

Supporting
Children aged 8–10
years' Emotional
Wellbeing Through
Mindfulness.



This Care Pack contains three sections with 11 foundational mindfulness topics to progress through with your child:



1. Recognising and Managing Emotions

- From Autopilot to Awareness
- Paying Attention to the Present Moment
- Recognising and Managing our Emotions
- The Senses
- Mindful Movement



2. Looking After Worry and Anxiety

- Handling Unhelpful Thoughts
- Looking After an Anxious Mind and Body
- Bouncing Back



3. Focusing on the Positives

- Gratitude and Savouring
- Choosing Optimism
- Growth Mindset

These three sections combine to deliver a comprehensive toolkit to assist in supporting emotional wellbeing with your child.

Recognising and Managing Emotions

This first module, Recognising and Managing Emotions, contains five foundational mindfulness topics to progress through with your child:



5 topics

- From Autopilot to Awareness
- Paying Attention to the Present Moment
- Recognising and Managing Our Emotions
- The Senses
- Mindful Movement



5 meditations



11 activities

We invite you to practise the following meditations with your child as a way of cultivating the ability to turn towards one's own experiences with care and kindness. Doing this together, and discussing the experience, is especially important if your child is struggling. Children thrive on caring and trusting relationships with others and you as their parent, carer or teacher have a vital role to play.

After sharing the mindfulness practice together, have a conversation about how the experience felt and how mindfulness can help us to recognise and manage our emotions. We then suggest inviting your child to choose an activity they wish to complete. While the activities are designed so they can be done without adult support, we do encourage continued conversation and collaboration as they complete them.







Listen to a mindfulness meditation. A good one for this topic is: Daily Mindfulness Guide.

Smiling Mind App Location:

- → All Programs
- → Kids & Youth
- 07 09 Year Olds
- Mindfulness 103 Awareness and Sounds
- Daily Mindfulness Guide 5 Minutes

Web App Link:

https://app.smilingmind.com.au/sessions/4/3/3/



Continue the conversation using one of the activity sheets on the following pages:

How am I feeling in this moment

This activity is all about bringing awareness to how feelings show up inside us each and every day.

I can see clearly now, the rain has gone

This activity will explore the concept of internal weather. Remember that your emotional storm clouds will pass and the sun comes out again.



Deepen the conversation by exploring these questions together. Remember, there are no wrong answers:

How do you make sure that thoughts and feelings don't push you around and be the boss of you?

Do you sometimes ask yourself "how am I feeling right now?"

How do you experience the mind and the body communicating with one another?

I can see clearly now, the rain has gone.



When our minds are full of difficult emotions and worries it can feel cloudy, even stormy. It can be very hard to be aware of the present moment. Create a landscape and place yourself within it, feeling focused and aware. Write words and phrases around the landscape describing how it feels to be fully in the moment.









Listen to a mindfulness meditation.

A good one for this topic is:

Daily Mindfulness Guide

- Body Scan.

Smiling Mind App Location:

- → All Programs
- → Kids & Youth
- → 07 09 Year Olds
- Mindfulness 201 Curiosity
- → Daily Mindfulness Guide Body Scan

Web App Link:

https://app.smilingmind.com.au/sessions/10/150/



Continue the conversation using the activity sheets on the following pages:

Coming back to the present moment

This activity is great for identifying and exploring some ways in which you can return to the present moment.

The Present Moment

Mindful walking as a way to pay attention to the present moment. This activity introduces the concept and encourages you to reflect on what helps you pay attention to the present moment.

Shining A Torch

This activity is about considering the link between a torch beam and attention, it helps you to think about how to be fully attentive.



Deepen the conversation by exploring these questions together. Remember, there are no wrong answers: What really works for you when it is time to pay attention very closely?

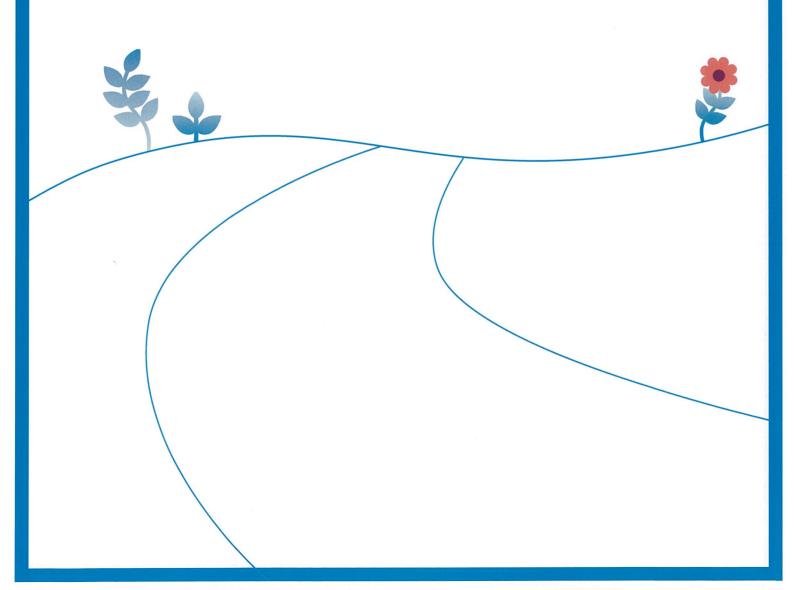
How do you feel the breath helps you to be in the present moment?

