

Abilene Christian University

## Digital Commons @ ACU

---

Masters of Education in Teaching and Learning

Masters Theses and Projects

---

Spring 5-6-2022

### Mindfulness Is When “You Don’t Think at All, You Just Do Whatever You Want Without Thinking of the Consequences”: Reframing Mindfulness in a Third-Grade Classroom

Emily Colwell  
eac16d@acu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/metl>



Part of the [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Curriculum and Social Inquiry Commons](#), and the [Elementary Education Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Colwell, Emily, "Mindfulness Is When “You Don’t Think at All, You Just Do Whatever You Want Without Thinking of the Consequences”: Reframing Mindfulness in a Third-Grade Classroom" (2022). *Masters of Education in Teaching and Learning*. 55.

<https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/metl/55>

This Manuscript is brought to you for free and open access by the Masters Theses and Projects at Digital Commons @ ACU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Masters of Education in Teaching and Learning by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ ACU.

**Mindfulness Is When “You Don’t Think at All, You Just Do Whatever You Want Without Thinking of the Consequences”: Reframing Mindfulness in a Third-Grade Classroom**

Emily Colwell

Abilene Christian University

### **Abstract**

This study explored the influences that five minutes of daily mindfulness activities had on third-grade students in a math and science classroom, as well as both student and teacher perceptions of the mindfulness activities. The researcher implemented five minutes of a mindfulness activity daily during a three-week period. Data collection methods included pre- and-post surveys, observations with field notes, student artifacts, and student and teacher interviews. Qualitative data was analyzed using the constant comparative method to look for recurring themes and numerical data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Four major themes emerged including better understanding of what mindfulness is, the role school and home play, provided structure and quiet calmness, and behaviors stayed consistent. While behaviors stayed consistent, students left the intervention with a better understanding of mindfulness and additional calming and refocusing strategies. The mindfulness intervention also showed to have created a calming environment that allowed students to better concentrate.

**Mindfulness Is When “You Don’t Think at All, You Just Do Whatever You Want Without Thinking of the Consequences”: Reframing Mindfulness in a Third-Grade Classroom**

Miss. Colwell: For, *What does the word mindfulness mean to you?*, you said, “When you don’t think before you do,” tell me more about that.

Ryan: You don’t think at all, you just do whatever you want without thinking about what the consequences might be...

Miss. Colwell: What if I told you that mindfulness was thinking before you did...the opposite.

Ryan: Why would mindfulness mean you do think...

Miss. Colwell: Why do you think it means you don’t think, what made you think that?

Ryan: Because it has the word -ness in it, so mindfulness...so, I thought it was like, kind of like, not.

This conversation was during Ryan’s (all names are pseudonyms) pre-interview. On his pre-survey, he said that he thought mindfulness meant not thinking, because he thought that the suffix -ness meant not. Even after I told him that it meant that you *do* think, he still didn’t believe me. Since this was before the mindfulness intervention, it got me thinking about how the mindfulness intervention would impact students’ understanding of what mindfulness was and if Ryan’s understanding of mindfulness would change throughout the intervention.

**Purpose**

Students today live complex lives that require them to handle difficult circumstances starting from a young age (Kraemer-Holland, 2021). Having the ability to regulate emotions and understand complex feelings is an important skill for students to learn. Mindfulness has been described as having “...compassion for self and others...[and] engaging with the present

moment” (Kraemer-Holland, 2021, p. 8). Through getting to know the students in my yearlong graduate student clinical teaching placement, I saw a need for my students to learn self-regulation skills and calming strategies. The purpose of my study was to see the influence, if any, that incorporating five minutes of daily mindfulness activities in a third-grade classroom had on student behavior and engagement. My study aimed to answer the following questions:

**Research Question:** What are the influences, if any, of incorporating five minutes of daily mindfulness activities into a third-grade classroom?

**Sub-Question 1:** In what ways are behaviors influenced by consistently incorporating five minutes of daily mindfulness activities into a third-grade classroom?

**Sub-Question 2:** What are student and teacher perceptions of the influences of incorporating five minutes of daily mindfulness activities into a third-grade classroom?

During this action research study, I was serving as a yearlong graduate clinical teacher in the second semester of the academic school year in a West Texas city with a population of around 120,000. My placement was at Sailor Elementary School which served about 570 students K-5. Sailor is one of thirteen elementary schools in its district. The approximate racial and ethnic demographics of the school include 55% White, 30% Hispanic, 6% African American, 5% Asian, 5% two or more races, and >1% Native American. At Sailor, 12% of students were in the special education program, 12% were in the gifted and talented program, and 3% were in the bilingual/ESL program. About 40% of students were considered economically disadvantaged and 26% were considered at-risk.

### **Literature Review**

Social emotional learning (SEL) has been around for decades but has only been brought to the forefront of education over the last 10 years. SEL is described as “...the process of developing the self-awareness, self-control, and interpersonal skills that are vital for school, work, and life success” (“What Is Social-Emotional Learning?,” 2021, par. 1). Research has shown that when social and emotional skills are taught at the elementary level, students are better able to regulate their behavior, their attention, and are better able to problem solve (Jones et al., 2017; McCormick et al., 2015). A meta-analysis of school-based universal SEL interventions conducted by Durlak (2011) found that all of the SEL programs implemented by the schools (grades K-8) in the studies benefited students’ social-emotional skills, attitudes about self and others, connection to school, positive social behavior, and academic performance. They also showed a reduction in student conduct problems and emotional distress (Durlak et al., 2011).

