your class. The activities can run as standalone activities or be extended into longer lessons by linking them to your current class topic or curriculum. They're really simple to deliver - using everything you'll already have in your classroom.

COMPETITION TIME!
Promote a calm classroom
with a fun superhero-
themed activity and WIN a
stash of Berol goodies for
your classroom. See page 8
for full details. T&Cs apply.



There's a superhero in all of us

You will need:

Flipchart, Berol flipchart markers, sticky notes, Berol fiber tip pens, Berol felt tip colouring markers, pencils, blank paper

Mindfulness skills:

Creativity, curiosity, observation, self-awareness, concentration

Activity:

- Write the word 'Superhero' in the centre of your flipchart.
- As a whole class, discuss the children's favourite superheroes. What do they have in common?
- Encourage the children to notice both physical and non-physical attributes that superheroes share (e.g. physically strong, wears a costume, has special powers, brave, truthful, etc).
- Hand out a sticky note to each child and ask them to write down their favourite superhero characteristic. Invite children to come and stick their idea on the class flipchart.
- Next, introduce the idea that we are all unique or 'extraordinary' in some way. Ask the children to think of their own positive attributes (things they especially like about themselves, things they're good at, things that are unique to them, times they have overcome a particularly adversity etc).
- Ask the children to write down or share these verbally with the rest of the class.
- Do they notice any similarities between their own special attributes and those of superheroes?
- Using their ideas and discussions, invite the children to design a superhero of themselves that focuses on their 'super' qualities. Encourage them to make their designs as colourful as possible to really bring them to life. Older children may want to add labels and annotations.
- Encourage the children to focus on the positives, turning any perceived weaknesses into strengths (e.g. if a child wears glasses this could give them special xray vision).



EXTENSION:

Invite the children to create a short story about themselves as a superhero. Encourage them to think of different characters (e.g. villain, victim); location (fictional or real-life); a plot that involves overcoming adversity; and finally a resolution. Children could even storyboard their stories in the style of a comic.



COMPETITION TIME

Submit your class' superhero designs to our competition for your chance to WIN A STASH OF BEROL GOODIES for your classroom! An exciting way to celebrate individuality and promote mental wellbeing. See page 8 for full competition details. T&Cs apply.

Pinwheel breathing

You will need:

Berol felt tip colouring markers, coloured crayons, paper straws, split pins, downloadable 'Make your own pinwheel' template.

Mindfulness skills:

Creativity, observation, breathing techniques, concentration, repetition

Activity:

- Begin a whole class discussion about how our breathing changes depending on our activity and mood levels.
- Invite the children to suggest when their breathing might become very fast or erratic, and ask them how they might be feeling or what they might be doing (during sport, when upset, frightened or stressed etc).
- Next ask the children to think about when their breathing might be much slower and steadier (e.g. while sleeping, when very relaxed, happy etc). You might ask them to roleplay snoring with a partner - what do they notice about how the snoring sounds (other than the volume)? Encourage them to notice that snoring is very slow and rhythmic.
- Talk about how when we are feeling anxious or upset, taking some slow, deep breaths can help us to feel better. Model what this breathing might look like by inhaling and exhaling purposefully.
- Invite the children to colour in the downloadable 'Make a pinwheel' template using Berol felt tip colouring markers or coloured crayons. The detailed pattern on the template features a common style used in many mindfulness colouring activities to encourage patience, focus and concentration.
- Once the children have finished, invite them to cut out, fold and make their pinwheels following the simple instructions on the template.
- Ask the children to gently blow the pinwheel and notice how it moves. What kind of breath makes the pinwheel rotate the best? Repeat several times to help the children practice slow breathing techniques.



EXTENSION:

Talk to the children about different ways of coping with stressful situations - both positive and negative. Suggestions might include fighting, arguing, meditation, talking to someone, going somewhere quiet, listening to music or doing some exercise (e.g. playing a favourite sport). What types of stressful situations might the children encounter (e.g. exam/assessment pressure, falling out with friends, changes at home)? Emphasise that even though we can't always control why a situation is stressful, how we respond to stress is entirely our choice. Invite the children to create a stress-busting slogan or mindfulness mantra for the whole class. Encourage them to repeat this phrase to themselves quietly whenever things get a bit tough.



Today is going to be an awesome day

You will need:

Flipchart, Berol flipchart markers, Berol fiber tip pens, paper

Mindfulness skills:

Creativity, focusing on the present, being grateful

Activity:

- Share the famous quote by Alice Morse Earle: “Everyday may not be good but there is something good in every day.”
- Discuss what the quote might mean. Elicit that even if the children are having a bad day, there will likely be times - in that same day - that are good. For example, a child might get caught in the pouring rain one day, lose a favourite toy and have a disagreement with a friend. But then they get their all-time favourite dinner later that day.
- Invite the children to write down one good thing that’s already happened to them that day and share their ideas. It’s important the children focus on ‘today’ - so try to discourage them discussing events yesterday or tomorrow.
- Next extend the discussion to introduce the idea of gratitude. Encourage the children to be grateful for any positive experiences or events in their day, no matter how small.
- Explain to the class that you are going to create a whole class poem based on their ideas. The poem will be called: ‘Today is going to be an awesome day.’ You could tap into the senses and begin each line with: I will see / I will listen to / I will taste / I will touch / I will smell, or you may want to explore different poetry forms, e.g. acrostic (using ‘Awesome Day’).