What is the best thing about really deep breaths for you?

The Present Moment.



When our mind wanders, we can find ourselves a long way from the present moment. Draw yourself on a wandering walk and reflect on what signs in your mind and body help you to pay attention and return to the here and now.



Recognising and Managing Our Emotions

We each experience a whole range of emotions every day; some are pleasant and some are not so pleasant. Most of us spend a great deal of time caught up in our emotions, particularly difficult ones. When this happens, our behaviour is on autopilot and we can feel stressed and overwhelmed. We may miss important information and find it hard to see situations clearly. When we practise mindfulness, we tune into our bodies and become aware of how we are feeling and how those feelings are impacting us. We also learn that emotions come and go and will not last forever. This assists us to feel less overwhelmed in the present moment and role model effective ways to manage emotions as they arise.



As children grow and develop, their awareness of feelings and emotions expands. Children communicate to us how they are feeling through facial expressions, gestures, actions, behaviours and words. For us all, when we are able to notice and express how we feel, we can begin to make decisions about how we might manage our emotions effectively.

Mindfulness helps us to develop the ability to observe our emotions with more openness and curiosity, and with less judgement. By being able to observe them more objectively, we tend to be less pushed around by them. We are also better placed to be there for those still learning to understand what a wide range of emotions feels like for them. Mindfulness allows us to switch off autopilot and get back into the driver's seat. It also enables us to see our emotions are more like passengers in the back seat rather than the one driving.



Our Internal Weather.



Have you ever felt more than one feeling at the same time? It can be confusing. Our emotions always have important information to tell us. Just like the weather, emotions are constantly changing. Write and draw some of the emotions you sometimes feel all at once.

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	2 2	



The Senses

We have five primary senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. Our senses are the way in which we interact with the world and learn about what is happening around us. Mindfulness gives us a pathway back to the present moment through our senses. For the children in our care, the senses are a wonderful way to feel grounded and in the here and now. We can model this for them by tuning into our own senses and engaging with the world in the present.



In the midst of a global pandemic, our senses are being over stimulated. We are literally bombarded with sensory information as we move through each day and many of us, and many of our children are feeling the effects of this overload.

Mindfulness helps us to focus on one thing at a time. When we do this via our senses, two important things happen: we develop our sensory awareness and we increase our capacity to pay attention. When we pay close attention, we are able to calm our mind and let go of distracting thoughts. We then have an opportunity to open ourselves up to the world around us without getting too caught up in our thoughts and emotions.



Seeing and Sensing.



Going to the beach switches on our senses. They come alive as the waves roll in. Imagine you are at the beach. What can you see, hear, smell, touch and taste? Write and draw about all that you sense at the beach.







Mindful Movement

For adults and children, one of the ways in which we can manage our emotions is to mindfully drop down out of our heads and begin to pay attention to the sensations in our bodies. Our bodies are multi-sensory and provide us with so much 'present moment' information. We feel better when we move because it is what we've been engineered to do. Young children are especially at ease when moving and being active.



Sometimes, we may find ourselves very caught up in our heads. It is especially at these times that mindful movement can help us to reconnect with our bodies and activate some of the wisdom they contain. Being in the present and paying attention to the felt sensations in our body is an ideal gateway to mindfulness.

COVID19 represents a new and uncertain challenge to us all and one which has possibly seen us do a lot of mental work. As we grapple with the rapid changes to our way of life, the restrictions to our movements and the palpable sense of loss around the world, it is not surprising many of us are experiencing a wide range of emotions.

Children look to us as role models and guides on how to navigate change and handle new and possibly unsettling experiences. It is important to remember that humans learn the most through observing what others humans do. Children intuitively know that trusted and caring adults are a source of wisdom. Getting out and about and moving together can be a highly effective way to create feelings of calm and connection. We have this unique and powerful opportunity to show the children in our care a positively oriented approach to change and uncertainty through mindful movement.



