

Lesson Plan

NEUROHEADWAY

Neuroscience Into Education

VANTAGE --- EDUCATION

Developing Lives. Accelerating Potential

Mental Acuity

MENTAL ACUITY

- Mental acuity is sharpness of the mind.
- Things considered in determining a person's mental acuity are memory, focus, concentration and understanding.



MENTAL ACUITY

- An elderly person with Alzheimer's has decreasing mental acuity and is less likely to remember exactly how or when something happened than they were when they were younger.
- There are a number of things you can do to increase your mental capacity.



ACTIVITY ONE - Mindfulness

- How do you cultivate mindfulness? One way is to meditate.
- A basic method is to focus your attention on your own breathing—a practice simply called “mindful breathing.” After setting aside time to practice mindful breathing, you’ll find it easier to focus attention on your breath in your daily life—an important skill to deal with stress, anxiety, and negative emotions, cool yourself down when your temper flares, and sharpen your ability to concentrate.



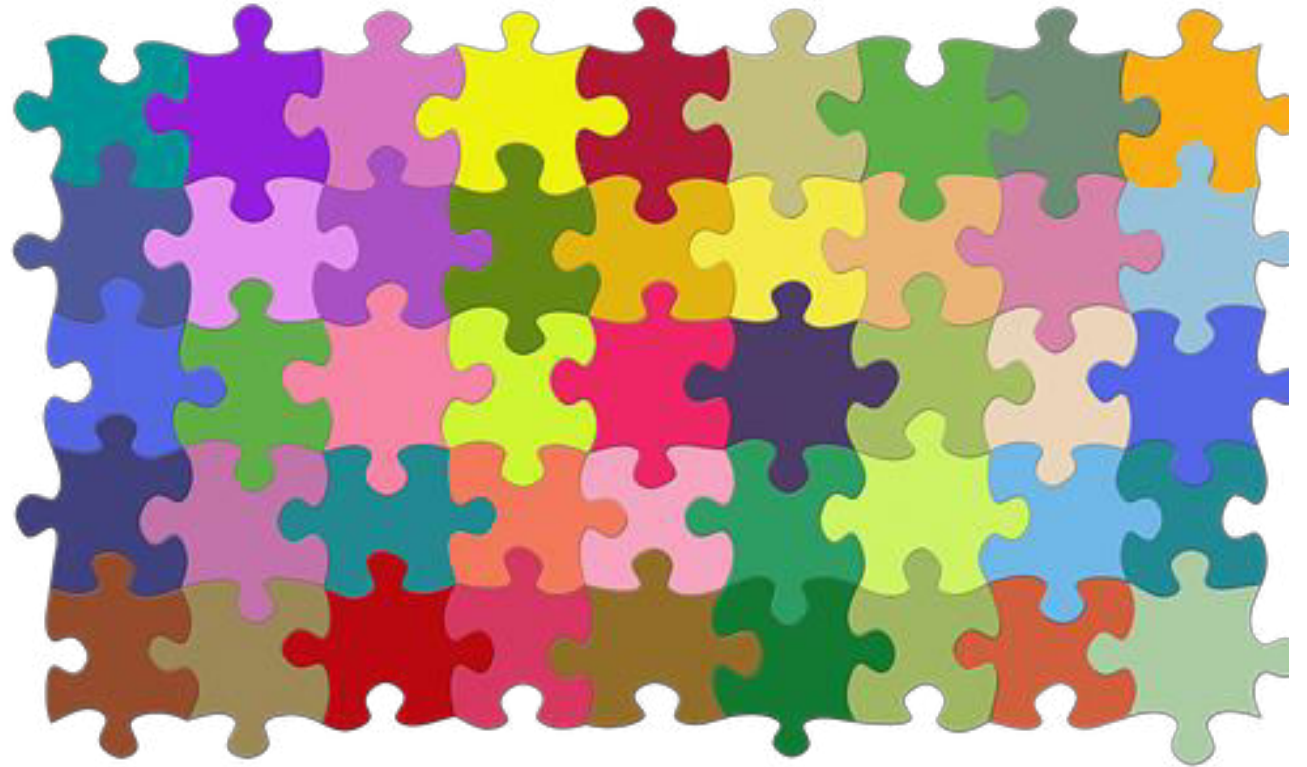
ACTIVITY ONE – Mindful Breathing

- **Find a relaxed, comfortable position.**
- **Tune into your breath.**
- **Be aware of your wandering mind.** If you start to think of other things, just bring your attention back to your breathing.
- **Try to practice for five minutes** at a time



ACTIVITY TWO – Mental Exercises

- Mental exercises are any task that stimulates your brain and makes you think and can range from Sudoku to crosswords to puzzles.
- Choose a puzzle to practice mental exercises



ACTIVITY THREE – Physical Exercises



- There are two types of exercise that can help you to grow more energy production in your brain and muscles. The first is to go for a walk every day for at least 20 minutes.

ACTIVITY THREE – Physical Exercises



- The second is to push yourself really hard for only 15 minutes once or twice a week. The most effective forms of this kind of exercise are short sprints.

ACTIVITY THREE – Physical Exercises



- Simply walking up a few flights of stairs is enough to physically change your brain for an hour, by providing dopamine, serotonin and adrenaline — the three key brain chemicals that keep you alert.

ACTIVITY THREE – Physical Exercises



- Now it's your turn!
- Stand up and practice whatever your environment allows you to do, safely and without interfering with others – it could be walking/running on the spot for five minutes.

PLENARY

- Which of the three activities did you enjoy most – set aside a short time each day to practice at least one of them.
- What else can we do to improve our brain function?

