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DISSERTATION

# **Mindfulness in Preschool: A Teaching Proposal.**

Presented by María Leoz Gimeno

Tutor: Iván Bueno Ruiz

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## 1. ABSTRACT

Many researches prove that practicing *Mindfulness* at school helps you to keep the stress down, which mean to have a better academic performance.

Mindfulness requires that people develop high level of concentration, but keeping the attention at the present, watching what feelings you have when they appear. It is necessary that pupil develop mindfulness skills to reach the best level of ripeness.

**Key words:** Mindfulness, stress, emotional intelligence, education and academic performance.

## RESUMEN

Numerosos estudios demuestran que la práctica de la atención plena en el ámbito educativo, ayudan a reducir el estrés, y por consiguiente, obtener un mayor nivel de rendimiento académico.

El Mindfulness requiere que la persona desarrolle un alto grado de concentración, centrándose fundamentalmente en el presente observando todas las sensaciones que experimenta en el momento en que se producen. En base a esto, es necesario que el alumno o alumna desarrolle la atención plena en el ámbito escolar, para alcanzar un alto nivel de madurez afectivo y emocional.

**Palabras clave:** Atención plena, estrés, inteligencia emocional, educación y rendimiento académico.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

Mindfulness is a way of attending – an attentional practice – that is derived from Asian contemplative traditions but has been secularized in the context of clinical psychology (e.g., Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2002). As Kabat-Zinn (1994, p. 4) described it: ‘Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally.’ Mindfulness practice may occur in the context of sitting meditation, but may also happen in the context of other activities, such as walking or eating.

From the perspective of research of self-regulation, mindfulness training has a considerable potential as an intervention because it targets both top-down and bottom-up influences on self-regulation. As such, mindfulness training may scaffold the development of self-regulation by creating conditions conducive to reflection, both in the context of problem solving and in the context of playful exploration.

In summary, emerging research suggests that age-appropriate mindfulness exercises are feasible for use with young children, even during the preschool period, and that such exercises may foster the healthy development of self-regulation. Improvements in self-regulation might be expected to have lasting implications, including implications for children’s performance in school (e.g., Blair & Razza, 2007) and children’s social and emotional development (e.g., Bierman et al., 2008). Clearly, however, additional research is required to assess the efficacy of mindfulness training in childhood, and to understand the mechanisms that may underlie any beneficial effects.

The present study is focused in the effects of mindfulness-based in school setting on executive function, self-regulation and prosocial behavior. Interpretation of the results indicate effects favoring the group’s attention and cognitive flexibility. These findings have made me developing a teaching proposal in which emotions are worked. The main aim of the teaching proposal is to make children easier to understand their feelings and control them. So they will be able to manage difficult situations in any context.

### 3. OBJECTIVES AND COMPETENCES

The main goal of the Teaching degree is to train professional teachers for been able to give educational attention for preschool children. It is based on 14 article of the organic law 2/2006, 3rd of May. The teaching degree has many different objectives and competences, which doing this project I have developed and achieved some of them:

- To know teaching processes between 0-6 years old at different contexts such as family, social and school.
- To promote freedom, curiosity, observation, etc.
- To promote the cooperative work.
- To favor the integration of students with learning difficulties.
- To promote the self-acceptation and multiculturalism.
- To promote learning related to no discrimination and equality of opportunities.
- To eliminate sexist behavior and stereotypes.
- To design activities that work democracy, no violence, no tolerance, justice, solidarity, etc.
- To favor the coexistence in the classroom.
- To design activities to favor the psychomotor development.
- To favor the knowledge of their own body.
- To understand that the daily dynamics in Preschool are always changeable depending on each student.
- To value the importance of a team working.
- To know and accept the respect rules.
- To be able to observe and analyze the context.
- To be able to analyze the data and information.
- To know the different methodologies that we can apply in Preschool.
- To participate making new projects for Preschool.
- To be conscious about the importance of the teacher role.
- To be conscious about the different educational contexts: formal and informal.
- To do formative evaluations of the learning process.
- To adapt all the activities to the special needs.
- To favor the symbolic game.

- To know the curriculum for Preschool.
- To be able to express me in an oral and written way.
- To favor the development of the different skills in an oral and written way.
- To favor the approach to reading and writing.
- To be able of teaching a foreign language.
- To know about children´s literature.

The following statements are some of the goals that I have achieved studying the English specialty of the Teaching degree at the University:

- To be able to express me in an oral and written way.
- To design a teaching proposal for Preschool.
- To know the importance of multilingualism since Preschool.
- To know the foreign language curriculum.
- To know many different methods of teaching English.

#### 4. JUSTIFICATION OF THE SUBJECT

The favoring of the emotional skill from childhood will help to prevent emotional and behavior problems. It is important to keep in mind that due to social changes, unstructured families, etc, the outlook has changed considerably. Currently, it is really easy to find children that do not know how to express their feelings, that is why it is really important the emotional education in early years.

In this project there is a teaching proposal which works the emotions by different activities and techniques of Mindfulness. Each emotion will be worked by three different activities with the purpose of reinforce the content. The main objective of the teaching proposal is helping the children to understand their feelings and how to use them in a proper way and context.

Three years ago, I spent one year of my degree abroad in Edinburgh. I did the first period of practices in a school called “Greenbank Preschool”. I felt in love with the teaching methodologies that they used (Mindfulness). Teachers gave much importance to how children felt. Since then, I awaken interest in Mindfulness. I researched about it and I even did the first level course to prepare myself to instruct Mindfulness techniques to children (there are three levels) as I have been given the opportunity to work this topic, “Mindfulness in Preschool”, I thought that it would be great If I design a teaching proposal.

By doing this project I have realized that I am able to achieve more than I have expected or even sometimes, we do things without sense, but with the passing of time we give meaning to those “things”. I will very much hope to apply this teaching proposal once in the future.

## 5. METHODOLOGY:

For this project I have searched about Mindfulness in Preschool information in many different databases such as Dialnet, Web of Science, Scopus, etc.

As I have explained before, I took the first level of Mindfulness training with Murray (2012) in Edinburgh. I also have a book which contains valuable information about Mindfulness. For searching the information, I have used some key words like “Mindfulness, stress, emotional intelligence, education, academic performance”.

There are thousands of articles and books related to Mindfulness, but to be honest, there are not many of them related to Preschool. That is why it has been a little bit hard to find some of the information required to develop this project. I have surfed the web for many hours to find proper articles and information.

Once that I selected the information I could develop the project, translating everything. At the beginning I thought that it was quite hard, but at the end, I have enjoyed doing it. As I see things, I believe that Mindfulness is a really interesting topic.

On the other hand, I would like to share an observation done. Due to the fact that Mindfulness is unknown for most of people, it is quite hard to explain and introduce this topic. Besides the fact that much more researches should be done to find out valuable information.

Referring to the teaching proposal, I have invented the activities and adapted them to Preschool students. I would like to say that thanks to the last period of practices I have found doing this project much more easy.



## 6. THEORETICAL JUSTIFICATION:

### 6.1. Origin of Mindfulness

The concept of Mindfulness has its origin thanks to the evolution of Zen and Vipasan practices, specifically from Buddhism. The main aim of Buddhism was and still is to stop with human suffering (e.g., Fulton et al. 2005; Sogyal, 1994). Mindfulness is the translation of the Word “*Sati*” (language Pali) that means: conscious, attention and memory.

### 6.2. Definition of Mindfulness

The word meditation has many different interpretations. For Murray (2012), it has become a synonym of relaxation or stress management. Meditation is about focusing in the “here and now”, so we need to keep our attention in our daily routines, where everyone can simply enjoy physical sensations, or be guided on a peaceful journey using visual imagery (Segú-Jensen, 2014).

As Murray (2012) wrote majority of adults tend to spend a lot of time analyzing and judging life (and themselves) rather than just being in the moment enjoying it. At the same time that an adult grows, the responsibilities do at the same time too. This is why teaching children by using meditation can be easier than teaching adults. The young mind is much more open than adult’s mind.

The person that practices Mindfulness know how to observe and to accept thoughts and emotions that he or she experiments. Through the observation, it is generated a new perspective about what it is happening. So, the person who use Mindfulness techniques does not try to avoid or reduce their feelings, due to this situation can control some situations, which generates more problems as Campbell, Barlow, Brown and Hoffman said (2006).

### 6.3. Components, attitudes and key elements of Mindfulness

As Bishop et al. (2004) said, there are two main components to practice Mindfulness. The first component is to auto regulate the attention and the second one is to be orientated to the experience. This way, students will learn not to act automatically.

On the other hand, Germer (2005) wrote that consciousness, the present moment and acceptance must be the 3 independent elements required to practice Mindfulness.

