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Teaching in the Flow with Mindfulness 2.0

"Of all the virtues we can learn no trait is more useful, more essential for survival, and more likely to improve the quality of life than the ability to transform adversity into an enjoyable challenge."

– **Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Flow: The Psychology of Happiness**

TEACHING IN FLOW WITH MINDFULNESS 2.0

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GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Students will discover the science of positive psychology and how to achieve a state of "flow"

- Students will learn how to define and measure "flow" outcomes and to evaluate practice

- Students will understand what mindfulness is, how a mindful state relates to flow, and what a deliberate mindfulness practice looks like

- Students will explore social emotional themes and skills related to self and social awareness

- Students will increase connectivity and collaboration in the classroom and community

- Students will integrate breathwork and body awareness to reduce stress and anxiety

- Students will integrate team building activities

- Students will discover the health benefits of journaling

FLORIDA STANDARDS

LAFS.68.WHST.4: Range of Writing: Write routinely over extended time frames (times for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences. Cognitive Complexity: Level 3: Strategic Thinking and Complex Reasoning.

LAFS.8.SL.1.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one on one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. b. Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. c. Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas. d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views considering the evidence presented. Cognitive complexity: Level 3: Strategic Thinking and Complex Reasoning

SP.PK12.US.19.1b Identify personal emotions and feelings and their impact on physical and mental well-being

SP.PK12.US.19.2a Identify personal strengths and areas of need

SP.PK12.US.19.7b Demonstrate self-esteem, self-confidence, and pride, such as through self-affirmations, persistence, and self-monitoring

Course Overview

Teaching in Flow with Mindfulness 2.0 taps into innovative science-based exercises in the popular HEADSPACE digital mindfulness platform. Using Headspace's Performance Mindset program, students and teachers are encouraged to reset and pause, renew, and recharge with resiliency in the face of the greatest challenge facing education today. A clear, open and curious mind helps us to achieve the Flow State- the term used in Positive Psychology-to describe a mental state where peak performance and productivity feel fun and effortless (not to be confused with "going with the flow"). A Flow State, also known as being "in the zone", encourages students to develop a growth mindset that builds self-confidence, positivity, and grit when the going gets tough. Flow is often considered the domain of elite athletes, musicians, and actors, but the truth is, we all have the potential to experience it and when we do, it can enrich our lives. The purpose of this project is to create the conditions for a flow state to emerge by committing to a weekly mental fitness practice in order to develop mindfulness skills which are likely to enhance the ability to focus on the present moment, to manage distractions, and to notice personal challenges and skill levels more clearly. Through the Headspace-Performance Mindset Program, students will experience 10-minute digital mindfulness practices to help build awareness of the here and now, heighten their senses and concentration, tune into their purpose and talents, and build confidence in their skills by focusing on what they can do (not what they can't do). The Performance Mindset program features a series of 3-minute videos inspired by NBA and WNBA athletes to help students reach any kind of goal in life. Topics such as managing pressure, letting go of stress, balance, finding focus, restlessness, managing anxiety are just a few great collaborative conversation starters and creative journal entries teachers can infuse in weekly lessons. This unique program is more than traditional mindfulness practice, these science-based mental exercises from growth mindset neuroplasticity training also help students cultivate positive emotions, develop self-compassion, build self-esteem and kindness to overcome limiting beliefs and develop optimism and resilience. Flow Friday's is a fantastic way to introduce a short 5-minute video on what flow is and how to achieve it followed by a 10-minute stillness exercise where students are encouraged to observe and note how they can manifest creativity, achievement and prosperity in their lives. Students are also encouraged to visualize their goals and create a digital vision board. To track progress, teachers might want to incorporate a "flow profile" for each student based on a pre/post flow survey. For example, the pre survey can measure a student's current state with rating scales such as ...You are easily distracted (students' rate 1-5 with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree). During Flow Fridays, periodic wellness checks can help a student monitor their progress and help teachers adjust or scaffold lessons based on student needs. Towards the end of the year, upon completion of the mental fitness program, a Happiness post survey is given to assess results and obtain feedback. Students revisit their vision boards and culminate the project by writing a letter to their future self.