While there are many ways that SEL has been incorporated into the classroom, mindfulness practices have frequently been researched and utilized in the school setting. Researchers have found that mindfulness practices in the classroom affect students’ ability to focus and exhibit on-task behaviors. A study conducted by Higgins and Eden (2018) found that by incorporating the mindfulness practice of breathing, combined with small group discussions, students became more aware of when they were or were not focused both in and out of the classroom and school setting. During one interaction, the teacher asked a student about her bringing herself back to focus, and she replied with the following:

I don’t use [the word] wandering [to bring my focus back] I just sort of tell myself hey you’re getting off topic think about what you’re gonna think about you weren’t supposed to be thinking about that...not in class but like when I’m at home and trying to read

something and then I get distracted I’m like you’re supposed to be reading this you have to finish this by so and so.... (p. 685)

Similar results were found in a study conducted by Carboni et al. (2013). Researchers looked at the effects that mindfulness training had on the behavior of four 8-year-old boys. The mindfulness training was given to each participant during the time of day where they exhibited the most off-task behaviors and was given for 30-45 minutes twice a week. The findings showed that there was an improvement in the number of on-task behaviors that the participants exhibited, but it took more sessions than the researchers had originally hypothesized. Black (2014) found similar results when they studied what would happen when the mindfulness program *Mindful Schools* was implemented into a public elementary school in California. He found that the students’ ability to control their attention increased and continued to increase with the number of mindfulness sessions (Black, 2014).

Research has also found that mindfulness practices in the classroom bring a feeling of calm and relaxation to students. In the same study conducted by Higgins and Eden (2018), students discussed the related ideas of fiddling and relaxed, and energy and calm. They talked about how they became more aware of when they were fiddling during lessons and that the breathing exercises helped them feel more relaxed and calm (Higgins & Eden, 2018).

Beauchemin et al. (2008) found similar results when they looked at whether the mindfulness practice of meditation eased anxiety in high school students who were diagnosed with a learning disability. Overall, the students had positive feelings towards the meditation practices and expressed that they felt more calm, quiet, relaxed, and at peace (Beauchemin et al., 2008).

Several studies also found that mindfulness practices helped to reduce psychological stress,

especially in students who had experienced trauma or who had been diagnosed with an emotional behavioral disorder (Black, 2014; Kraemer-Holland, 2021; Zolkoski & Lewis-Chiu, 2019).

While there is quite a bit of research that has been done on the topic of mindfulness in schools, most studies have focused on whole school or multi-school implementation of a mindfulness program. Other studies have focused only on how a few students have benefited from mindfulness practices in the classroom. Because my study is focused on looking at mindfulness as a classroom intervention, it has added research on the topic at the classroom level. My study also looked at the perceptions that teachers and students have of mindfulness activities in the classroom, which was an overlooked area in most other studies.

### **Methods**

The intervention I implemented was incorporating five minutes of a mindfulness activity daily into my third-grade math and science classroom. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the intervention did not occur every single day but happened at least three times a week during a three-week period. The intervention included two different breathing exercises, writing/drawing prompts, and two books on mindfulness were read aloud. The first day of the intervention included an introduction to the mindfulness activities, which involved creating an anchor chart that gave the definition of mindfulness and an example of the mindfulness activities. I then led the class through completing the mindfulness activity for the day for about five minutes. The sections below explain how participants were selected, the data collection methods used, and how the data was analyzed.

#### **Participant Selection**

The participants of this study were the third-grade students in my homeroom class and one classroom teacher. I sent home a parent information letter and consent form, and 13 students



received parent permission. Students were given an assent form to sign, and all 13 assented to take part in the study. The classroom teacher was given an adult consent form to sign. Of the 13 students, there were eight girls and five boys. Eight students were White, two were black/African American, one was Asian, two were two or more races, and the teacher was a Caucasian female. All ages of the students in the class ranged from eight to nine years old. I made sure that both parents and students knew that participation in the study was completely optional, not tied to a grade, and that students could withdraw from the study at any time.

### **Data Collection**

Four methods of data collection were used so data could be triangulated and common themes could be identified in several different ways (Hendricks, 2016). Data collection methods included a pre-and post- survey, observations with field notes, student artifacts, and student and teacher interviews. All student participants who assented to the study were given a survey before the study began (see Appendix A). The survey consisted of ten questions relating to students’ perceptions of themselves during the school day, their feelings and their behaviors, and their perceptions on mindfulness. Eight of the questions required a Likert-scale response and two were open-ended. The same survey was administered after implementing the intervention for three weeks. All eight Likert-scale questions were the same in the pre- and post-surveys, but the open-ended questions were different (see Appendix B).

