

Lesson Plan: Mindfulness during Independent Reading

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Describe the 3 types of memory
- Name strategies to help the mind stop wondering during independent reading
- Independently read grade level texts

Standards:

The following are Common Core State Standards for each grade level on Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

- First Grade: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.10
- Second Grade: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.10
- Third Grade: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.10
- Fourth Grade: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.10
- Fifth Grade: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.10
- Sixth Grade: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.10
- Seventh Grade: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.10
- Eighth Grade: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.10

Lesson Plan:

Materials:

- Use “Brain Programs” Google Slides
- Mindfulness During Independent Reading Video

Introduction:

- **Ask the class:** Does your brain wander while you are trying to read?
- Assure them that this happens to everyone!
- Explain that it is important to deal with our wandering minds while we are in class.

Lesson:

- Slide 2: Explain that there are 3 “programs” that helps our brains stop wandering

- Slide 3: The first “program” is **working memory**. That is the part of your brain that can store information and retrieve it when you need it.
- Slide 4: examples of working memory are recalling the steps to a recipe, remembering the teacher’s instructions, and recalling the rules of a game
- Slide 5: The second “program” that our brain runs to stop our minds from wandering is called **Cognitive Flexibility**. Cognitive Flexibility can be seen when we switch between ideas, hold two ideas at the same time, or see that there are multiple answers.
- Slide 6: Cognitive Flexibility examples are when you can think of a move in chess, but also think of the other outcomes of your move.
- Slide 7: The third “program” that our brain runs to stop our minds from wandering is called **Inhibitory Control**. Inhibitions are internal rules you don’t want to break, like saying you’re hungry randomly in class just because you felt hungry in the moment. Yep - you’re all thinking right now “I AM hungry”
- Slide 8: People who lack inhibitory control easily get distracted when trying to read. Inhibition control is being studied by scientists - brain scientists called neurologists. They use FMRI machines and are learning that each of our brains is very different. Some of us have a LOT of trouble with inhibitory control.
- Slide 9: Read this scenario: You need to look up the definition to a work. Then, you watch a YouTube video of the definition. Next, YouTube shows you all the popular videos of the day. You start watching them. Then, you send one to a friend. Your friend sends you a great meme. So, you spend 5 minutes searching for the perfect meme to respond.
 - **Ask:** What was your original assignment?
 - Can any students correctly answer?
- Slide 10: Do you remember the 3 “programs?”
- Slide 11: Now, let’s practice being mindful while reading.

Have students read for about 10 to 15 minutes. (During this short time, it can be easy for students to stay mindful the entire time. So, I will walk around and be a little louder than usual. This really tests the students' ability to try some strategies on their own to stay mindful.

Closing:

- Stop the students from reading in a soft voice.
- Play the video "Mindfulness during Independent Reading"
- After the video, have a discussion with your students about what distractions made their minds wander and how they can take control of their mind to focus on the text and reading.

Practice mindfulness during reading with our previous lesson Meditative Breathing and remind students to remember the skills we learned today whenever they are reading!