Kabat-Zinn (2003) selected 7 main elements to practice Mindfulness in educational areas

- Do not judge.
- Be patient.
- To have a beginner mind.
- To have confidence.
- Do not make effort.
- Acceptance.
- To let things go.

#### 6.4. Types of Mindfulness

There are two ways of practicing Mindfulness, formal and informal way. To practice it in a formal way, we should spend time in different postures (sit down, lie down and stand), keeping the attention in some aspects such as breathing, sounds, corporal feelings, stimulus, emotions and thoughts. On the other hand, the informal practice consists in keeping our attention in all the quotidian activities (Stahl et al. 2010). Piaget establishes a list of different stages in which children experiment various states:

1. Sensorimotor stage (0-2 years old).
2. Preoperational stage (2-7 years old).
3. Specific operations stage (7-11 years old).
4. Formal operations stage (starts at 11 years old).

It is important to know that each stage has its own characteristics. On the one hand, Piaget affirms that the child who is in preoperational stage is dominated by a symbolical thought, pre-logic and egocentric, what means that everyone can have a different point of view from the same reality.

On the other hand, Mind Theory is defined by the ability of being conscious that can exist different points of view. In other words, each person has its own point of view from the same reality. As Shaffer et al. (2007) explained, The Mind Theory establishes that a five years old child is able to understand that people's thoughts can be different from him or her thoughts.

As Hidalgo & Palacios (2002) defend, social conscious is developed during the childhood. What means that children can be more critical and develop emotions such as pride, self-esteem, embarrassment and culpability (Berger, 2007). Nevertheless, while developing the attention during the childhood it is important to have external agents, for instance, friends, teachers, the school and last but not least, the importance of the family (Garaigordobil, 2013).

#### 6.5. Aims of Mindfulness practices

Some of the goals that Mindfulness pretends to achieve while its practice in pre-school as Murray (2012) wrote, are the following ones:

- To please children in the different tasks that they do.
- To figure out if they are consciousness about what is Mindfulness and its uses.
- To observe the results from activities planned before using Mindfulness.
- To evaluate the tasks (if they are motivational or not).
- To provide with suggestions for futures practices of Mindfulness.

#### 6.6. Training Programs with Mindfulness

Referring to the training programs in Mindfulness stand out the following ones as Mañas, I., Franco, C., Gil, M. D., & Gil, C. (2014) said:

- Inner Kids Program: It was created 12 years ago in the USA. It is also known as “The New ABCs (Attention, Balance and Compassion)”. It is taught through games and activities. It is focused in the student’s attention and consciousness. It has to be adapted to student’s interest and ages. The program takes two weekly sessions (30 minutes each one). It must be applied between 10-12 weeks. The program is about using games followed by tasks. Then, students have to share their experiences.
- Inner Resilience Program (IRP): It was created 10 years ago in the USA. The main goal of the program is to focus in personal lives. To achieve the purpose of the program, some outdoors activities must be done during the weekends, so teachers and students will change their minds.
- Learning to BREATHE: It was created 5 years ago in the USA. It is about controlling ourselves and it has five main goals:

1. To encourage well-being.
2. To improve the emotions.
3. To strengthen the attention.
4. To manage the stress.
5. To help students how to use Mindfulness daily.

It may take 6 sessions (each session will be 30-45 minutes) to achieve the goals of the program.

- Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP): Originated in England 4 years ago for students between 14 and 18 years old.  
The program is about a body-scan, eating in a conscious way. It works with “3 min silence” and mindful texting. It may be applied during 9 weeks at school lessons.
- Mindful Schools: Originated in the USA 5 years ago for Primary students. It has 15 sessions during 8 weeks. The program is about hearing different sounds, breathing, emotions, generosity, kindness, etc.
- MindUP: It is a project that born in the USA. It is formed by 15 lessons that improve the well-being and academic results of students. This program is about applying 3 times per day breathing for Mindfulness. It is being applied in 250 schools from North America.
- Staf Hakeshev (The Mindfulness Language). It was born 19 years ago in Israel. This is the oldest program of Mindfulness and it is about developing cognitive skills through the breathing and corporal feelings.
- Still Quiet Place: Originated in the USA 11 years ago for Primary students. It is focused in consciousness to achieve the goal of learn how to respond in a peaceful way instead of acting. It may be applied during 8 weeks once a week (each session between 45 or 1,5 minutes).
- Stressed Teens: Originated in the USA 8 years ago for students between 13 and 18 years old. The Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction for Teens (MBSR-T) is related with MBSR’s program created by Kabat-Zinn of Stress Reduction Clinic of the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester, MA. The main purpose is to practice Mindfulness in a formal and informal way. The program takes 8 weeks with a weekly session of 1,5 hours.

## 6.7. Mindfulness in education

As Arguís (2014) said, Mindfulness in an educational area can counteract daily stress, so students are able to live different experiences paying more attention and being consciousness about the new knowledge that they get. In this way, it is forbidden an excess of information, in other words, students only get useful knowledge for them lives. During the school attendance, there are lots of transformations in children's developments, such as cognitive and emotional processes. Despite of childhood is known as a period where there is a high cerebral plasticity; Price (2009) affirms that everything that a child achieves during childhood can become habitual when they grow.

As Berger (2007) said, a child from pre-school education has a high corporal control, giving him or her the opportunity to develop motor movements and gets all the purposed tasks. The development of language is mainly determined by cerebral maturation and the social context as Philips et al. (2007) wrote.

Kaiser (2010), author's book *The Mindful kids* wrote an article in which she said that using Mindfulness techniques in an educational area could change the world in a revolutionary way.

There are lots of great educational programs that teach valuable life-skills cradle to grave. When kids, teens and adults develop these capacities through mindful (awareness - attention, balance and compassion) - they transform themselves and are better able to transform our world into a more peaceful, collaborative and caring place as Kaiser (2010) said. In fact, to help the development of mindful awareness at an early age, Kaiser (2010) shared perspectives on how best to build and implement programs suitable for public education. Here there are a few things that are important to share with a wider community:

1. **Motivation.** Be clear about why you're teaching mindful awareness in the first place. Know your objective.
2. **Perspective.** Mindfulness in everyday life is not a religion, so do not approach it as one.
3. **Simplicity.** Use simple, clear language and activities that communicate simple, clear concepts and experiences. Adapting mindful awareness games and

activities for a younger audience can be a fun opportunity to express your creativity (Woloschin de Glaser y Serrabona, 2003).

4. **Play.** It has to be playful for children.

5. **Integration.** To integrate Mindfulness into everyday activities, in our daily routines.

6. **Collaboration.** to put our differences aside and work together for the benefit of everyone without exception (students, teachers, families).

7. **Strategy.** To develop a comprehensive strategy for researching and developing secular mindful awareness programs and implementing them in public settings.

Despite of many researches related with using Mindfulness as a tool in education has positives academic profits, teachers have no doubts about its efficiency. Considering that Mindfulness techniques can reduce stress, improve the environment in which children work, regulates the emotions and the creativity, rises the attention in class and also can change the bad behavior (Parra et al. 2012).

To prove the profits coming from Mindfulness practices, let us analyses the following research (Almansa, 2014). Almansa put into practice an intervention program in a Primary School from Huelva. Two different experimental groups of children were chosen besides two groups of control in two different schools from Huelva. All the students did a questionnaire before and after Mindfulness intervention. There were 157 students participating at the experiment, 46.7% were girls and 53.3% were boys with ages between 10 and 12 years old. The research took place in the last two years of Primary CEIP “La Noria” de Lepe and CEIP “El Puntal”. Both of them wanted to participate in a voluntarily way.

Almansa gathered all the parents and staff in a meeting and gave them useful information about Mindfulness concept and the experiment. He collected and grouped the results in: autonomy, aptitude and relationship with others. Almansa’s program consisted of practicing Mindfulness daily through hearing some sound recordings during seven weeks. The sound recordings were given to the teachers by Almansa.

As Almansa researched, the analysis of the results had two phases and we can see them on table 1. At the first phase the data were analyzed to prove that there was not a difference between both experimental groups before using Mindfulness techniques. The second phase analyzed the results after using Mindfulness techniques. For analyze the results at the second phase of the experiment, Almansa kept in mind some variables statistics and he observed a strong link between them. For instance, psychologist welfare is related to the orientation of the task and fun.

However, Mindfulness is something relatively new, so we have to be careful by using it in educational contexts. The main handicap that we find is to understand the real meaning of Mindfulness. Most of people tend to mix the interpretations, for instance, is common to relate it with philosophy or even paranormal activity, as Gunaratana said (2016). Sometimes, it is viewed such as a simple way to escape from reality, but all of these thoughts are mistakes, due to the previous researches that has proven the profits of Mindfulness in education.

