

Raising Resilient Kids

Promoting Mental Health
Through Social and Emotional Learning

RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND PARENTS



Britannica
Digital Learning

As the coronavirus crisis continues to be tackled worldwide and remains a popular topic of conversation, uncertainty about what's next creates a perfect storm for fueling anxiety.

While our anxious feelings are understandable, it's important to be aware of how anxiety is impacting our children. Knowing how to respond to anxious feelings will help keep students calm and safe.

To help teach students about mental health, Britannica's Curriculum Expert Team has put together a classroom bundle, which includes:

Ready-to-use classroom lessons paired with differentiated collections of multimedia content to support each topic

Print-ready worksheets to build resiliency skills in students at different levels

Activities and resources for students and families

Free access to Britannica School Resource bundles for the duration of the term to support independent research

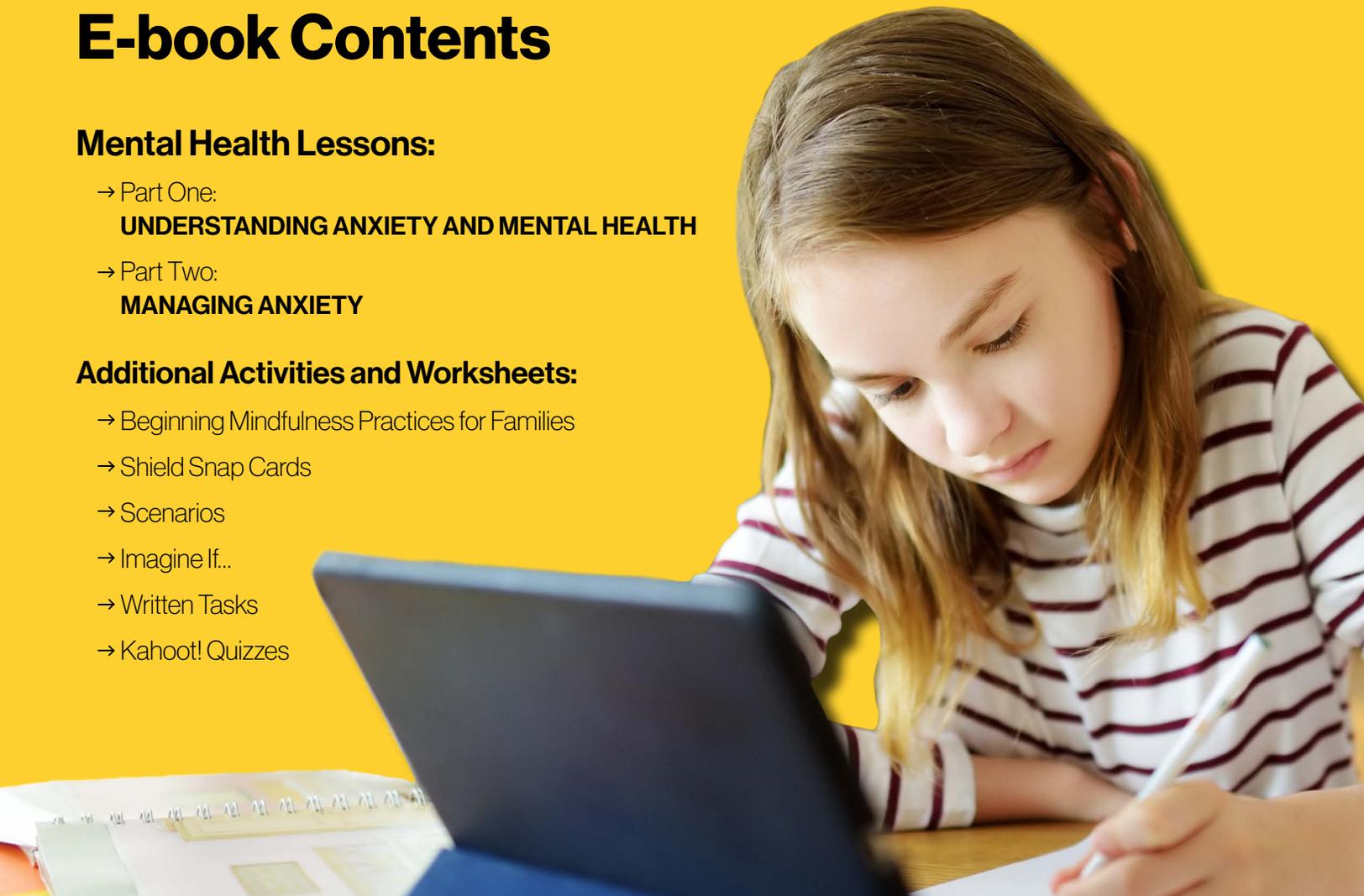
E-book Contents

Mental Health Lessons:

- Part One:
UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY AND MENTAL HEALTH
- Part Two:
MANAGING ANXIETY

Additional Activities and Worksheets:

- Beginning Mindfulness Practices for Families
- Shield Snap Cards
- Scenarios
- Imagine If...
- Written Tasks
- Kahoot! Quizzes



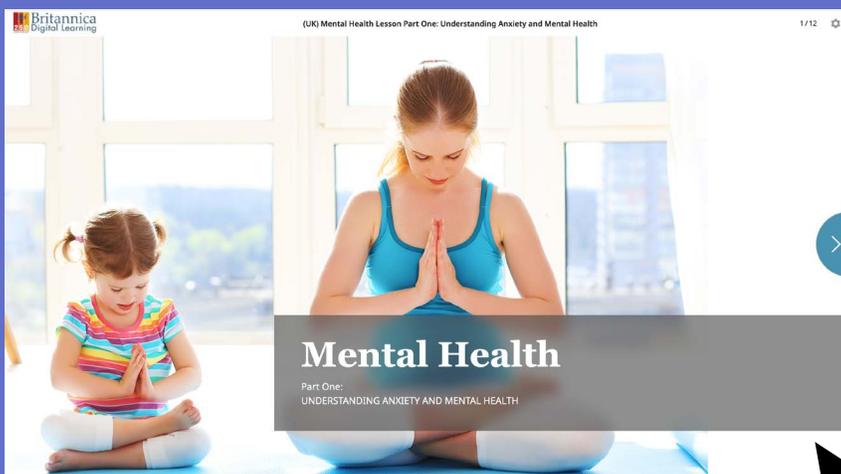
PART ONE

Understanding Anxiety and Mental Health

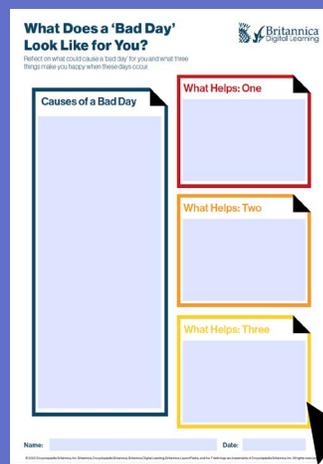
ABOUT THE LESSON

This lesson is designed to help children understand what mental health and anxiety mean and their importance. It aims to introduce young people to the practice of reflecting on their emotions and being mindful of their mental state. They will become aware of mental health terminology, have discussions, and understand what it means to "reflect" on their feelings.

LESSON SLIDES



SUPPORTING RESOURCES



RESOURCE PACKS

**Elementary
Resource Pack**

**High School
Resource Pack**

Learning Outcomes

- Identify the meaning of mental health and anxiety
- Recognize and label the emotions and feelings you experience during stressful situations
- Understand the importance of mental health and why we need to raise awareness

Included in the lesson

- 1 Learning Outcomes
- 2 Key Vocabulary
- 3 Reflection: *Mood Check-In*
- 4 Discussion Task: *Physical Health vs. Mental Health*
- 5 What is meant by "mental health"?
- 6 Reflection: *What does a "bad day" look like for you?*
- 7 What is anxiety?
- 8 What causes anxiety?
- 9 Anxiety Quiz
- 10 Learning Outcomes

Additional Activities and Worksheets

Beginning Mindfulness Practices for Families

Mindfulness is a calming practice that can help both you and your child, especially during times of stress. There are several benefits to mindfulness practice. For example, it allows you and your child to focus on the present moment, while acknowledging feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations. Focusing attention can be especially important for children, as they are still learning about themselves and their world. It also helps you and your child experience feelings without judgment, regardless of what's going on around you. In time, mindfulness practice can help to achieve a quiet, still mind. And practice helps develop mental strength for you as well as your child's growing brain.



Mindfulness Practices with Your Child

Here are some suggestions for beginning mindfulness practices that you can try with your child. The focus of these practices is on relaxing the body, breathing calmly, and quieting the mind.

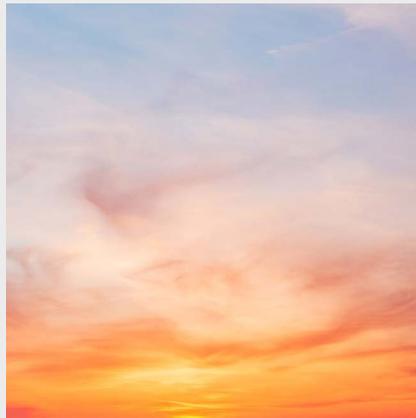
- 1** Find a comfortable, quiet, and peaceful place (e.g., garden or bedroom). Sit with your child in a comfortable upright position, with your spine straight and your legs crossed or straight out. Fold your hands in your lap or place them on your knees, whichever is most comfortable. Use a cushion or yoga mat for added comfort.
- 2** Model for your child how to relax and loosen your body, starting with your forehead, then your jaw and mouth. Move down to your shoulders, relaxing your arms, then your belly, hips, and legs.
- 3** Take slow deep breaths. Focus on breathing in and breathing out. Count to three on each inhale, hold for another three seconds, then exhale out for three seconds. Demonstrate for your child, and then try breathing together.
- 4** Pay quiet attention to each of your senses. After a few deep breath cycles, ask: "What can you hear at this moment? Can you smell anything? What can you taste?"
- 5** Acknowledge each passing thought, and then let the thought go. Encourage your child to watch the thoughts passing through their mind, like watching from a distance as cars pass by on a busy street.