I chose a sample of students to interview based on their response to the pre-survey. I used purposive sampling (Patton, 1990) to select three students who, based on the survey, had the lowest scores. I also took into consideration what I saw during my pre-intervention observations. The sample of students represented the demographic makeup of my class. The interviews were semi-structured, 8-10 minutes long, and were recorded and transcribed. After

the implementation of the intervention, I interviewed the same three students. The second interviews were also semi-structured, 8-10 minutes long, and recorded and transcribed. I also conducted one 10-minute interview with my cooperating teacher after the implementation of the intervention. This interview was also semi-structured and recorded and transcribed. (Hendricks, 2012). Additional questions were asked depending on the responses of the participants for all interviews (see Appendix C for interview protocols).

Student behavior and engagement during the hour of instruction occurring before lunch was observed both before and after implementing the intervention. I conducted two observations before implementing the intervention and took field notes. I also conducted observations during the implementation of the intervention and took field notes. During field notes, I jotted down brief words and phrases and then fleshed them out as soon as I had time. During these observations I focused on student engagement and off task behavior.

All participants were assigned a pseudonym. A key with participants’ real names and corresponding pseudonyms was kept electronically under password protection. They were deleted at the end of the study. Participants’ names were replaced with pseudonyms on all data that was collected.

### **Data Analysis**

The open-ended questions from the surveys, the interviews, the observations, and student artifacts were coded and analyzed for recurring themes. I used the constant-comparative method to analyze the data for categories and concepts, integrated the categories and concepts, and then summarized the categories and concepts that emerged (Hubbard & Power, 2003). The coding process involved generating level 1 codes. These codes described the direct content of the data and were used for the first 20% of the collected data (Tracy, 2013). A total of 19 level 1 codes

were generated and used to analyze the remaining 80% of the data. After analyzing all the data using the 19 level 1 codes, I synthesized the codes to create four level 2 codes. These codes provided an interpretation of the main themes from the level 1 codes (Tracy, 2013). Throughout the coding process, I kept a running index of my codes in which I organized all my data based on the level 2 codes (Hubbard & Power, 2003). For each level 2 code, I created memos that described the meaning and significance of the codes (Tracy, 2013). Lastly, I created a codebook (see Appendix D) to further organize and show the level 1 and 2 codes generated from the data. (Tracy, 2013).

For the Likert-scale questions on the survey, I used descriptive statistics to analyze the data (Hubbard & Power, 2003). The eight Likert scale questions on the pre-and post-survey were totaled and compared for each participant. These scores were charted on a double bar graph so that changes in feelings, emotions, and perceptions could be measured (Hendricks, 2016).

### **Findings**

After data collection and analysis, the following four themes emerged; better understanding of what mindfulness is, the role school and home play, provided structure and quiet calmness, and behavior stayed consistent. These themes came from a combination of pre-and post-surveys, pre-and post-interviews, and observations.

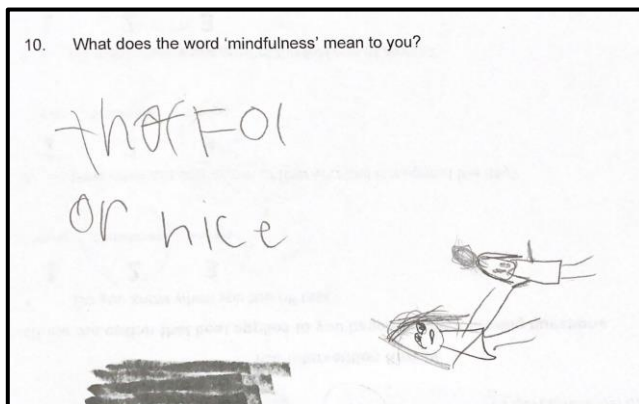
#### **Better Understanding of What Mindfulness Is**

One level 2 code that emerged from the data was, “Better Understanding of What Mindfulness Is.” Data coded underneath this code included any ideas or perceptions that both students and teacher had about what mindfulness was, as well as ways it was described or defined throughout data collection methods. Pre-interviews and pre-surveys showed that students

had a broad idea about what mindfulness was before starting the intervention. Some ideas about mindfulness that students had before the intervention included the idea of being kind to others (see Figure 1), not thinking before acting, being calm, the idea of meditation (see Figure 2), and being smart. Pre-intervention data also showed that there were a number of students who did not know anything about mindfulness and responded to the question on the survey “*What does the word mindfulness mean to you?*” with a question mark. When introducing what mindfulness was on the first day of the intervention, an anchor chart was created that included the definition of mindfulness that we would be using, as well as the two main types of mindfulness activities we would be participating in and their purpose (see Figure 3). After the intervention and discussions about mindfulness, students’ understanding of what mindfulness was changed and became more succinct and less broad than prior to the intervention. Ideas about mindfulness after the intervention still included the idea of kindness, being calm, and meditation, but students also understood mindfulness to be about things going on inside your head and knowing both the feelings of others and self, and by the end of the study, only one student still didn’t understand what mindfulness was.

