

Overview - Intermediate High

Positive Psychology Learning Outcomes: Students will discuss the meaning of mindfulness, recognize the importance of mindfulness, and identify how mindfulness helps language learning. Language Learning Outcomes: Students will listen for specific information, understand speaker's purpose and point of view, and use syntactic and morphological cues to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words.

Lesson Information

Positive Psychology Learning Outcomes

Students will...

1. discuss the meaning of mindfulness.
2. recognize the importance of mindfulness.
3. identify how mindfulness helps language learning.

Language Learning Outcomes

Students will...

1. listen for specific information.
2. understand speaker's purpose and point of view.
3. uses syntactic and morphological cues to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words.

Materials Needed

- [Mindfulness Overview](#)
- [The Power of Mindfulness: What You Practice Grows Stronger | Shauna Shapiro | TEDxWashingtonSquare](#)
- [IH Overview - TED Talk Cloze activity](#)
- [Mindful Looking Meditation](#)
- [Headspace | Mini Meditation | Let Go of Stress](#)
- [Relaxing Nature Sounds](#)

Overview

Explain that students will be learning about “mindfulness” throughout the course of the semester (further discussion of mindfulness and its definition is provided later in the chapter). These lessons about mindfulness are designed to help them not only learn English, but to feel better about themselves and learn better. You may want to share the following research about mindfulness:

- Research in mindfulness has identified many benefits, such as helping to decrease anxiety, and emotional reactivity. Research has also shown mindfulness helps to increase positivity and concentration.
- Practicing mindfulness can also help your physical health. Research shows mindfulness can improve immune system function, quality of sleep, as well as decreasing blood pressure.
- Mindfulness has also been connected to better work performance and decreased test stress. ([UCLA](#))

Activate Background Knowledge

Put the word “mindfulness” on the word (provided for you in slides). Tell students that there are three parts to this word. Ask students to break the word down into three parts with a partner. Then have students share what they think.

After students share their thoughts, divide the word “mind + ful + ness”. Explain that in English, many words have smaller parts to them, called “affixes”. These affixes have meaning and are like puzzle pieces that come together to create a word. Present the three definitions of each part of this word on the board.

Mind: the element of a person that helps them to be aware of the world and their experiences, to think, and to feel; different from brain

-ful: to be full of, have the qualities of

-ness: added to adjectives to form nouns

After explaining the affixes, have students look at the word “mindfulness” again. Then have them discuss with a partner the following prompt:

- What do you think mindfulness means?

Have a few students share their ideas. Then give the following definition:

“Mindfulness is about being aware of yourself and your surroundings.”

Explain that being aware can mean seeing something, understanding something, knowing something, or feeling something. Then ask students to discuss with their same partner:

- How can you apply being aware to language learning?

Activity 1: Speaking

Help students further understand the concept of mindfulness by contrasting “mindful” and “mindless”. Review what -ful means and give the definition for -less.

-less: without

Ask students to find a different partner and brainstorm ideas to the following prompts together.

1. Write down things that you can do mindlessly (ie breathe, heartbeats, hiccups)
2. Write down things that you can do mindfully (memorizing, paying attention in class, speaking English)

Ask a few students to share their answers with the class. Explain that today we will talk about being more mindful (even of mindless activities such as breathing) and how it can benefit our learning and our lives. Share that students will continue to practice mindfulness throughout the semester.

Activity 2: Vocabulary

Present the following words on the board. Review definitions and pronunciations of each word.

Breathe - to push air in and out of our lungs

Breath - the air that leaves our lungs

Mindful - conscious or aware of something

Mindless - not thinking of or concerned about

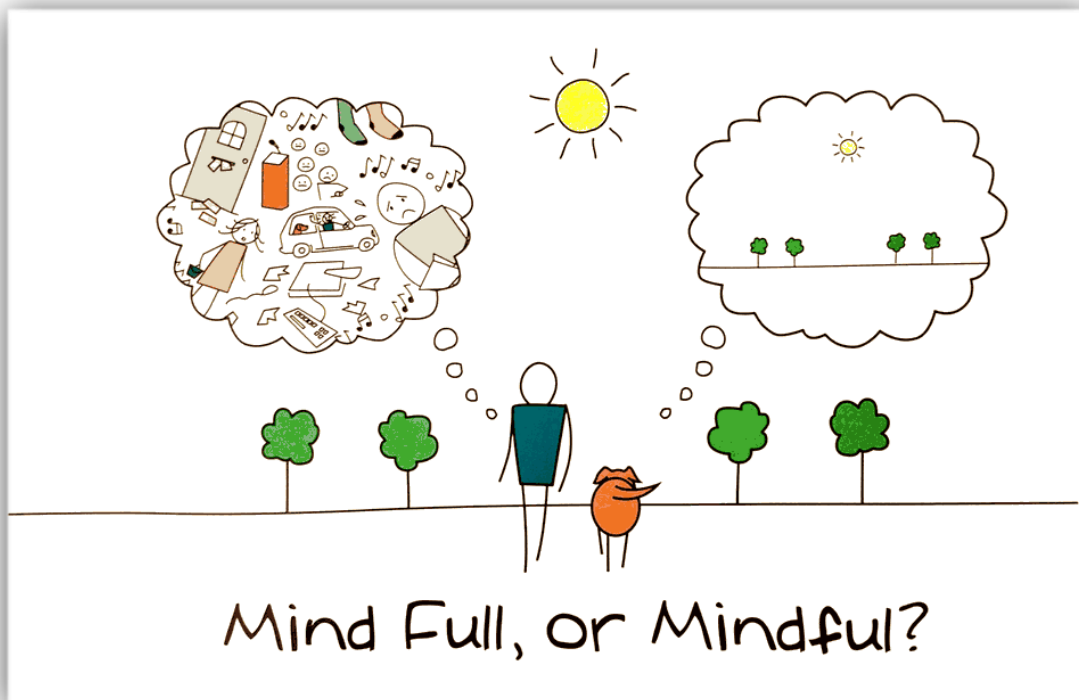
Attention - focus on someone or something; the thinking of someone or something as interesting or important.