Try these mindfulness practices for just a few minutes each day, and build a daily routine that works for you and your family. Regular practice will strengthen the mindfulness muscle and will benefit both you and your child.

Express Gratitude

Expressing gratitude is another practice that benefits both children and adults. Scientists and mental health professionals have studied gratitude's **positive effects** on our **minds and bodies**. For example, researchers Randy A. Sansone and Lori A. Sansone at the U.S. National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health explored how **gratitude influences** the **hypothalamus** (the area of the brain that releases the **"feel good" neurotransmitters** like serotonin and dopamine) and **controls many essential bodily functions** necessary for good health, including sleeping, eating, and drinking. They discovered that people who express appreciation and feel grateful had increased activity in their hypothalamus. In other words, when you feel grateful, you experience synchronized activation of many parts of your brain, causing positive effects on both your mind and your body.

To build these positive effects, develop **gratitude rituals** with your family. At family meals, spend a few minutes going around the table, giving each family member a chance to share something they're grateful for. Or you could start a **gratitude journal** with your child, listing all the things they're grateful for such as a sunny day, a good friend, or a cuddly pet.



Practice, Practice, Practice

Mindfulness and gratitude are like muscles that need to be exercised. With practice, mindfulness and gratitude can become automatic.

Sources

Sansone, R. A., and Sansone, L. A., "[Gratitude and Well Being: The Benefits of Appreciation](#)," 2010

Learn More

Heart-Mind Online, "[Mindful Activities for Families](#)," [n.d.]

Shield Snap Cards

Practice using these power words alone or with a friend, parent, or a person you trust, to help shield you the next time you face stressful situations.

The next time you or a friend feels like screaming or feels angry, sad, worried, or frustrated, try using these power words to help you get through these feelings.

[Download the Shield Snap Cards](#)

Shield Snap Cards

Feeling tense is natural. It tells me it is time to use power words as my coping strategies.



If someone hurt my feelings, when I'm calm and feel ready, tell the person how their action made me feel.

Fighting this doesn't help, so I'll just relax and breathe deeply and let it float away.

By relaxing through these feelings, I learn to face my fears.

I can feel anxious and still deal with this situation.

Things are not as bad as I think they are.

This is not a real emergency. I can slow down and think about what I need to do.

Scenarios

Read the following scenarios and answer the questions that follow:

Brian just found out that he failed his test. He slams his books on the floor and yells at his friend who asked if he was okay.

Julie accidentally shared her best friend's secret with another friend. She begins crying, beats herself up, and won't forgive herself for days.

Shawn doesn't like science class because he feels his teacher dislikes him because his grades are low, so he caves in his chair each lesson, making sure not to participate in class and sometimes doesn't show up to class.

1. Do you think any of these people managed their emotions in a healthy way? Explain your answer.

2. If you were to meet each of these people, describe a healthy solution you could share with them that will better help them manage their emotions.

Name:

Date:

Imagine if...

1. Someone close to you (e.g., a brother/sister, parent, friend) has hurt your feelings. What can you say and/or do? Use the five activities suggested in Part 2 and the power words from the [Shield Snap Cards](#) to help you.

2. You have a test coming up and feel a flood of anxiety. What activity can you do and what power words can you use to calm yourself?

3. Someone lied to you about something, and it made you feel hurt and betrayed. How can you handle this? What activity can you do and what power words can help you get through your feelings?

4. If you had a friend struggling with something, what ideas could you share to help them cope? Share some of the things that you have learned from the Shield Snap Cards or the five activities suggested in Part 2.

Name:

Date:

OPTION 1

Create a poster informing your peers about the importance of mental health.

OPTION 2

Create a PowerPoint presentation explaining what anxiety is and how we can ease it.

OPTION 3

Based on what you have learned about mental health and anxiety, write an informal letter to a friend explaining why mental health is an important topic to discuss and learn about in school.

Kahoot! Quizzes

Click on the links below to test what you have learned about mental health and anxiety!

FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

QUIZ 1

FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

QUIZ 2

FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

QUIZ 3

FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

QUIZ 4