While students are getting emotional abilities, there are positives consequences in their behavior. What means an easier development of personal and social welfare (Bisquerra et al. 2007). If we base on the analysis of many researches related with Mindfulness practices, Extremera et al. (2003) affirms that smart children emotionally talking, have better personal welfare, but those students that use Mindfulness in class, will have better academic results.

It is important to say that Mindfulness is suitable for all the audiences. Practicing Mindfulness with children has no many differences from practicing it with adults. As Lillard (2011) wrote, all the activities must be adapted and related with the children's ages and interests. It is not a tool to control the society, on the contrary, it can help us to develop in a comfortable way (KabatZinn, 2015). According to García-Campayo & Demarzo (2015), Mindfulness does not let us to manipulate the reality it is just that meditation can give us the opportunity to take over the responsibility of our lives.

KabatZinn (2015), García-Campayo & Demarzo (2015) agree that we should considerate the children's interest and adapt the activities (Woloschin de Glaser y Serrabona, 2003). Practicing meditation is based on the observation of stimulus. Talking as a future teacher,

we should have prepared alternative activities in case that some of the pupils do not want to participate.

Other difficulty of using Mindfulness in an educational context is the problem to adapt the skills that must be included in the curriculum and how them must be developed. Generally talking, it is believed that being Smart means to know what it is happening around us (Langer, 2000). Mindfulness tends to change it, by trying to explain reality from our point of view, our emotions and feelings.

As Schoeberlein (2011) recommended, we should introduce Mindfulness in education in a progressive way, starting from simple activities and increasing the difficulty with the time. Schoeberlein (2011) said that it would be easy to find an agreement for the profits of Mindfulness, such as patient, attention, the school and the kindness in school. It would be the greatest way to start introducing simple practices or activities that helps to develop those skills.

It would be recommendable (Kabat-Zinn, 2015) that teachers who use Mindfulness in class, must have previous experience about it. In other words, a training period would be needed for a correct application of Mindfulness techniques. In addition, creativity is required for teachers (Woloschin de Glaser y Serrabona, 2003). It is really important to motivate the students, showing them the activities in a game way (Palomero, 2016). Skills to keep us under control must be developed. The development of this skills depends on Mindfulness. Consciousness is indispensable, considering that been conscious means to know what happens and observe own feelings and emotions. In addition to know what is happening in our environment. To be conscious, give us the opportunity to develop some love and respect feelings. Just a consciousness teacher is able to teach in a consciousness way. The teacher will be more relaxed, attentive and peaceful. Taking everything into consideration, a conscious teacher will be a person who motivates their students. This situation may help them to be guided and helped, so they can develop abilities and skills that would be useful in the future.

#### **6.8. Profits of Mindfulness**

There are some clear profits why teaching children by using meditation can help them in short or long term. Doing meditation encourage children to use their imagination or to explore the world by their own, using their senses in a way which is “relaxed but alert”



as said Murray (2012). It helps them to develop their ability to focus and concentrate rather than being easily distracted by other thoughts or the environment. It helps them to control their “butterfly mind” and it can help children to unwind before going to bed, helping them to have a better rest while sleep. Some of the most important profits of using Mindfulness in education are the following ones:

- Improving sleep.
- Managing thoughts and feelings.
- Building self-esteem.
- Learning to relax.
- Having more balanced energy.
- Improved focus and concentration.
- Peaceful mind, peaceful body and peaceful life.

## 7. TEACHING PROPOSAL

### 7.1. Introduction

Currently, it is really easy to find children that do not know how to express their feelings, that it is why it is really important the emotional education in early years. So I have decided to keep the attention on this. Through this teaching proposal I would like to help students to understand themselves and keep calm using Mindfulness techniques.

Emotions are present in our lives since we are born and they play a relevant role in the construction of our personality and social interactions. We feel emotions anywhere and at any time, with the family, with friends, with our environment, with our equals, with our school, with our educators, etc. To educate means to take into account the complete development of individuals, developing cognitive, physical, linguistic and moral capacities as well as affective and emotional ones. Emotional education is put into practice at all stages in life through sequenced programs which can be started during infant education. In this article objectives, contents, examples of activities and the evaluation of emotional education in infant education are presented.

This project is thought to be distributed in seven different weeks. This way, we will work a different emotion weekly. There will be 3 sessions each week (30-45 minutes each session depending on the activity). To sum up, we will work one emotion every week.

It is important to keep in mind that the teaching proposal can be adapted depending on the school characteristics (number of students and teachers, geographical and economic situation of the school, special necessities required, etc).

I would like to share an observation done. As the teaching proposal works the emotions, one of them is the fear and it would be great to work this emotion during Halloween.

### 7.2. General goals

This teaching proposal has many different goals to achieve, some of them are the following ones:

- To make children enjoy tales.
- To encourage an emotional teaching.
- To encourage literary skills, dramatization and drawing through the Monster of colours.
- To understand the main topic of the tale (emotions).

- To know all the emotions (furious, happiness, anger, sadness, fear and calm).
- To identify their partner's emotions.
- To improve the relationships between the students.
- To express the feelings related with the emotions worked.
- To represent all the body parts through the drawing.
- To participate in the activities.
- To respect the partner's opinions and feelings.
- To work in a cooperative way (team working).
- To use properly all the materials (books, scissors, crayons, glue, etc).

### 7.3. Contents

This teaching proposal is about working the emotions with different activities. I have decided to work them through one tale called "The colour monster" by Anna Llenas. Using the book as motivational axis to develop an interesting project about emotional teaching.

The main contents that I would like to work through this teaching proposal are the following ones:

- To know all the emotions (furious, happiness, sadness, anger, fear and calm).
- To understand them and be able to control them.
- To be able to solve a difficult situation with a good behavior.
- To express all the emotions and feelings in a proper way and context.

To work each emotion, there are different activities designed that will help children to understand and classify their feelings.

### 7.4. Methodology

To carry out this teaching proposal, it may need work through routines and corners the project. In every class it is needed a corner. Cassà, È. L. (2005) said that for the school is another area of knowledge in which emotions are experienced.

As Piatek, A. I. (2009) wrote, working through corners during preschool is really important despite of it is a new stimulating, flexible and dynamic way of organize the work. The student is the main character of him or her learning process. The main goal of

working through corners is to establish some strategies to organise the teaching-learning process.

Last but not least, Forneiro, M. L. I. (2008) wrote that the aim goal of routines is also to organize the work in class. Some routine activities are the following ones: to take the register, to line up, to tidy up all the materials and objects used, to water the plants, to clean up the class, etc.

### 7.5. General evaluation

The evaluation will be taken in 4 different levels:

- Students' project: after applying the teaching proposal, a session will be needed to evaluate the work made. This evaluation will be in assembly and students should discuss and value about what they have worked.
- Students: the teacher will evaluate the student's participation and the achievement of goals through direct observation of the activities.
- Teachers' project: first of all, each teacher will evaluate individually the different items and then results will be shared to compare.
- Improvements in future projects: it will be included a section in which improvements should appear for future projects.

### 7.6. Proposal

The teaching proposal is formed by different activities that should be distributed as I had explained in the contents part. Keeping in mind that changes are accepted depending of the situation in which we are. The activities are divided into different groups (introduction, happiness, sadness, angry, fear, calm, love, final activity). At the end of the teaching proposal, students will collect and organize all the material worked in a booklet way, so they can keep it as a memory.

### **Introduction**

Activity 1: "The monster is our friend"

- Materials:
  - Big sheet of paper.
  - Wool in different colours (yellow, blue, red, black and green).
  - A pair of scissors.

- Glue.
- Duration: 60 minutes.
- Explanation: we will start the project with this activity. Supposing that a magic elf has given us a surprise borrowing the mysterious book of “The colour monster” by Anna Llenas. The teacher will read the elf’s letter to the students and then, they will do with paper, wool and glue the colour monster. Before doing the activity, the teacher will explain that each emotion is associated with a colour (yellow-happiness, blue-sadness, red-angry, black-fear, green-calm and pink-love). When we finish decorating the monster, the teacher will hang it up on the wall. \*Annex 1

## **Happiness**

### Activity 2: “We feel yellow”

- Materials:
  - “The colour monster” book.
  - Yellow jar with yellow things in it.
- Duration: 30-45 minutes.
- Explanation: after introducing the story. We are going to work the first emotion that is happiness (yellow). The teacher will read the happiness chapter while all the students will be sat down on the floor in a circle shape (assembly). Then, the teacher will open the jar and put all the yellow objects in the middle of the circle. One by one have to take a yellow object and introduce it in the jar while the student says something that make him or her feels happy. After this, students will colour at the front and draw something at the back what make them feel happy. \*Annex 2

### Activity 3: “If you are happy”

- Materials:
  - A computer (with Internet access).
  - A digital board.
  - A big classroom.
- Duration: 10 minutes.

