

# Lesson 4 The Mind Jar

## Tip

*The 'Mind Jars' can be kept in the classroom and used each day so the pupils are being encouraged to find focus each morning using their mind jars*



To help pupils begin to develop skills for resilience and wellbeing

---



Learn more about ways in which they can calm their bodies and minds through breathing and other techniques

Develop coping skills for responding to situations when things are not calm

---



Glass jars with lids  
Glitter Glue  
Regular glitter  
Hot water  
Dish of soap or shampoo  
Spoons  
Measuring jug

---



Activity 1: 30 minutes

Activity 2: 20 - 30 minutes

### Links to Pupil Learning Framework

#### Cultivating Skills and Values to acquire:

- Emotional Literacy
- Metacognition
- A Growth Mindset: attitudes and dispositions



# Activity 1

- Explain to the pupils that they are going to make a 'Mind Jar' individually or in groups – whatever suits the class best

## Instructions

- Fill the jar with hot water – not boiling, but hot
- Add a generous amount of glitter glue and stir it so it blends well with the water
- Add regular glitter – encourage them to choose colours that interest them
- Add a few drops of dish soap or shampoo
- Put the lid on it and give it a shake
- When the mind jars have been made, explain to the pupils that their mind jar can help them find focus, calm and pay attention to their emotions, feelings and thoughts
- Ask them to think of a time that they felt very frustrated or angry; they do not need to share that memory with anyone
- When they have all thought of a time, ask them to shake their mind jars

- Explain that the glitter in the jar represents their emotions, feelings and thoughts. The act of shaking the jar represents that our 'Thinking Brain' and 'Feeling Brain' are not communicating well (*you might wish to refresh their memory on Lesson 3: Activity 1*)
- Ask them to notice how the glitter is rushing and swirling about as they shake their jars
- Ask them to notice how it is hard to find a clear spot
- Then ask pupils to stop shaking their jars and put them down
- Invite them to notice what happens when we stop shaking our mind jars and simply observe (the glitter should start to sink to the bottom and the water should soon become clear)
- Explain that when we give ourselves space and time to settle we can clear our minds; and when we have cleared our minds, we are in a great position to feel good, to learn with and from each other, to have good friendships and to express ourselves in a healthy and happy way

# Activity 2

- Explain to pupils that they are going to learn to use breathing techniques to help settle thoughts, feelings and emotions
- Explain that in a minute, you will invite them to shake up their mind jars once again
- But this time, as they watch the glitter settle, they will breathe towards finding a place of calm
- But first, they must practice the breath technique

## Instructions

- Focus on the natural rhythm of your breath
- Do not exaggerate it, but simply focus on the air passing in and out
- Place your index finger (horizontally) beneath your nostrils, and breathe the air down your nose and onto your finger. Again, no need to exaggerate it, but just feel it gently
- Once pupils have grasped the breath exercise, invite them to shake up their mind jars
- As they watch the glitter settle, they should do the above breathing technique, and visualise any thoughts, feelings and emotions they might have settling down with the glitter
- It is important to stress that pupils do not have to try to stop having thoughts, feelings or emotions. The purpose is to become aware of the thought, feeling or emotion and simply breathe it through the nostril. If the thought, feeling or emotion keeps returning, then they simply keep noticing it and breathing with it
- Once the exercise is finished, ask pupils what they thought of the exercise

## Prompt Questions

- How did you find that?
- Was it easy or hard?
- What did you like about it?
- Did you notice anything about your thoughts, feelings or emotions?
- Did you have any moments when your mind and body was still and calm?
- Can you think of any other ways to help focus your breath (besides finger beneath nostrils)?
- Explain to pupils that the more they practice this type of breath activity, then the more aware they will become of their thoughts, feelings and emotions, and how to help settle these if they are feeling overwhelmed

## Note

*Prior to this lesson teachers should refer to Appendix B for guidance on creating a Resilient Zone space for teaching and learning.*

*Depending on the class, teachers might wish to implement the Resilient Zone activity to complement and develop this overall lesson*

*Teachers might also wish to try out the 'Exercises to Complement The Mind Jar' (see Appendix C)*