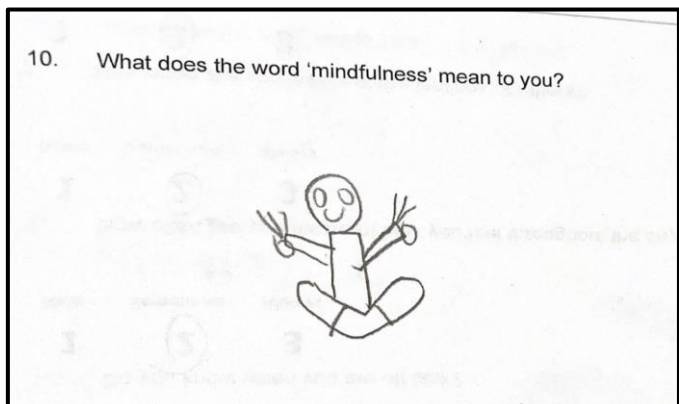
**Figure 1**

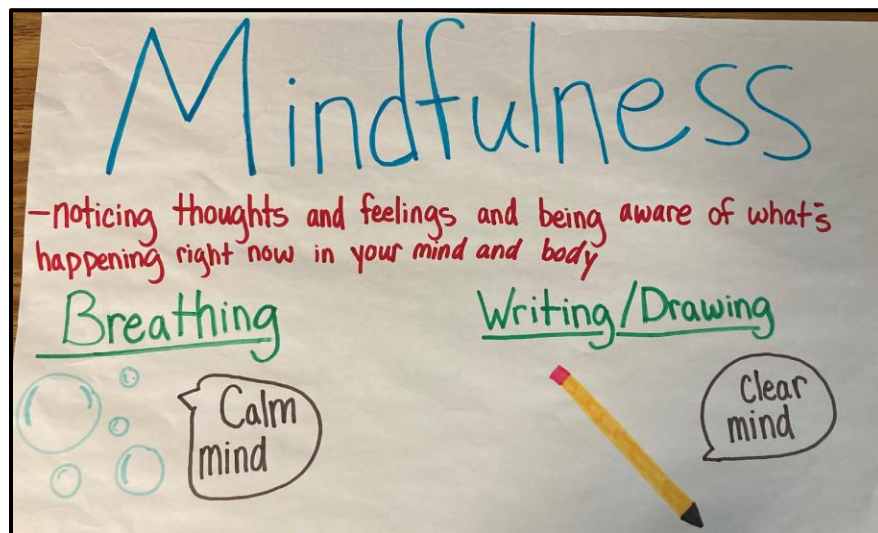
*Mindfulness as Being Kind to Others*



**Figure 2**

*Mindfulness as Meditation*



**Figure 4***Mindfulness Anchor Chart*

Ryan was one participant whose understanding of mindfulness changed throughout the course of the intervention. In his pre-interview, he stated that mindfulness was, “You don’t think at all, you just do whatever you want without thinking about what the consequence might be.” Even after trying to tell him that mindfulness actually meant the opposite, he didn’t believe me. After the intervention, Ryan’s post-interview showed that he now had a different understanding of what mindfulness is. In his post-interview, he stated that mindfulness was “...mind-full, so I feel like when something uses the word full, it means like, you’re using it, and it’s filled up with things, so I now think of mindfulness as all the things that are going on in my head.” Ryan’s perception of mindfulness changed, and he left the intervention with a greater understanding of what mindfulness was.

Mrs. Martin’s perception of mindfulness was similar to that of the students. She stated that mindfulness was “being aware of your emotions and your body and how you’re reacting.” With that definition in mind, she saw students show a greater awareness of their actions as their understanding of mindfulness expanded.

The data relating to this code is significant to my study because it not only shows a shift in students' perception of mindfulness, but it also helps to show the influence that the mindfulness activities had on the participants. Through the mindfulness activities and conversations about mindfulness that were had during the intervention, students gained a better understanding of what mindfulness was, what it could look like, and how they could use it in their daily lives both in and out of school.

### **The Role School and Home Play**

Another level 2 code that emerged from the data was, “The Role School and Home Play.” This code included data that showed the relationships between an understanding of mindfulness and the role that the home and school settings play into that understanding. Pre-intervention data showed that most students came into the research with calming or refocusing strategies. These strategies included breathing, getting outside, drinking water, technology, getting away from the situation, calming toys, being with others, sleep, and reading. I was surprised at the number of calming and refocusing strategies students had before the intervention even started, but as I thought about it, students probably learned these strategies while at school. During her interview, Mrs. Martin stated that while she thinks mindfulness and social and emotional skills should be taught first in the home, that “...a lot of it gets put onto school and education, because kids come to school not prepared with those, um, skills, they’re not developed”. Whether from a past teacher or the school counselor, students had learned strategies in the school environment before beginning the intervention.

Through pre-intervention data, I learned that students were not only bringing in background knowledge from school, they were also bringing background knowledge and skills from home. One participant, Sally, shared in her pre-interview that her parents have helped her

find strategies that help her calm down. Sally talked about stuffed animals that she has at home that help her to calm down. She also referenced zones of feelings that her mom helps her to identify. She stated that “...my mom says I have certain zones. Green zone is when you are happy, red zone is when you’re mad, and blue zone is when you are stressed...” After the intervention, students not only maintained, but also added to their calming and refocusing strategies. Strategies mentioned post-intervention included sleep, writing/drawing, reading, technology, and breathing. Data also showed that the majority of students had a good understanding of how they were feeling and how people around them were feeling. With the rise in social emotional learning at school, students have most likely been introduced to these skills prior to the intervention. Students were bringing in background information about mindfulness from both the home and school, which influenced both their understanding and acceptance of the intervention.