Explanation: as we may know, happiness is related to fun and enjoying the moment. This way, dancing and singing is the best way to have fun for a moment. Let's play the video and put the embarrassment away for a while. The teacher should look for the song "If you are happy and you know it" on YouTube.

Activity 4: "Let's tidy up the yellow monster"

- Materials:
  - Big sheet of paper.
  - Yellow crayons.
  - Yellow wool.
  - A pair of scissors.
  - Glue.
- Duration: 20 minutes.
- Explanation: when we have finished working happiness, we will colour and decorate a yellow monster, so we can hang it up next to the colour monster that we hang up first. The aim of this activity is to divide and classify the emotions.

*\*Annex 3*

**Sadness**

Activity 5: "We feel blue"

- Materials:
  - "The colour monster" book.
  - Blue jar with blue things in it.
- Duration: 30-45 minutes.
- Explanation: we are going to work the next emotion that is sadness (blue). The teacher will read the sadness chapter while all the students will be sat down on the floor in a circle shape (assembly). Then, the teacher will open the jar and put all the blue objects in the middle of the circle. One by one have to take a blue object and introduce it in the jar while the student says something that make him or her feels sad. After this, students will colour at the front and draw something at the back what make them feel sad. *\*Annex 4*

### Activity 6: “The ugly Duckling”

- Materials:
  - Computer.
  - Digital board.
  - Sheets of paper.
  - Crayons.
- Duration: 30 minutes.
- Explanation: in this activity we are going to work the fear through a tale called “The ugly Duckling” by Hans Christian Andersen. First of all, students must be sat down in front of the screen to watch the tale. After that, we will mention it in assembly and finally, they will draw the happiest swan ever. \*Annex 5

### Activity 7: “Let’s tidy up the blue monster”

- Materials:
  - Big sheet of paper.
  - Blue crayons.
  - Blue wool.
  - A pair of scissors.
  - Glue.
- Duration: 20 minutes.
- Explanation: when we have finished working sadness, we will colour and decorate a blue monster, so we can hang it up next to the colour monster that we hang up first. The aim of this activity is to divide and classify the emotions. \*Annex 6

## **Anger**

### Activity 8: “We feel red”

- Materials:
  - “The colour monster” book.
  - Red jar with red things in.
- Duration: 30-45 minutes.
- Explanation: we are going to work the next emotion that is anger (red). The teacher will read the anger chapter while all the students will be sat down on the

floor in a circle shape (assembly). Then, the teacher will open the jar and put all the red objects in the middle of the circle. One by one have to take a red object and introduce it in the jar while the student says something that make him or her feels angry.

Activity 9: “Detonate it”

- Materials:
  - Red balloons.
  - Red crayons.
  - The colours monster in red.
  - Sheets of paper.
  - Scissors.
- Duration: 60 minutes.
- Explanation: after the teacher has read the angry chapter, she or he will explain their students that when we feel angry, we are similar to a traffic light. First, children have to draw colour the red monster at the front and draw something at the back what make them feel angry. Students will have to fold the drawing and put it inside of a red swollen balloon. When everybody finish, they must be sat down in assembly. Before detonating the balloons, the teacher will explain the students that being furious means to break out if you do not control your feelings. One by one, they have to take the red balloon with the drawing inside and detonate it with scissors. Finally, they will show and explain what make them feel angry.

*\*Annex 7*

Activity 10: “Let’s tidy up the red monster”

- Materials:
  - Big sheet of paper.
  - Red crayons.
  - Red wool.
  - A pair of scissors.
  - Glue.
- Duration: 20 minutes.



- Explanation: when we have finished working angry, we will colour and decorate a red monster, so we can hang it up next to the colour monster that we hang up first. The aim of this activity is to divide and classify the emotions. \*Annex 8

## **Fear**

### Activity 11:

- Materials:
  - “The colour monster” book.
  - Black jar with black things in it.
- Duration: 30-45 minutes.
- Explanation: we are going to work the next emotion that is fear (black). The teacher will read the fear chapter while all the students will be sat down on the floor in a circle shape (assembly). Then, the teacher will open the jar and put all the black objects in the middle of the circle. One by one have to take a black object and introduce it in the jar while the student says something that make him or her feels fear. After this, students will colour at the front and draw something at the back what make them feel fear. \*Annex 9

### Activity 12: “Let’s tidy up the black monster”

- Materials:
  - Big sheet of paper.
  - Black crayons.
  - Black wool.
  - A pair of scissors.
  - Glue.
- Duration: 20 minutes.
- Explanation: when we have finished working fear, we will colour and decorate a black monster, so we can hang it up next to the colour monster that we hang up first. The aim of this activity is to divide and classify the emotions. \*Annex 10

### Activity 13: “Feeding the ghost”

- Materials:
  - A computer (with Internet access).

- A digital board.
- The drawing of fear.
- Halloween vocabulary (ghost, vampire, witch, zombie, skeleton, worms and monster).
- Duration: 45 minutes.
- Explanation: with this activity we are going to try to eliminate our fears facing them. The activity is about sharing our fears with classmates (showing and explaining the drawing in assembly). After that, we will put all the pictures in the mailbox feeding the ghost. Taking advantage of we are in October, we will introduce the topic of Halloween watching a video in addition to a short explanation about it. *\*Annex 11*

## **Calm**

### Activity 14: “We feel green”

- Materials:
  - “The colour monster” book.
  - Green jar with green things in it.
- Duration: 30-45 minutes.
- Explanation: we are going to work the next emotion that is calm (green). The teacher will read the calm chapter while all the students will be sat down on the floor in a circle shape (assembly). Then, the teacher will open the jar and put all the green objects in the middle of the circle. One by one have to take a green object and introduce it in the jar while the student says something that make him or her feels calm. After this, students will colour the green monster at the front and draw something at the back what make them feel calm. *\*Annex 12*

### Activity 15: “We are lungs”

- Materials:
  - “The colour monster” book.
  - Some extensible colorful plastic balls.
  - A dark and silence place or class.
  - Relaxing music.
  - Computer (with Internet access).

- Digital board.
- Duration: 20 minutes.
- Explanation: with this activity we will focus in the children breathing. I am going to explain a couple of Mindfulness techniques to make children feel relaxed, so they will be able to do tasks in a concentration mood. The first one will consist in telling a short story while children are sat down in a dark quiet place. While the teacher is telling the story, students must have closed eyes and keep attention to their breathing. At the same time, they will extend and shrink the plastic ball as their lungs do.

After, the teacher will ask how the students feel and their emotions do. We can do it with any tale and story. With the time, we will realize that students will be more concentrated. Other activity to make students feel relaxed is about being sat down in front of the digital board and watch a video. There are lots of Mindfulness sources and one of them is to watch videos\**Annex 13*

#### Activity 16: “Let’s tidy up the green monster”

- Materials:
  - Big sheet of paper.
  - Green crayons.
  - Green wool.
  - A pair of scissors.
  - Glue.
- Duration: 20 minutes.
- Explanation: when we have finished working calm, we will colour and decorate a green monster, so we can hang it up next to the colour monster that we hang up first. The aim of this activity is to divide and classify the emotions. \**Annex 14*

### **Love**

#### Activity 17: “We feel pink”

- Materials:
  - “The colour monster” book.
  - Pink jar with pink things in it.
- Duration: 30-45 minutes.

- Explanation: we are going to work the last emotion that is love (pink). The teacher will read the love chapter while all the students will be sat down on the floor in a circle shape (assembly). Then, the teacher will open the jar and put all the pink objects in the middle of the circle. One by one have to take a pink object and introduce it in the jar while the student says something that make him or her feels love. After this, students will colour at the front and draw something at the back what make them feel love. \*Annex 15

#### Activity 18: “Cobwebs”

- Materials:
  - A ball of yarn.
  - The Japanese legend of “red thread”.
- Duration: 30 minutes.
- Explanation: the teacher will be responsible for reading the Japanese legend of “red thread” before doing the activity. Then, the teacher will explain students that we are joined to people by feelings and memories, and it does not matter how far we are, or how long we have not seen each other, because we will be always joined. We should always feel loved by our close family and friends. \*Annex 16

#### Activity 19: “Let’s tidy up the pink monster”

- Materials:
  - Big sheet of paper.
  - Pink crayons.
  - Pink wool.
  - A pair of scissors.
  - Glue.
- Duration: 20 minutes
- Explanation: when we have finished working love, we will colour and decorate a pink monster, so we can hang it up next to the colour monster that we hang up first. The aim of this activity is to divide and classify the emotions. \*Annex 17

## **Final activity**

### Activity 20: “Our booklet”

- Materials:
  - The colours monster cover.
  - Different crayons.
  - Colourful wool (to tie the pages together).
- Duration: 45 minutes.
- Explanation: this is the last activity of the teaching proposal. Students have to decorate the colours monster cover. The purpose of this activity is to store all the activities in a booklet, so students can have it as a memory. The teacher will also ask them to wear a clothing in their mood colour. In addition, the teacher will read the last letter of our elf friend Perky\**Annex 18*

## 8. REFLEXIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

After have analyzed some of the researches named before, I have reached the conclusion of applying Mindfulness in Preschool activities has positives results. Mindfulness has helped to improve student's attention besides academic performance. It is important to keep in mind that there are some different variables such as personal development and welfare development. It is also important to adapt the activities depending on the number of students and the different situations in which we find.