Lesson Activities

1) Introduction- Watch a short 5-minute video with a great explanation of flow, discuss and set a purpose for "FLOW" Friday's

2) Take Happiness and Gratitude Pre-surveys and set goals that have clear and immediate feedback- (i.e. making your bed in the morning, exercise 3x per week, getting to classes on time, going to bed at 10pm., learning a digital skill, one bad habit you want to change, one good habit you want to increase, watching less TV, etc. Students videotape their goals for the year (including their hopes and dreams for the future) choosing flip grid, a digital vision board or other digital tool of their choice (which they will revisit at the end of the quarter or year)

3) Create the calm conditions for "FLOW" – a Peace Corner or Comfy, Cozy safe space where creativity can flow

4) Focus on the present moment and clear the mind- Set intentions and watch technique videos - Letting Go of Effort (from the Headspace Library-various technique videos to choose from)

5) Begin Headspace Performance Mindset Course by choosing a theme (i.e. focus, managing pressure, resilience, and confidence)

*** each theme has 10-30 sessions***

6) Journal and/or Collaborative Discussions -i.e. Resilience- Raising awareness of what you are grateful for helps you have a more positive outlook and build resilience for tough times); The qualities of a Champion's mind - Mental strength- turning tragedy into triumph. Through journaling and discussions of the related Performance Mindset themes, students can manage emotions by keeping track of their thoughts and feelings and learn to respond in healthy ways.

7) Reflection- What did you notice? Encourage student feedback using their 5-senses to describe body sensations and sounds (without judgement) If they are unable to focus- have them notice what that feels or looks like, if they are mad- what does mad feel like, if they are feeling bored- what does bored look like-simply paying attention and becoming aware of the present moment

8) End of Quarter or Year- Students retake the Happiness and Gratitude Post Surveys, revisit vision boards and goals, and write a letter to their Future Selves.

RESOURCES

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, TED Talk, "Flow, the Secret to Happiness", 2004 (over 6-million views and counting)
https://www.ted.com/talks/mihaly_csikszentmihalyi_flow_the_secret_to_happiness?utm_campaign=tedspread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare

Headspace, What is a Flow State and What Are Its Benefits, https://www.headspace.com/articles/flow-state, 2020.

Positive Psychology.com, 8 Ways to Create Flow by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, ariticle, 2020 0:05 / 5:20

FLOW BY MIHALY CSIKSZENTMIHALYI | ANIMATED BOOK SUMMARY-YOU TUBE
What is Flow?
https://youtu.be/8h6IMYRoCZw

Headspace App

Calm App

Happiness Pre/Post Survey

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=j_Z4Rc2G-UqzF5Pjgmyg9S5NQ0tNG-BBngZaMY4B9IhURUJJNjkwRjZISk0zUlJPSTZNMlVUT0NKNS4u

Subjective Happiness Scale

- Permission is granted for all non-commercial use.
- A PDF of the scale can be downloaded here.
- To score the scale, reverse code the 4th item (i.e., turn a 7 into a 1, a 6 into a 2, a 5 into a 3, a 3 into a 5, a 2 into a 6, and a 1 into a 7), and compute the mean of the 4 items. Norms are available in the reference below, as well as in many other publications that have used the scale (see PsycInfo).

The Gratitude Questionnaire – Six Item Form (GQ-6)

The Gratitude Questionnaire-Six-Item Form (GQ-6) is a six-item self-report questionnaire designed to assess individual differences in the proneness to experience gratitude in daily life.

McCullough, M. E., Emmons, R. A., & Tsang, J. (2002). The grateful disposition: A conceptual and empirical topography. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 82, 112-127.

Instructions: Using the scale below as a guide, write a number beside each statement to indicate how much you agree with it.

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = slightly disagree
4 = neutral
5 = slightly agree
6 = agree
7 = strongly agree

____1. I have so much in life to be thankful for.
____2. If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list.
____3. When I look at the world, I don't see much to be grateful for.
____4. I am grateful to a wide variety of people.
____5. As I get older, I find myself more able to appreciate the people, events, and situations that have been part of my life history.
____6. Long amounts of time can go by before I feel grateful to something or someone.

Scoring: Compute a mean across the item ratings; items 3 and 6 are reverse-scored.