

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. 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.

Keywords: mindfulness, mindfulness in elementary classrooms, student perceptions, breathing exercises

Introduction

Although it may seem that the definition of mindfulness is common knowledge, for younger children it may be a confusing concept. This study explores the impact of mindfulness practice in a 3rd grade classroom. One student illustrates how mindfulness can be confusing.

Researcher: 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...

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

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

Researcher: 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 thought mindfulness meant not thinking, because he thought the suffix -ness meant not. Even after I told him it meant 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

During this study, I was serving as both a clinical teacher in graduate school and a researcher. As a clinical teacher, I was teaching alongside Mrs. Martin, who was a third grade teacher at Sailor Elementary School (all names are pseudonyms) 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.

Hendricks (2016) defines action research as "a systematic approach to investigation that enables people to find effective solutions to the problems that confront their everyday lives" (pg. 1). I believe that teachers conduct informal action research daily when we seek solutions to problems in the classroom. Through getting to know the students in my yearlong clinical teaching placement, I did just that. 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?

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)

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 [in people] 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, which included grades kindergarten through eighth grade, 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, such as class disruptions, noncompliance, aggression, bullying, and school suspensions, and emotional distress (Durlak et al., 2011).

While there are many ways 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. The student responded by talking about a time when she was at home reading. She realized she was getting distracted and that she needed to focus so she could finish her reading (Higgins and Eden, 2018). Similar results were found in a study conducted by Carboni et al. (2013). Researchers looked at the effects mindfulness training had on the behavior of four 8-year-old boys. Using teacher input, researchers gave the mindfulness training to each participant during the time of day where they exhibited the most off-task behaviors. Researchers wanted to see if receiving the mindfulness training in conjunction with the time of day the students were most off task would help students regulate and exhibit more on-task behaviors. The findings showed there was an improvement in the number of on-task behaviors the participants exhibited,

but that it took more sessions than they had hypothesized (Carboni et al., 2013). 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 (Higgins & Eden, 2018). In the same study conducted by Higgins and Eden (2018), students discussed the related ideas of fidgeting and relaxed, and energy and calm. They talked about how they became more aware of when they were fidgeting 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 feeling 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, which is an emotional disorder which can present itself as anxiety, depression, aggression, and impulsivity and impedes students from being successful in the school setting (Black, 2014; Kraemer-Holland, 2021; Zolkoski & Lewis-Chiu, 2019).

While there is quite a bit of research on the topic of mindfulness in schools, most studies have focused on implementation of a mindfulness program at an entire school or implementation across several schools. 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 fills the gap in the research between studying mindfulness with an entire school and with only a few students. My study also looked at the perceptions teachers and students have of mindfulness activities in the classroom, which was an overlooked area in most other studies.

Methods

The intervention I implemented incorporated a daily mindfulness activity for five minutes in the 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 initial intervention time took place in the morning, about thirty minutes after the students arrived, and included alternating between two different breathing exercises and writing/drawing prompts. The two breathing exercises introduced were the bubble breath and tense and release breath. During the bubble breath, students placed their hands on their stomachs. When they breathed in they would expand their hands like a bubble blowing up, and when they exhaled their hands would come back in like a bubble deflating. During the tense and release breath, students tensed their arms by their side as they breathed in and released the tension in their arms when they exhaled. To respond to the mindfulness prompts, students were given a small journal where they were able to choose whether they wanted to respond in writing or through drawing. Writing prompts included: What are things you like? What are things you dislike? What are you thankful for? What is a grow and a glow from this week?

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. Students were then led through completing the mindfulness activity for the day for about five minutes. As students became more comfortable with the process, they

were able to choose which breathing exercise they wanted to complete. 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 Mrs. Martin's homeroom class. Mrs. Martin was also a participant. Parent information letters and consent forms were sent home, 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. Both parents and students knew participation in the study was completely optional, not tied to a grade, and 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).