Some of the most important profits of using Mindfulness in Preschool is the improvement of concentration, an improvement in the regulations of emotions, the empathy, the sympathy or the classroom atmosphere. In any way, it is convenient to understand our mood, so we will be able to manage the emotions and develop a high welfare.

This study provides evidence for a new way to collect evidence and document support for the utility of mindfulness as a school-based intervention.

In addition, individual training is not often realistic or easily implemented within the school. High educational standards make it difficult for children to miss classroom instruction. Therefore, implementing this intervention in a group setting before or after school would limit the time students missed vital classroom instruction.

Finally, this study is unique as it seeks to provide evidence for the utility of mindfulness training in improving attention regulation skills in young children. A majority of mindfulness-based research has been conducted with adults and adolescents. Studies that incorporate younger children typically involve a less rigorous training component than the current study. Additionally, the current study was designed to evaluate the effectiveness between 3-6 years old students. Children of this age are only just beginning to develop abstract reasoning skills. While positive results will be noted, it may be beneficial to replicate this study with older children when the ability to understand abstract concepts is more fully developed. It is possible that the intervention may have more impact with older children.

In particular, mindfulness training seems optimally designed to foster the healthy development of self-regulation because it targets top-down influences (such as the sustained, iterative reprocessing of information) while simultaneously addressing bottom-up influences (e.g., by reducing anxiety). This is important because self-regulation is strongly predictive of school readiness (e.g., Blair & Razza, 2007; McClelland et al., 2007), presumably because it allows children better to adapt to classroom demands, such as sitting still, sustaining both attention and motivation toward a task, and maintaining and manipulating information during problem solving (Bierman et al., 2008), and also because it allows children to learn in a more active, reflective fashion, in contrast to the incremental drudgery of skill acquisition (Marcovitch, Jacques, Boseovski, & Zelazo, 2008).

Clearly, however, more research is needed to demonstrate the efficacy of mindfulness interventions with children in a rigorous fashion: with random assignment of both trainers and trainees, active control conditions, efforts to equate both student and teacher expectancy effects, and validated behavioral (vs. self- or other-report) measures administered by researchers who are blind to experimental condition. Future research should also investigate issues concerning the feasibility of integrating mindfulness training activities into routine school-day activities, and assess the degree of fidelity and dosage that is required for mindfulness training to be effective, the influence of classroom and school factors on efficacy, and the duration of any observed effects. Such research has the potential not only to provide important knowledge that may be used in applied settings, but also to provide insight into the causal mechanisms underlying major age-related changes in self-regulation.

On the other hand, I also would like to say thank you to my tutor Iván. The one who has been correcting my mistakes and orientating me through the last steps of my degree. Thank you to you and your patience. Thank you to your rapidity. Thank you for being warm and understanding. Last but not least, a big thank you for accepting me and my topic.

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## 10. ANNEX

### Annex 1

Hello every one,

My name is Perky and I am an elf. I live far away and I am 6 years old. My best friend is a lovely monster but he needs your help. He is confused and he has mixed him feelings. Can you help him to separate their feelings, please? I have a present for all of you, so you can help my best friend. Thank you!