The data relating to this code is significant to my study because it deals with student and teacher perceptions of mindfulness. Both student and teacher perceptions were influenced by background knowledge that students were bringing into the intervention either from school or home.

### **Provided Structure and Quiet Calmness**

Another level 2 code that emerged from the data was, “Provided Structure and a Quiet Calmness.” Data coded underneath this code included times when the mindfulness activities provided more structure and a quiet environment for students, and the impact that had on them. During pre-interviews, students expressed concern with the noise level of the classroom and how, when it was especially loud, it hurt their ears and made it hard for them to focus. In Ryan’s pre-interview, he stated that blocking out the noise in the classroom helped him focus

“...because...whatever they’re talking about, it puts my mind on it very quickly, so I, like take my mind off it [by plugging my ears].” After the intervention, one student, in particular, discussed how the mindfulness activities made the room quiet and how that made her feel relaxed. In her post-interview, Kaitlyn said that “Whenever we were using the mindfulness activities, it was really quiet, and it made me really relaxed when we were doing it...”

Observations showed that during the mindfulness activity of writing and drawing, students were quiet and attentive and stayed on-task for the entire mindfulness activity. This code also included data related to the structure of the classroom. The idea of choice and how getting to choose what breathing exercise to do or whether to draw or write was a structure that the students liked and found enjoyable. The students and teacher also felt that the mindfulness activities helped to improve transitions in the classroom. Whether it was transitions to another subject area or to another activity, data showed that perceptions from both students and teacher were that there were higher levels of concentration after the transitions when a mindfulness activity was completed right before. In her interview, Mrs. Martin stated the following:

“...it seemed that they were more calm and ready to transition when you would do it in the morning...and in the afternoon I think it was good as well to get them ready to move on to the next activity.”

Kaitlyn responded in a similar way in her post-interview, stating that “Whenever we were using the mindfulness activities...and we went to [our reading class], it made me concentrate better.”

The data related to this code is significant to my study because it deals with the influences that the intervention had on the classroom, specifically looking at its structure and environment. It also has to do with student and teacher perceptions of the influence that the mindfulness activities had on both the structure and environment of the classroom.

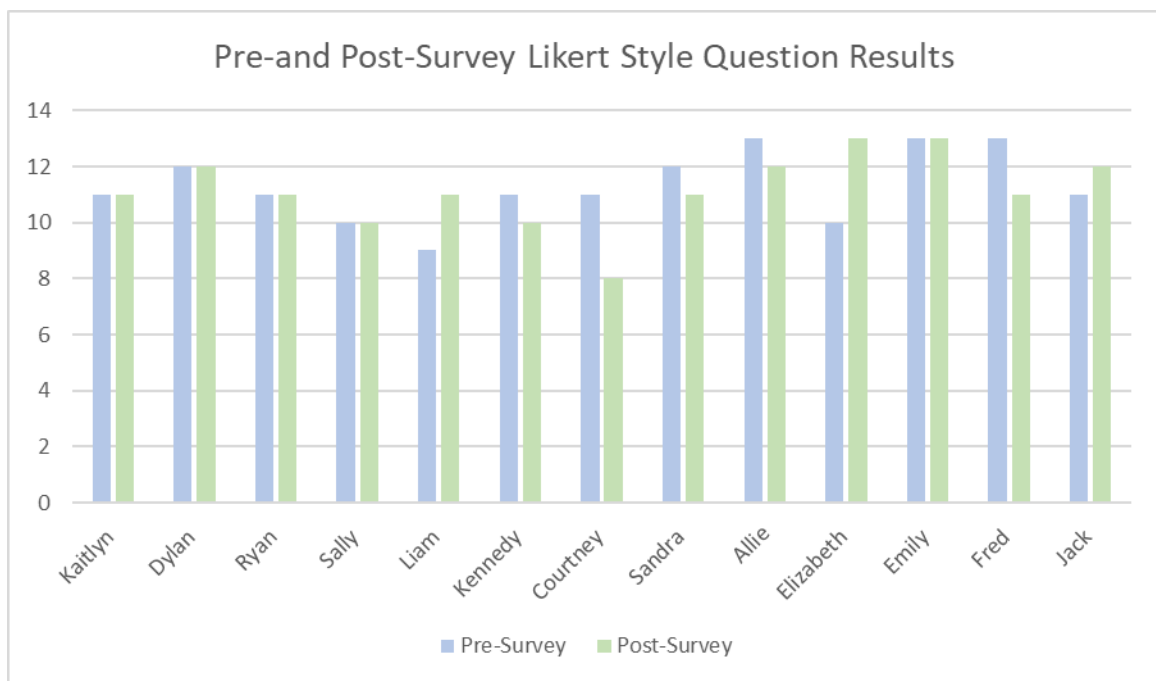


**Behavior Stayed Consistent**

The last level 2 code that emerged from the data was, “Behavior Stayed Consistent.” Data coded underneath this code included anything related to behavior that was observed or discussed during any of the data collection methods. Data showed that behavior stayed relatively consistent between pre-and post-intervention. The graph below shows student responses to the Likert style questions on both the pre-and post-surveys (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4**

Pre-and Post-Survey Likert Scale Questions Results



Student scores were calculated by giving a number to each Likert Scale response on the survey. A response of never was given a one, a response of sometimes was given a two, and a response of always was given a three. The graph shows that students’ scores stayed relatively consistent. Five students’ scores stayed the same, three students’ scores slightly increased, and five students’ scores slightly decreased. This showed that their perceptions of themselves and how they felt stayed consistent throughout the intervention. Observations showed similar results. Pre-

observation data showed a need for repeated instructions, students exhibiting off-task behaviors, with moments of attentive behavior towards lessons and directions. Even after implementing the mindfulness activities, observations showed that students still demonstrated a need for repeated instructions and showed off task behavior such as inattention to directions, talking while someone else was talking, and blurting. Attentive behaviors were still interspersed throughout observational data as well as throughout the intervention.