Judgment - an opinion or conclusion

Focus - the center of interest or activity

Present - the period of time now occurring

You may use the following image to better understand the word "mindful" (Also found in slides)



Retrieved from: <https://edtechbooks.org/-gLEw>

Activity 3: Listening

Watch the following TED talk about mindfulness. Hand out the printed cloze activity and ask students to listen carefully and fill in the blanks. Stop at 6:55 (the video in slides will stop automatically at that time).

[The Power of Mindfulness: What You Practice Grows Stronger | Shauna Shapiro | TEDxWashingtonSquare](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leblJdB2-Vo)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leblJdB2-Vo>

Cloze activity:

[IH Overview - TED Talk Cloze activity](#)

After watching the video, review the answers with students from the cloze activity. They are as follows:

- Dog
- Mindfulness
- Present
- Half
- Judging
- Practice
- Learning
- Sleep
- Beneficial

Activity 4: Speaking

Discuss the following questions about the video, first with a partner and then as a class.

- Why did Dr. Shapiro's share this TED talk?
- What does she think about mindfulness?

Possible answers might include her personal experience with mindfulness, to convince people to be more mindful, to educate people about mindfulness, etc.

Then have students discuss the following questions in groups.

- How can we be mindful?
- What are some benefits of mindfulness that you heard in the video?
- How can mindfulness help you learn a language?

Afterwards, discuss as a class. Praise students when they talk about coping with distractions, staying focused, etc.

Activity 5: Listening

Explain that sometimes it can be difficult to focus. Meditation can help us be more mindful. Invite students to listen and follow the instructions for this meditation. *you might need to explain that this meditation is for children, but it can help all of us practice paying attention.

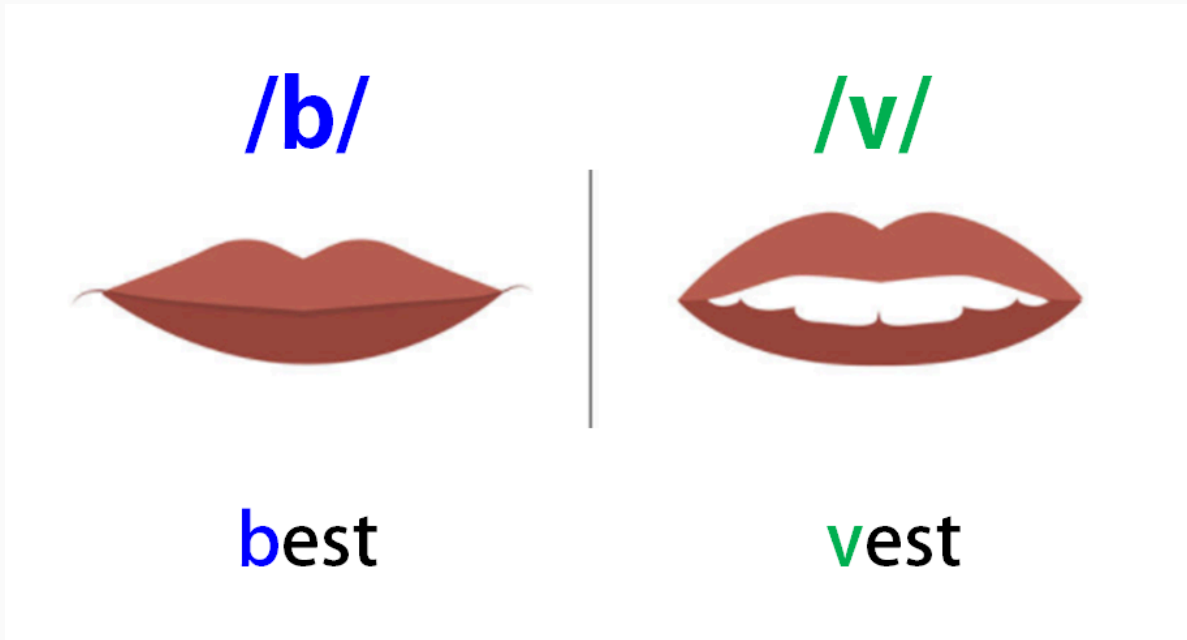
[Bubble Bounce! Mindfulness for Children \(Mindful Looking\)](#)

<https://edtechbooks.org/-LTA>

After the meditation, ask students how it felt to only focus on one thing.