See you son

Perky

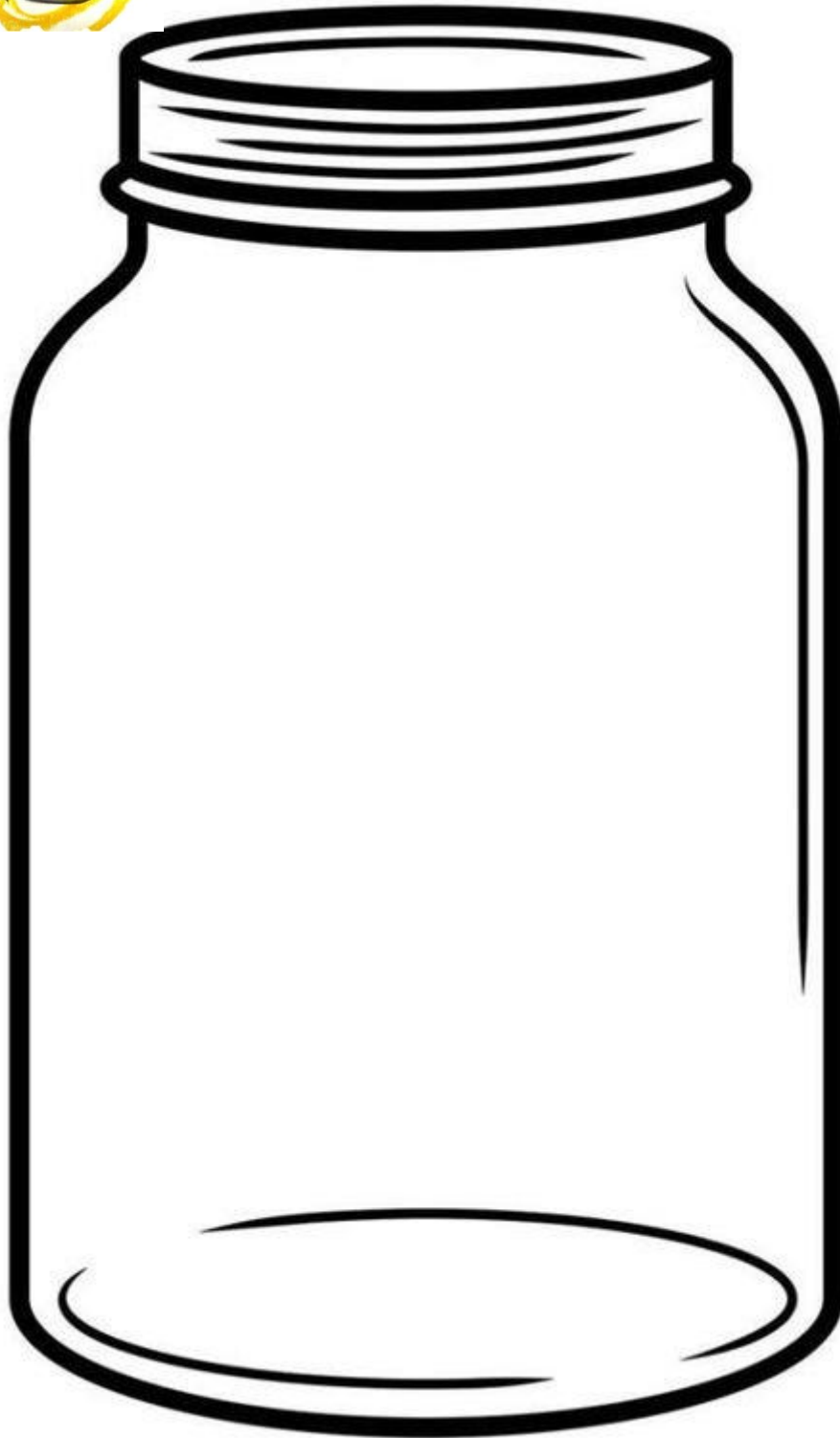


**Feeling: HAPPINESS**



**Colour: YELLOW**

Annex 3



Feeling: SADNESS



Colour: BLUE

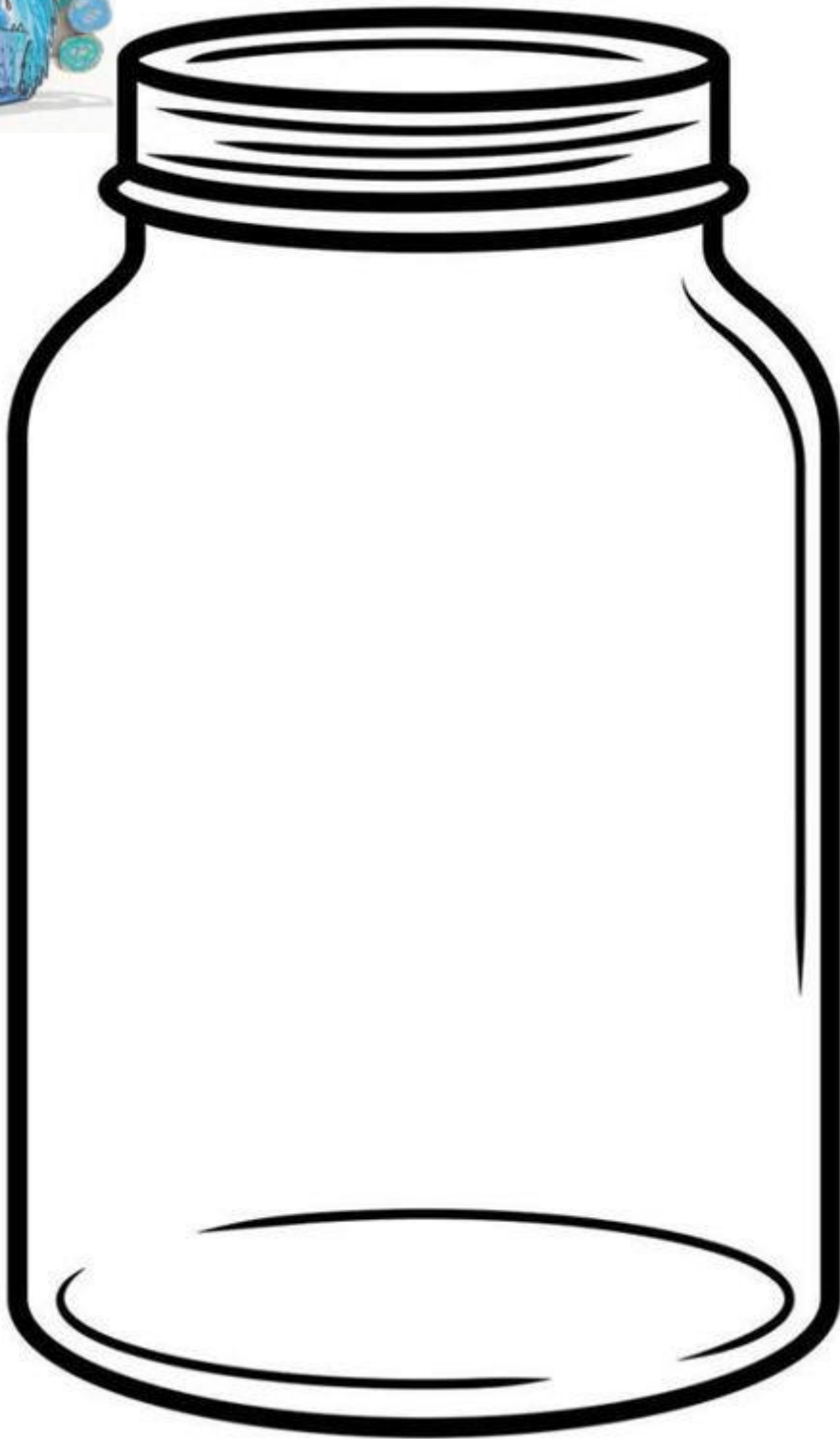
Annex 5

This is the link for the tale: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSWLxj4kTKA>





Annex 6

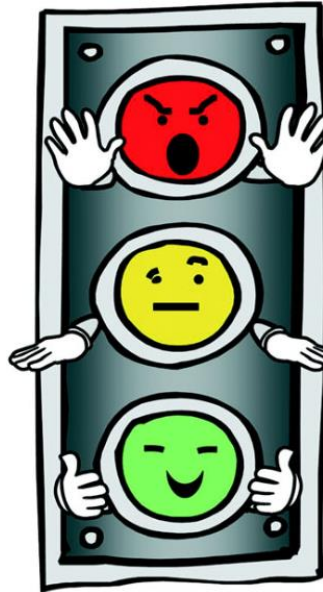


**Feeling: ANGER**

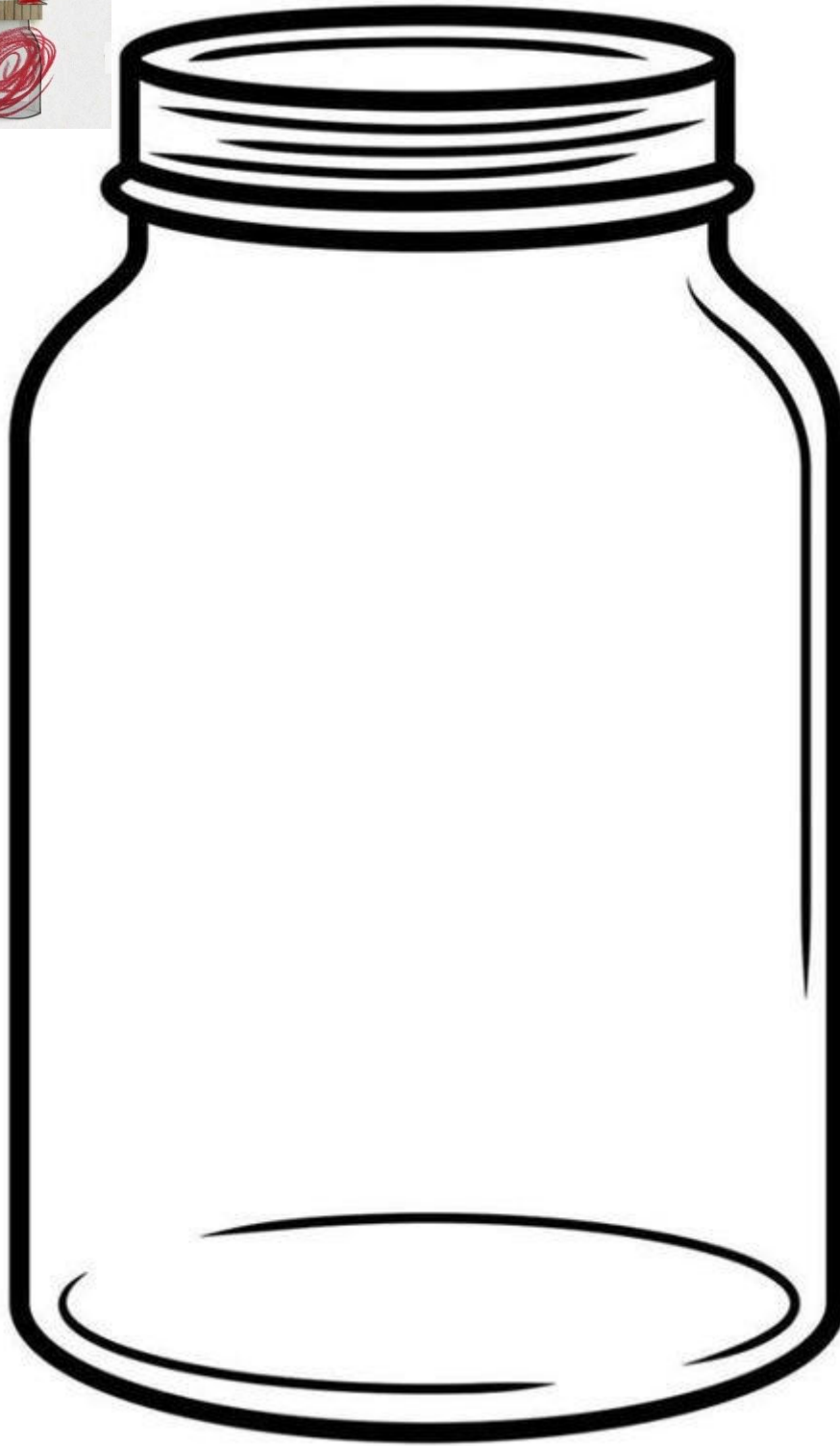


**Colour: RED**

After the teacher has read the anger chapter, she or he will explain their students that when we feel angry we are similar to a traffic light. First we are in red light (breathe deeply), then we change into yellow light (think about what can I do) and finally we are in green light (I choose the best option and I say sorry).