While behaviors stayed relatively the same, students were able to share their perception of these behaviors. Students discussed how some of these behaviors were a result of forgetting that something was off task or not having a full understanding of what was considered off-task behavior. Sally expressed in her pre-interview that, “I never know like if I’m off-task or not because sometimes I just get confused if I’m supposed to be doing the right thing or the wrong thing.” She expressed in her post-interview that “I just feel like I don’t know when I’m off task.” Even after the intervention, she still was not sure when she was exhibiting off-task behaviors. One promising takeaway from the data related to this code was the idea of improved concentration immediately following implementation of a mindfulness activity. Both the students and teacher expressed the perception that immediately following a mindfulness activity, students showed a greater level of concentration. Kaitlyn described in her post-interview that she felt more relaxed and better able to focus when we would do a mindfulness activity right before we would switch classes. Mrs. Martin stated that she also saw that students were able to concentrate more right after completing one of the mindfulness activities.

The data relating to this code is significant to my study because it relates to the influence that the mindfulness activities had on behavior within the classroom. It also dealt with student

and teacher perceptions of the behavior in the classroom and how the mindfulness activities did or did not have an influence on it.

### **Implications for Teachers**

The purpose of this study was to see the influence, if any, that incorporating five minutes of daily mindfulness activities in a third-grade classroom had on students, specifically on their behavior, as well as the perceptions that both the students and teacher had about the mindfulness activities. Before starting the mindfulness intervention, I had hoped that I would see drastic changes in student behavior and that the intervention would have a significant impact on students and the classroom as a whole. While data didn’t show any dramatic changes, it did show that students left the intervention with a greater understanding of mindfulness and had gained more calming and refocusing strategies. While behaviors stayed mostly consistent, data did show that both students and teacher felt that students had better concentration immediately following a mindfulness activity. Data also suggested that the mindfulness activities helped to provide a calm and quiet environment in the classroom that was conducive to learning and kept students relaxed and better able to focus.

One implication from the findings is that even though behaviors did not change in marked ways, students were still influenced by the mindfulness intervention. Through the mindfulness intervention, students gained a new understanding of mindfulness and learned calming and refocusing strategies. With this new understanding, students now have skills and knowledge about mindfulness that they can take and use in their life, both in and out of school. One considerable limitation to this study is the amount of time I was able to implement the intervention. Since I was only able to implement it three times a week for three weeks, students

did not have enough time to really get into it, nor was I able to see, what I believe, are the benefits that it could bring if it was implemented for a longer period of time.

For teachers wanting to implement this intervention into their classrooms, I suggest starting at the beginning of the school year. I found that some of my students had a hard time getting into the mindfulness activities and buying into the idea of participating in them. By starting at the beginning of the school year, mindfulness could become a part of the classroom culture and students would be more accustomed to participating in mindfulness activities. In addition to consistent implementation of mindfulness techniques from the beginning of the school year, I would also suggest having discussions about mindfulness. This would allow students to share any background knowledge they have while also informing the teacher about who may know something about mindfulness and who will be learning about it for the first time. This could be done through a survey or through carefully planned discussions at the beginning of the school year.

Moving forward from the study, I am curious as both an educator and a researcher about how student behavior might have been different if this study were implemented in a year-long setting. If students had been introduced to mindfulness starting at the beginning of the school year and been participating in mindfulness activities from the start, would they have had more buy-in with participating in the mindfulness activities? Would there have been more data showing an improvement in behavior? I also wonder what would have happened if I had included intentional guided discussions about mindfulness into the intervention. I think that regular discussions would have provided students with a time to talk about mindfulness with both me and each other and they may have developed an even greater understanding of mindfulness. Class discussions would have also provided me with the opportunity to get deeper

perceptions from more students than just the three that I interviewed. Additionally, I wonder about the impact that the mindfulness activities had, having only been done once a day. Would they have been more effective if used as a brain break throughout the day or between transitions, instead of just being used once in the morning or once in the afternoon?

While the findings of this action research study may appear to some to be inconclusive, the process has affirmed for me the importance of finding a balance as a teacher-researcher. Moving into my own classroom, I plan to be intentional about implementing mindful moments throughout the school day and explicitly teach my students strategies and skills related to mindfulness. I will continue to informally study what happens when mindfulness is incorporated into a classroom setting as I strive toward creating an environment where my students are given the space and opportunity to learn mindfulness strategies that they can use both in and beyond the classroom.