Using purposive sampling, I chose a specific smaller group of students (Patton, 1990) to interview based on their response to the pre-survey. I selected three students who, based on the survey, had the lowest scores. I chose these students because lower scores on the survey would indicate the students had little prior knowledge and experience with mindfulness. 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, with both predetermined questions and questions that emerged during the interviews, 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 math lesson and work time, which occurred an hour before lunch, was observed both before and after implementing the intervention. Behaviors I was looking for included if students were focused during lessons and during independent work, shouting out during lessons, playing with items inside their desk, working with partners, and overall their attentiveness during all classroom activities during that time of day. I conducted two observations before implementing the intervention and took field notes, or direct observations, that were written down (Hubbard & Power, 2003). I also conducted

observations during the implementation of the intervention and took field notes. During field notes, I wrote down brief words and phrases and then expanded them 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 collected.

Data Analysis

The open-ended questions from the surveys, the interviews, the observations, and student artifacts were analyzed using the constant-comparative method by creating initial codes and supporting codes to identify recurring themes (Hubbard & Power, 2003). I created a codebook (see Appendix D) to further organize and show recurring themes generated from the data. (Tracy, 2013). The coding process involved generating level 1 codes, or descriptive codes that are based on the data. A total of 19 level 1 codes were created using the first 20% of the collected data and then were used to analyze the remaining 80% of the data (Tracy, 2013). This was to ensure not too many smaller themes were created. After analyzing smaller themes, I combined similar themes together and created four level 2 codes. These four level 2 codes represented the bigger themes present in the data (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 (see Appendix D) that described the meaning and significance of the codes (Tracy, 2013).

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

Pre-interviews and pre-surveys showed students had a broad idea about what mindfulness was before starting the intervention. Some ideas about mindfulness 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

Figure 1: Mindfulness as Being Kind to Others

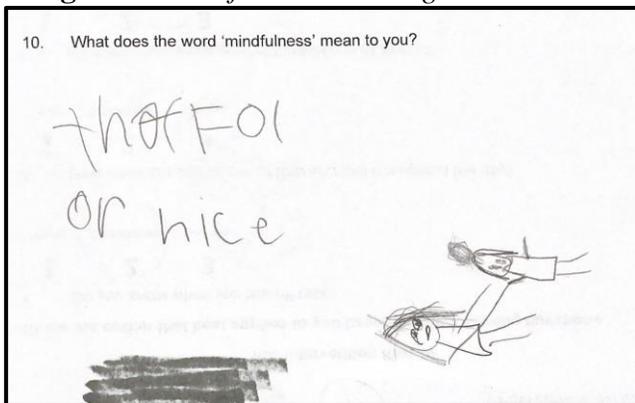
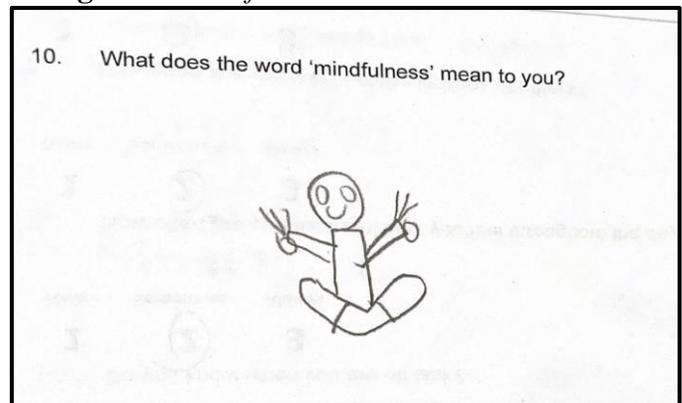


Figure 2: Mindfulness as Meditation



being smart. Pre-intervention data also showed 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 including the definition of mindfulness and the two mindfulness activities (see Figure 3). After the intervention and discussions about mindfulness, students’ understanding of what mindfulness was changed and