Annex 8

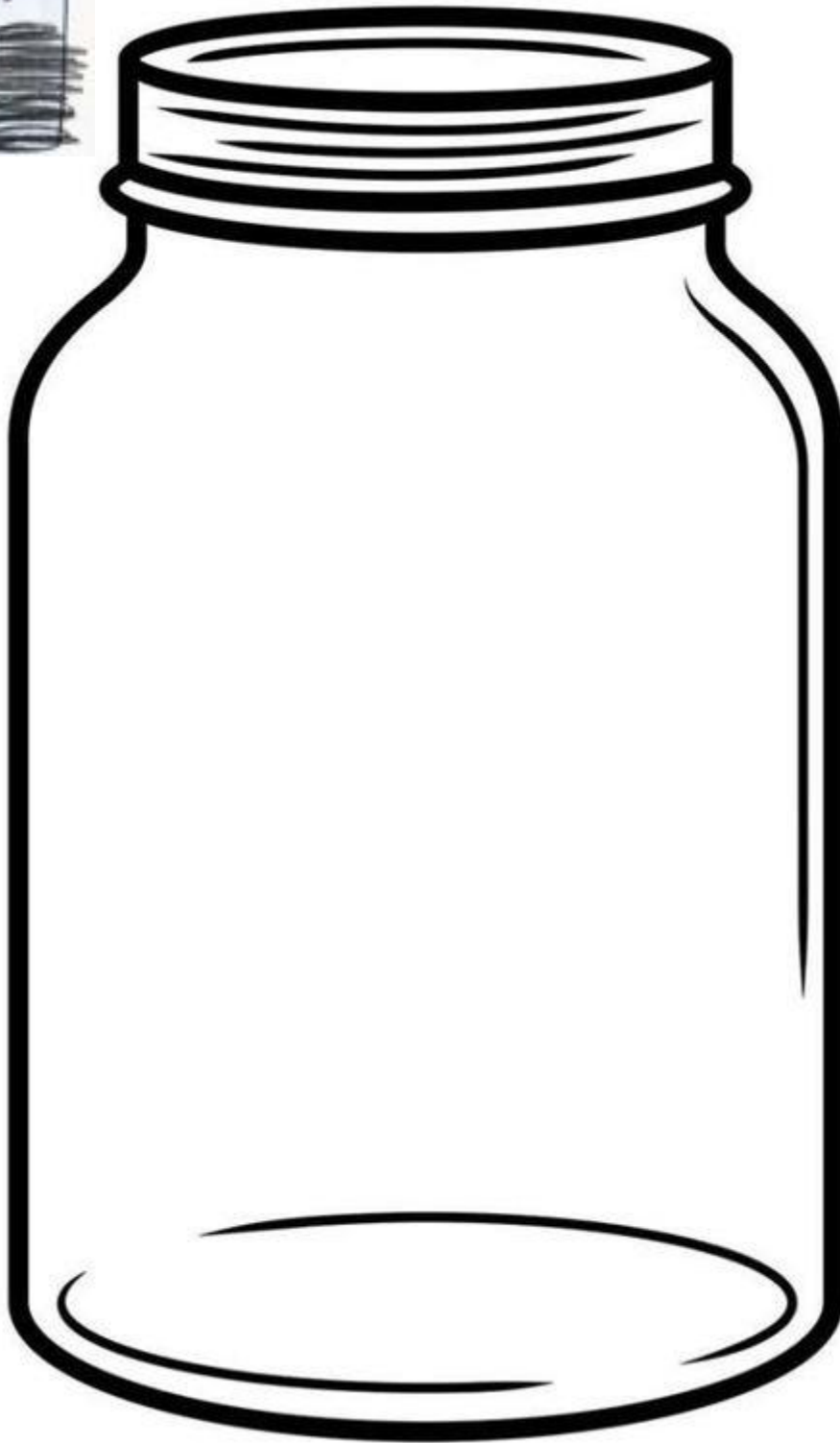


Feeling: FEAR



Colour: BLACK

Annex 10



## Annex 11

Modern Halloween as it has been reinterpreted by the United States and Canada has struggled to expand in Europe. Its popularity has increased throughout the world. Halloween is an annual festival that is celebrated on the night of October 31. On this night thousands of children observe a night of trick or treat.

The hollowing out and carving of a pumpkin into a lantern has origins that span millennia back to when Halloween was an ancient pre-Roman Celtic festival. Back then the carving of vegetables, usually turnips, served to protect those carrying them. The faces warded off evil and unwanted spirits ancient Celts believed wandered the night during their sacred year-end festival.

Halloween is a pagan festival celebrated on November 1, to mark the end of summer and the Celtic New Year. In parts of Scotland and Ireland, ancient Celts wore masks, or exchanged clothes, to ward off, or confuse, the spirits of dead relatives wishing to impose on the living. This tradition of masking one's identity has survived and has been reinterpreted many centuries later into the costumes worn today.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cpf-VBF45kQ> (link of the Halloween song)