EXTENSION:

Ask the children to create their own poems based on the theme. Afterwards, invite the children to dramatise their poems by adding movement and actions, and perform to the rest of the class.

Blow art posters

You will need:

Paints (watered down), paper, straws, Berol permanent markers black

Mindfulness skills:

Creativity, focus, concentration, breathing techniques, awareness, empathy, self-regulation

Activity:

- Introduce the idea that we can associate different colours with how we might be feeling (e.g. grey for sad, yellow for happy).
- How many colours can the children associate with an emotion? Does everyone associate the same colour with the same emotion?
- Discuss how we each experience a mix of different emotions everyday. Apart from colour, how else might we identify them (i.e. actions, behaviour, language etc)?
- Ask the children to choose one or more paint colours that they think portrays some of the emotions discussed.
- With watered down paint, straws and paper, ask the children to put a blob of paint somewhere on their paper, then blow down the straws to disperse the paint into a pattern.
- Encourage the children to notice their breathing during the activity, and how everyone's artwork is completely unique (even where the same colour and technique is used).

EXTENSION:

Talk to the children about what the word 'motivation' means. What kinds of things help to motivate us? When might we need motivation? Show the children some examples of motivational quotes (there are lots available on the internet) and discuss the types of words and phrases used. For example, many quotes use similes and metaphors to help them resonate. Ask the children to write down their favourite motivational quote or alternatively create their own. Using their blow posters as the background, invite them to experiment writing their quote in different font styles to create an inspirational and motivational poster.

Competition time

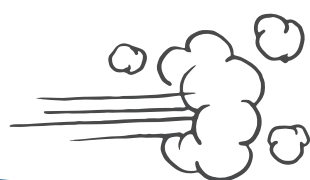


There's a superhero in all of us! It's one of the messages we promote in our fantastic superhero-themed activity on page 3. By practising creativity, curiosity, concentration, observation and self-awareness - we encourage children to understand they are all extraordinary in their own special way.

So here's how you can celebrate each child's individuality - and **WIN A LOAD of Berol goodies** in time for the new school year!



1. Complete the **'There's a superhero in all of us'** activity on page 3 in this pack.
2. When it comes to designing their superhero, give each child a white piece of A4 paper for their design. Tell the children to write their names clearly on the front of their design.
3. Remind the children that their superhero is based on themselves - so they need to hone in on their own unique characteristics then exaggerate these to create a powerful and inspirational hero.
4. Using pencils, crayons, pens and coloured pens, encourage the children to make their designs as big, bold and colourful as possible. Older children can annotate their designs if desired.
5. When the designs are finished, scan or take a photo using a tablet and then attach the image to an email (you may attach more than one design to an email if submitting a whole class' designs). Email designs to hello@theberolclassroom.co.uk remembering to include your name, position and your school's name.
6. Competition closing date: 8 November 2019.
7. **WINNERS: 1st prize** wins £150 voucher provided by Ovation incentives + Berol Handwriting Pens Tub of 42 + Berol classpack assortment of 288 - total value £396; **2nd** and **3rd prize** winners will each receive £150 vouchers provided by Ovation incentives + Berol classpack assortment of 288 - total value £325; **4th** and **5th prize** winners will each receive Berol classpack assortment of 288 - total value £175; **PLUS** 5 runners up will each receive Berol color broad assortment of 42 - total value £28.
8. Ovation vouchers can be used at over 40 high street retailers including Argos to buy classroom resources, or put towards a fantastic class trip through one of our partners.
9. Winners will be contacted and announced by 22 November 2019.
10. For full T&Cs see www.theberolclassroom.co.uk/mindfulness/competition/rules



1 - total value: £396
 2-3 total value: £325
 4-5 total value: £175
PLUS 5 runners up
 value: £28

Playground detective worksheet

Detective name:

Date/Time:

Location:



Things I see

Things I hear

Things I smell

Make your own pinwheel worksheet

1. Colour in the front of the square. Cut it out, then create your own colourful pattern on the back.
2. Turn the square back over and cut along the diagonal dotted lines towards the centre of the pinwheel. Be careful not to cut all the way into the middle.
3. Using a sharp pencil carefully make small holes in the centre of the pinwheel and in each corner marked by a small dot.
4. Fold in just the corners of the pinwheel that have a small hole at the end so that all the holes line up with the centre hole. Push a split pin through all the holes to keep them together, and then into a paper straw.