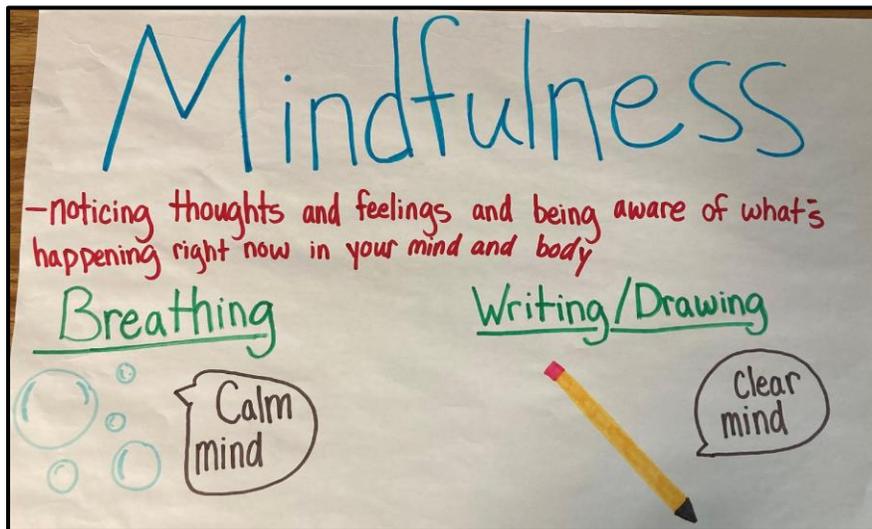


Figure 3 *Mindfulness*

Anchor Chart

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.

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 mindfulness actually meant the opposite, he didn't believe me. After the intervention, Ryan's post-interview showed 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, third grade classroom teacher, perception of mindfulness was similar to her 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. She stated that, "...it helped them to be aware of...when they are being impulsive or they are having too much movement...[and] helps them with an awareness of...and of centering [themselves]."

The Role School and Home Play

Pre-intervention data showed 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. During her interview, Mrs. Martin stated that while she thinks mindfulness and social and emotional skills should be taught first in the home, "...a lot of it gets put onto school and education, because kids come to school not prepared with those skills, they're not developed". Since being in this classroom from the beginning of the school year, I had witnessed students learning some refocusing and calming strategies, both from the school counselor during guidance lessons and during our morning meeting time working through the eight habits of the school's leadership program.

Through pre-intervention data, I learned 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 to help her calm down. Sally talked about stuffed animals she has at home that help her to calm down. She also referenced zones of feelings her mom helps her to identify. She stated, "...my mom says I have certain zones. Green zone is when you are happy, red zone is when you're mad, and the 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 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.

Provided Structure and Quiet Calmness

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 it made her feel relaxed. In her post-interview, Kaitlyn said, "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. The idea of choice and getting to choose what breathing exercise to do or whether to draw or write was a structure the students liked and found enjoyable. The students and teacher also felt 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 the teacher 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, “Whenever we were using the mindfulness activities...and we went to [our reading class], it made me concentrate better.”

Behavior Stayed Consistent

Data showed behavior stayed relatively consistent between pre-and post-intervention. 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 shouting out during lessons. 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. In interviews, 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, “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, “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 perception both students and classroom teacher had related to student behavior 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 also saw that students were able to concentrate more right after completing one of the mindfulness activities.

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 both the students and teacher had about the mindfulness activities. Before starting the mindfulness intervention, I had hoped 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 the classroom teacher felt students had better concentration immediately following a mindfulness activity. Data also suggested 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 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 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 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 some of the students had a hard time getting into the mindfulness activities and 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 wonder if regular discussions would have provided students with a time to talk about mindfulness with both me as the researcher and each other and if they would 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 I interviewed. Additionally, I wonder about the impact the mindfulness activities had, having only been done once a day. Would they have been more effective if used as mini breaks throughout the day or during 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 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

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, mindful, 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."