Activity 6: Pronunciation

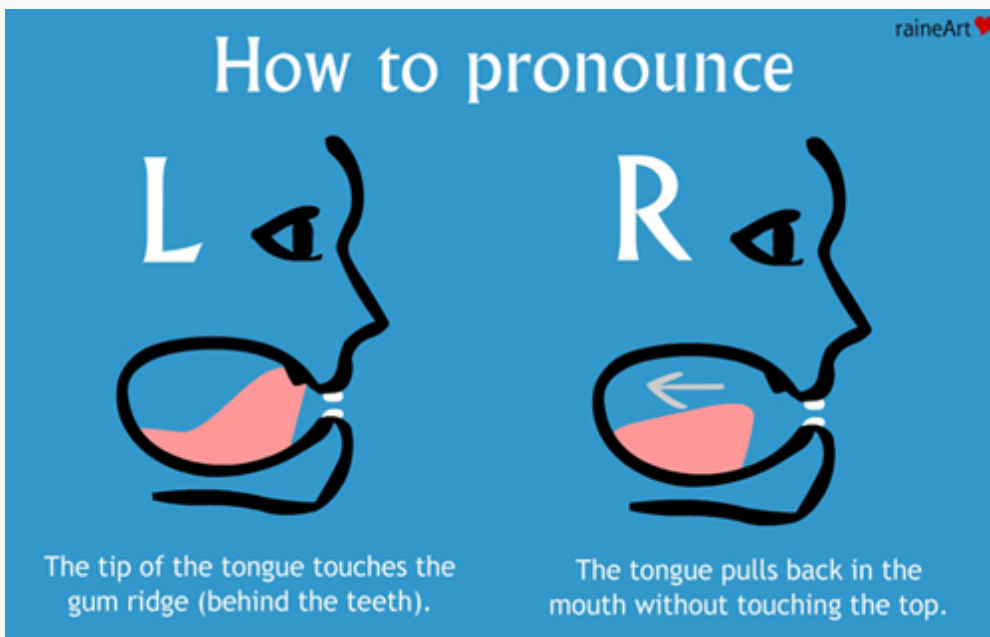
One way mindfulness can help us is in pronunciation. When we are mindful of our body, especially the way our mouth is shaped or moving, we are better able to pronounce sounds that are unfamiliar or difficult to us. You can demonstrate this by being mindful of your lips when you pronounce /b/ and /v/. For example:



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B vs. V

Ban vs van



Retrieved from: <https://edtechbooks.org/-zguC>

L vs. R

Rice vs lice

It might be helpful to ask students to really think about where their tongue/lips are. Encourage students to be curious and pay attention to how the sound changes when they move their lips/tongue.

Activity 7: Speaking

Place students in partners. Have students practice the pronunciation by reading various sentences. (These sentences can be found in the slides) You might practice these as a class as well.

B vs. V

I bought a very nice volley ball.

Berries are very delicious.

L vs. R

I would love a little rice.

I really like rap music.

We really love waffles.

After reading the sentences out loud, ask how well they stayed focused on the pronunciation of these sounds. Invite students to share how that helped them with their pronunciation.

Homework

Ask the students to participate in their own meditation. Provide them with the following video (or they might find a meditation in their own language). Have the students share their experiences, either as an assigned recording or in class.

Invite students to pay close attention to the way they feel during the meditation exercise and to stay focused on the activity while they are doing it. It can also be helpful to remind them that it is okay if they get distracted, they can just kindly bring back their attention to the meditation.

[Headspace Guide to Meditation \(Netflix\)](#)

<https://youtu.be/c1Ndym-lsQg>

Follow-Up

Tuesday:

Have students share their experiences with meditation from their homework. You can ask questions such as:

- How did you feel while meditating? And after meditating?
- How would you describe your mood before and after meditating?

Praise students when they talk about coping with distractions, staying focused, or even when they open up about how they felt, etc.

Wednesday:

Share the following quote and ask students what it means to them. Highlight any comments related to focusing one's attention in the present moment. You can encourage students to briefly discuss what strategies they use to stay focused in the present and how this helps them be happier. Review what it means to be present.

"The present moment is filled with joy and happiness. If you are attentive, you will see it."

— Thich Nhat Hanh, [Peace Is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life](#)

Thursday:

Watch this one-minute nature meditation video. Before watching the video encourage students to kindly bring their attention to the present moment and to try to stay focused.

[Relaxing Nature Sounds](#)

https://youtu.be/nqye02H_H6I

Help students make a plan to be more mindful during this semester.

For example:

- Meditate once a week. As a part of this goal, you can invite students to set a time and a place to remove distractions and stay focused for 5 minutes practicing meditation.
- Be more present with friends by not checking their phones while interacting with them.
- Take a few minutes of quiet time without technology before bed



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