### References

- Beauchemin, J., Hutchins, T. L., & Patterson, F. (2008). Mindfulness meditation may lessen anxiety, promote social skills, and improve academic performance among adolescents with learning disabilities. *Complementary Health Practice Review, 13*(1), 34–45. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1533210107311624>
- Black, D. S. (2014). Mindfulness training and classroom behavior among lower-income and ethnic minority elementary school children. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 23*(7), 1242–1246. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-013-9784-4>
- Carboni, J. A., Roach, A. T., & Fredrick, L. D. (2013). Impact of mindfulness training on the behavior of elementary students with attention-deficit/hyperactive disorder. *Research in Human Development, 10*(3), 234–251. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15427609.2013.818487>
- Durlak, J. A., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., Weissberg, R. P., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students’ social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development, 82*(1), 405–432. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x>
- Hendricks, C. (2016). *Improving schools through action research: A reflective practice approach* (4th ed.). Pearson.
- Higgins, J., & Eden, R. (2018). Cogenerated understandings of mindfulness-based breathing in elementary mathematics classrooms. *The Journal of Educational Research, 111*(6), 678–689. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2017.1396438>
- Hubbard, R., & Power, B. (2003). *The art of classroom inquiry: A handbook for teacher-researchers* (Rev. ed.). Heinemann.

- Jones, S. M., Barnes, S. P., Bailey, R., & Doolittle, E. J. (2017). Promoting social and emotional competencies in elementary school. *Future of Children, 27*(1), 49–72.
- Kraemer-Holland, A. (2021). Addressing trauma and empowering students through school-based mindfulness practices. *Contemporary Justice Review, 24*(1), 107–122.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10282580.1819802>
- McCormick, M. P., Cappella, E., O’Connor, E. E., & McClowry, S. G. (2015). Social-emotional learning and academic achievement: Using causal methods to explore classroom-level mechanisms. *AERA Open, 1*(3), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858415603959>
- Tracy, S. J. (2013). *Qualitative research methods: Collecting evidence, crafting analysis, communicating impact*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- What Is Social-Emotional Learning? (2021, October 9). *Committee for Children*.  
<https://www.cfchildren.org/what-is-social-emotional-learning/>
- Zolkoski, S. M., & Lewis-Chiu, C. (2019). Alternative approaches: Implementing mindfulness practices in the classroom to improve challenging behaviors. *Beyond Behavior, 28*(1), 46–54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1074295619832943>

**Appendix A**

## Pre-Survey

**Circle the option that best applies to you based on the following questions.**

1. Do you know when you are off task?

**1**      **2**      **3**

Never    Sometimes    Always

2. How often are you aware of how you feel throughout the day?

**1**      **2**      **3**

Never    Sometimes    Always

3. How often are you aware of the feelings of others?

**1**      **2**      **3**

Never    Sometimes    Always

4. How often can you control what you say or do?

**1**      **2**      **3**

Never    Sometimes    Always

5. When you feel out of control, can you calm yourself down?

**1**      **2**      **3**

Never    Sometimes    Always

**Circle the emoji that best represents your feeling to the following questions.**

6. How do you feel when you are off task?



Very Happy



A Little Happy



A Little Upset



Very Upset



7. How do you feel when things around you are loud and crazy?



Very Happy



A Little Happy



A Little Upset



Very Upset

8. How do you feel when things around you are calm?



Very Happy



A Little Happy



A Little Upset



Very Upset

**Draw a picture to answer the following questions.**

9. What does it look like when you are calm?

10. What does the word ‘mindfulness’ mean to you?

**Appendix B**

## Post-Survey

**Circle the option that best applies to you based on the following questions.**

1. Do you know when you are off task?

**1**      **2**      **3**

Never    Sometimes    Always

2. How often are you aware of how you feel throughout the day?

**1**      **2**      **3**

Never    Sometimes    Always

3. How often are you aware of the feelings of others?

**1**      **2**      **3**

Never    Sometimes    Always

4. How often can you control what you say or do?

**1**      **2**      **3**

Never    Sometimes    Always

5. When you feel out of control, can you calm yourself down?

**1**      **2**      **3**

Never    Sometimes    Always

**Circle the emoji that best represents your feeling to the following questions.**

6. How do you feel when you are off task?



Very Happy



A Little Happy



A Little Upset



Very Upset

7. How do you feel when things around you are loud and crazy?



Very Happy



A Little Happy



A Little Upset



Very Upset

8. How do you feel when things around you are calm?



Very Happy



A Little Happy



A Little Upset



Very Upset

**Answer the following question with a word or sentence.**

9. Which mindfulness activity was your favorite? Why?

---

---

---

**Draw a picture to answer the following questions.**

10. What does it look like when you are calm?

11. What does the word 'mindfulness' mean to you?

## Appendix C

### One-on-one Student Interview Protocol Pre-Intervention

1. Tell me more about...
2. What do you mean by...?
3. What do you do when you cannot focus in class? Why?
4. Tell me about this picture that you drew about ‘what it looks like when you are calm’
5. When I say the word mindfulness, what comes into your head?
6. You said you feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you are off task. Why do you think you feel this way?