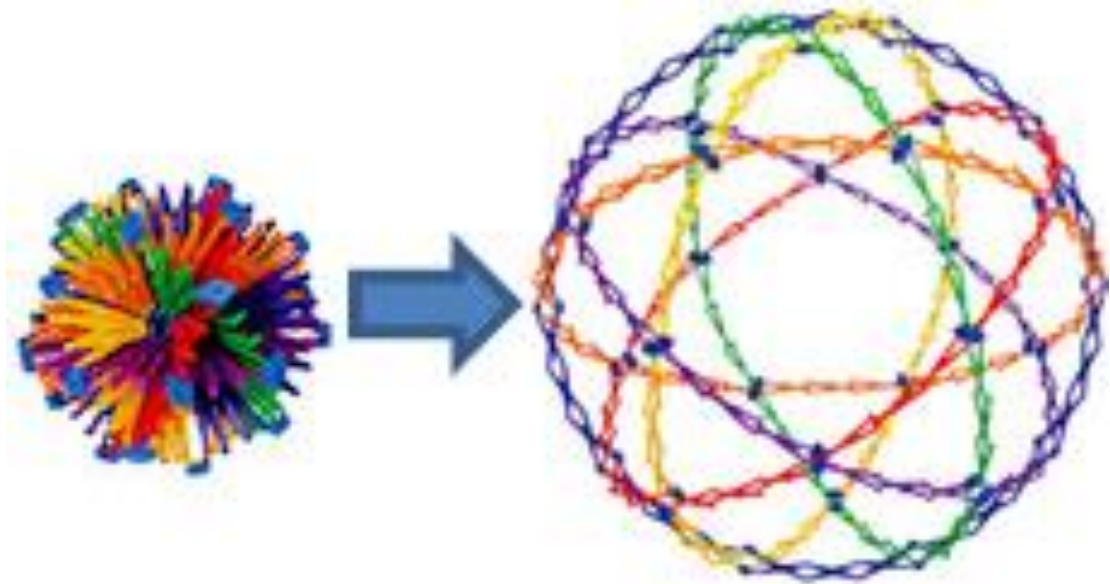
Feeling: CALM



Colour: GREEN



## Annex 13

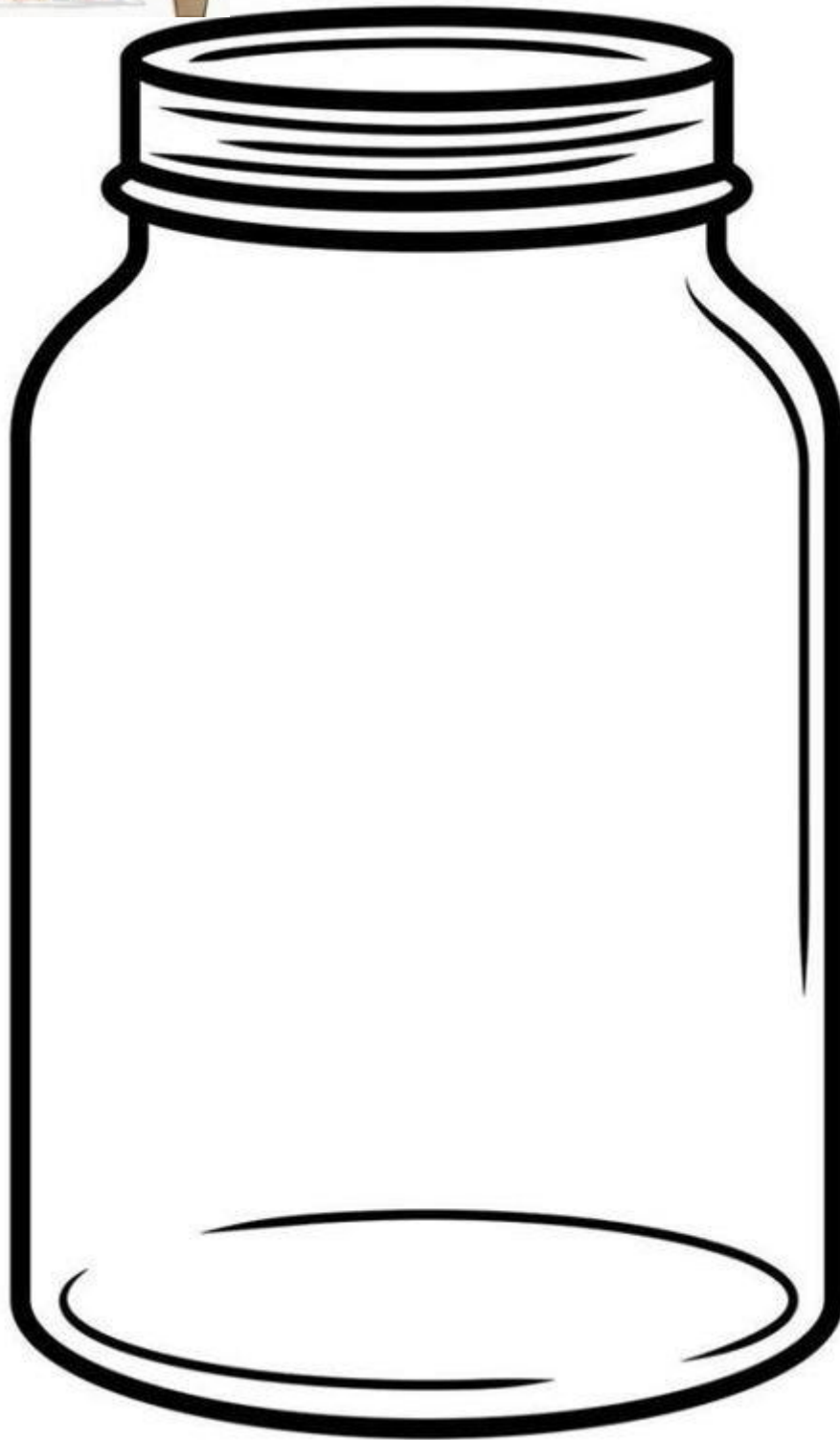


This plastic ball pretends to be the lungs, so while the teacher tells the story, students have to move it slow.

To do the Mindfulness technique, I have chosen some different videos that should be played in class:

- “Breath meditation for kids”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvF9AEe-ozcc>
- “Body scan meditation”: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihwcw\\_ofuME](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihwcw_ofuME)
- “The mind jar”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qKkFWiwIr4>

Annex 14



**Feeling: LOVE**



**Colour: PINK**

## Annex 16

### **Explanation**

There's an ancient myth that it does not matter what kind of relationship two people are in at the time, or whether these two lovers are worlds apart. If they are meant to be, they will always be connected by a "red thread", although it might not happen until the end of the road. This red thread, known as destiny, can never be broken, no matter what happens. It doesn't matter how long it takes you to meet this person, or how long you spend apart. Even if you live on other sides of the world, the thread will stretch so that your hearts are always connected.

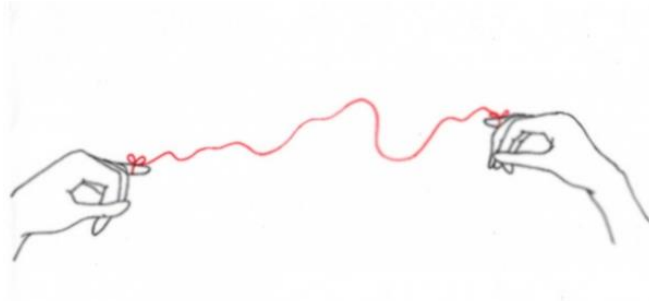
The thread is with you from birth, and it spins throughout your life. It is said that the moon emerges every evening to meet each newborn and unite these new souls with a red thread that's tied around her finger. It will decide your future, and guide your soul through life so that you'll never be lost, even at the edges of the earth.

All of us are connected with someone in anyway, that it is why we should to take care and keep in touch with our close family and friends. This way, our read thread (relationships) never will be broken.



## Legend of red thread

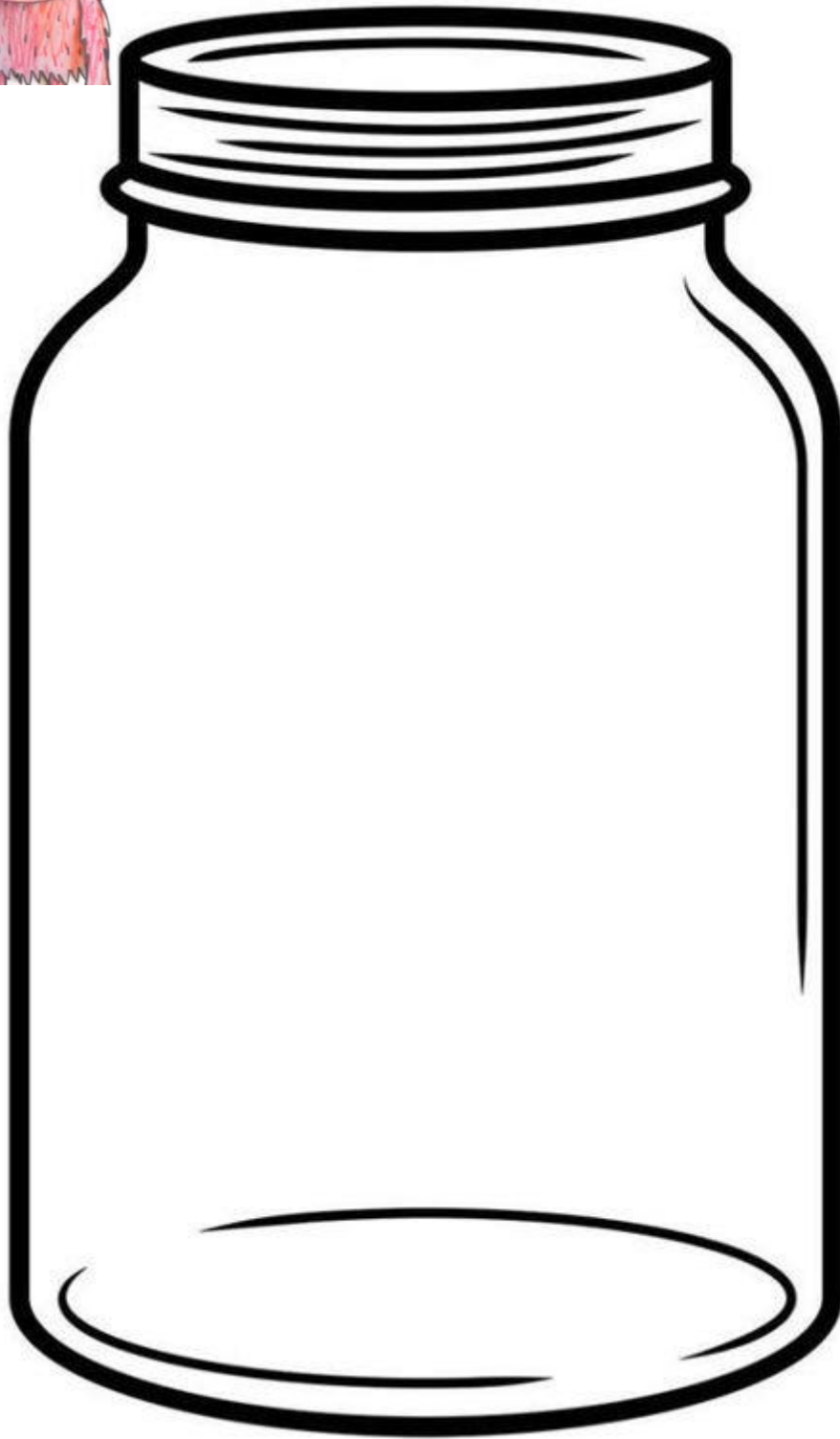
Long, long ago, an emperor learned that there was a powerful witch who lived in one of the provinces of his kingdom. She had the ability to view the red string of fate, and he sent for her presence. When the witch arrived, the emperor ordered her to look at the other end of his red thread, and tell him who would eventually become his wife. The witch agreed to his request, and she began to follow the thread.



The search led to a market, where a poor peasant woman with a baby in her arms was selling her wares. The witch stopped in front of this peasant, and asked her to stand up. She then beckoned the young emperor near and said, “Here ends your thread.” When he heard this, the emperor was furious, and thinking that the witch was playing a trick on him, he pushed the peasant woman aside as she still held her child in her arms. The fall caused a wound on the child’s forehead that it would wear forever. He ordered his guards to detain the witch and had her beheaded.

Many years later, it was time for the emperor to marry, and his court recommended that it was best for him to wed the daughter of a powerful general in the kingdom. He agreed and eventually the wedding day arrived. On that day, he saw his future wife’s face for the first time. When she arrived to the court she wore a white gown and a veil that covered her face completely. When he lifted it, he saw that her beautiful face was marred by an unusual scar on her forehead.

Annex 17





Hello everybody again!

I would like to say thank you to all of you, because my best friend is super happy now.

Hope all of you have enjoyed doing all the activities and learning interesting things about emotions.

Thank you very much!

Do not forget to smile always!

See you soon,

Perky