### One-on-one Student Interview Protocol Post-Intervention

1. Tell me more about...
2. What do you mean by...?
3. In our first interview, you answered \_\_\_\_\_ to the question ‘What do you do when you cannot focus in class’, has your answer changed? If so, what do you do now?
4. How did you feel when we did the breathing exercises?
5. How did you feel when we did the drawing exercises?
6. How did you feel when we did the stretches?
7. How did you feel when we did the writing prompts?
8. Was there a mindfulness strategy that you liked more? Why?
9. Tell me about this picture that you drew about ‘what it looks like when you are calm’
10. What does mindfulness mean to you now?

### Teacher Interview Protocol Post Intervention

1. Tell me more about...
2. What do you mean by...?
3. What influences, if any, have you seen in student behavior since implementing the five minutes of daily mindfulness practices in the classroom?

4. Are there any specific behaviors that you used to see a lot that you aren’t seeing as much? Why do you think that is?
5. Do you think any of the mindfulness practices have been more beneficial than others? Why?
6. Tell me about any differences in student behavior you have seen since implementing the five minutes of mindfulness practices?

Questions may vary and additional questions may be asked depending on the answers of the participants.

**Appendix D**

Code Book

Code	Level	Definition	Example
Better understanding of what mindfulness is	2	Understands that mindfulness has to do with being calm and what is going on inside your head	“Because whenever you breathe, your mind just stops and it helps me calm down, whenever it was really quiet in the room”.
What is mindfulness	1	Definitions of mindfulness	“Because it says, mind-ful, so I feel like when something uses the word full, it means like, you’re using it, and it’s filled up with things, so I now think of mindfulness as all the things that are going on in my head”.
The role school and home play	2	How both school and home shape students’ understanding of what mindfulness it and what strategies they use	“Because I now have strategies...I can calm myself down”.
Know how I am feeling	1	Students can explain how they are feeling in different situations	“Knew I was happy, cause like, um, I was having fun...”
Mindfulness strategy	1	Different strategies students use to calm themselves down	“There’s not really a lot of people outside, so when you’re outside, like on a walk or running, you don’t really hear anything besides like the birds”.
Know how others are feeling	1	Students express that they know how people around them are feeling	“If they are like this, I know they are sad, and when they are like, smiling, I know that they’re happy.”
Mindfulness at home	1	Ways that grownups at home teach mindfulness	“My mom says I have certain zones. Green zone is when you are happy, red zone is when you’re mad, and blue zone is when you are stressed, so she helps me get out of the blue zone.”
Didn’t love any mindfulness activity	1	Students expressed they did not enjoy doing the mindfulness activities	“I mean, I can’t say any of them were my favorite”.
Consequences to off task behaviors	1	What happens when students are off task	“I feel very upset because I have some that, um, like, whenever I get a check or if I don’t know if I got a check”.
Schools’ job to teach mindfulness	1	The school has a large role in teaching students social and emotional skills and mindfulness	“It’s on the schools to do that and I think there is a part of that, of course, is

			definitely, um, it should be taught at school, I mean there are certain things that I think we do have, have to teach, but I don't think that all of it should be on the school".
Provided structure and a quiet calmness	2	The mindfulness activities set up structure for helping students calm down and created a quiet environment	"It was really quiet and it and it made me really relaxed when we were doing it".
Impact of noise level	1	Loud noises hurt students' ears	"My ears, they're, like sensitive, and whenever, like people are yelling and stuff, they kind of hurt my ears and it hurts in, like my eardrums".
Choice	1	Students were given choice when doing the mindfulness activities	"I liked that whenever, that, whenever we, when you asked us what to do that we got to write or draw about it and I liked that um, we could, we could do what we wanted to do".
Improves transitions	1	Mindfulness activities helped students transition throughout the day	"In the afternoon I think it was good as well, um, to get them ready to move on to the next activity".
Behavior stayed consistent	2	No major changes in behavior were observed or noted	"Because sometimes, like, I just feel like I just need to talk".
Repetition of instructions	1	Instructions had to be repeated for students to follow them	"While going over the problem of the day, students had to be reminded several times to put their pencils down and their heads up".
Inattention	1	Students were not paying attention to teacher or classmates	"While students were sharing about what measuring cup they would use...some friends had their hands up wanting to answer instead of looking and listening to what their friends were saying."
Being attentive	1	Students were paying attention and engaged	"Students were attentive as I went over CHAMP expectations."
Blurting	1	Students speaking out without raising their hand	"There was some blurting at the beginning asking if they could go ahead of me".

Forget that something is off task	1	Students forget that a behavior is off task	“I never know like if I’m off-task or not because sometimes I just get confused if I’m supposed to be doing the right thing or the wrong thing”.
Something bothering you, can’t control reaction	1	Students can’t control what they say or do when someone is messing with them	“If I...if someone was messing with me, I can, so like I can control what I say and do but sometimes I can’t control if they are like messing with me or something”.
Off task things are fun	1	Enjoys doing off task things so doesn’t feel upset when they are off task	“Because sometimes the things that are off task are...whenever I’m off task, sometimes I’m talking or reading so I’m getting to talk to a friend...so I can’t say that it’s not fun because it’s actually fun getting to talk to a friend but I’m off task and that it’s the wrong time...but I’m still happy getting to talk”.
Improved concentration	1	The mindfulness activities helped students concentrate and focus	“And whenever we went to Mrs. Holly’s class, it made me concentrate better.”