Moving Mindfully.

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Think of a time when you were using your whole body and feeling fantastic. Perhaps you were swimming or running or participating in a sports match. Draw yourself feeling great, moving mindfully and in the zone. Write some of the feelings you felt at the time.





Looking After Worry and Anxiety

This second section, Looking
After Worry and Anxiety, contains
three specific mindfulness topics
to progress through with your child
to assist them to turn towards the
positive, especially in times
of challenge:



3 topics

- Handling Unhelpful Thoughts
- Looking After an Anxious Mind and Body
- Bouncing Back



3 meditations



6 activities

We invite you to practise the following meditations with your child as a way of cultivating the ability to turn towards one's own experiences with care and kindness. Doing this together, and discussing the experience, is especially important if your child is struggling. Children thrive on caring and trusting relationships with others and you as their parent, carer or teacher have a vital role to play.

After sharing the mindfulness practice together, have a conversation about how the experience felt and how mindfulness can help us to manage anxious feelings. We then suggest inviting your child to choose an activity they wish to complete. While the activities are designed so they can be done without adult support, we do encourage continued conversation and collaboration as they complete them.





Listen to a mindfulness meditation.
A good one for this topic is:
The Wish Tree.

Smiling Mind App Location:

- → All Programs
- → Kids & Youth
- → 10 12 Year Olds
- → Mindfulness 107 A Wish For Me
- The Wish Tree

Web App Link:

https://app.smilingmind.com.au/sessions/24/144/144/



Continue the conversation using one of the activity sheets on the following pages:

My Magical Climbing Tree

Imagining the strength and stability of a tree in this activity assists you to think about being like a tree when feeling impacted by unhelpful thoughts and negative emotions.

Float Away

This activity gives children an opportunity to explore the concept of a leaf floating past as a useful strategy for letting worries go once they have acknowledged them.

Deepen the conversation by exploring these questions together. Remember, there are no wrong answers:

How can we help each other to stay in the moment and not worry too much about things that have happened in the past?

How can we help each other to stay in the moment and not worry too much about things that have not happened yet and might not even happen?

When we think of thoughts and feelings that upset us, what are some great ways you help them to gently move on so you can get back to what you were doing?



Float Away.

are floating past and just let them go. Draw and write what you are imagining right now. If you'd fresh water is flowing past you gently and calmly. Pop any worries you may have on leaves that Imagine sitting beside a beautiful creek. The sun is shining, the birds are singing and the cool like to, draw the leaves and write the worry words on them that you are letting go.





00

Listen to a mindfulness meditation. A good one for this topic is: My Internal Weather

Smiling Mind App Location:

- → All Programs
- → Kids & Youth
- → 07 09 Year Olds
- → Mindfulness 106 Thoughts & Feeling
- My Internal Weather

Web App Link:

https://app.smilingmind.com.au/sessions/7/17/17/



Continue the conversation using one of the activity sheets on the following pages:

Inside And Out

The concept of our emotions changing like the weather can be a useful comparison. This activity helps you to notice the many varieties of our internal weather and consider ways to be with your emotions at these times.

My Internal Weather Report

This activity gives you an opportunity to think about how your own internal weather can change without warning just like the real weather can. What can you learn in these moments?

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Deepen the conversation by exploring these questions together. Remember, there are no wrong answers:

How do things feel in your body when you are worried and uncertain?

Who and what can help you when worries show up and won't easily dissolve and move on?

How does it feel when you hand your worries to a trusted adult and you can happily get on with being a kid?

My Internal Weather Report



When we are finding things difficult, we can feel stormy on the inside. When things are going well, we can feel full of sunshine. Our internal weather report gives us important information. Write about a time when your internal weather helped you to understand your thoughts and emotions a little more clearly. Draw some of the weather you felt on the inside.









00

Listen to a mindfulness meditation.
A good one for this topic is:
Letting Go of the Day.

Smiling Mind App Location:

- → All Programs
- → Families
- → After School
- → Letting Go of the Day

Web App Link:

https://app.smilingmind.com.au/sessions/483/1377/2809/



Continue the conversation using one of the activity sheets on the following pages:

My Up and Down Learning Moments

This activity invites you to bring together words, drawings, colours and shapes to express the up and down moments in life and the learning that comes from these common experiences.

A Not So Great Day

Having difficult days is completely normal – everyone has them from time to time. This activity invites you to brainstorm a list of ideas to call upon when things are not going very well.

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Deepen the conversation by exploring these questions together. Remember, there are no wrong answers:

How do humans and other animals bounce back after a challenge so that they can keep going and enjoy the rest of their day?

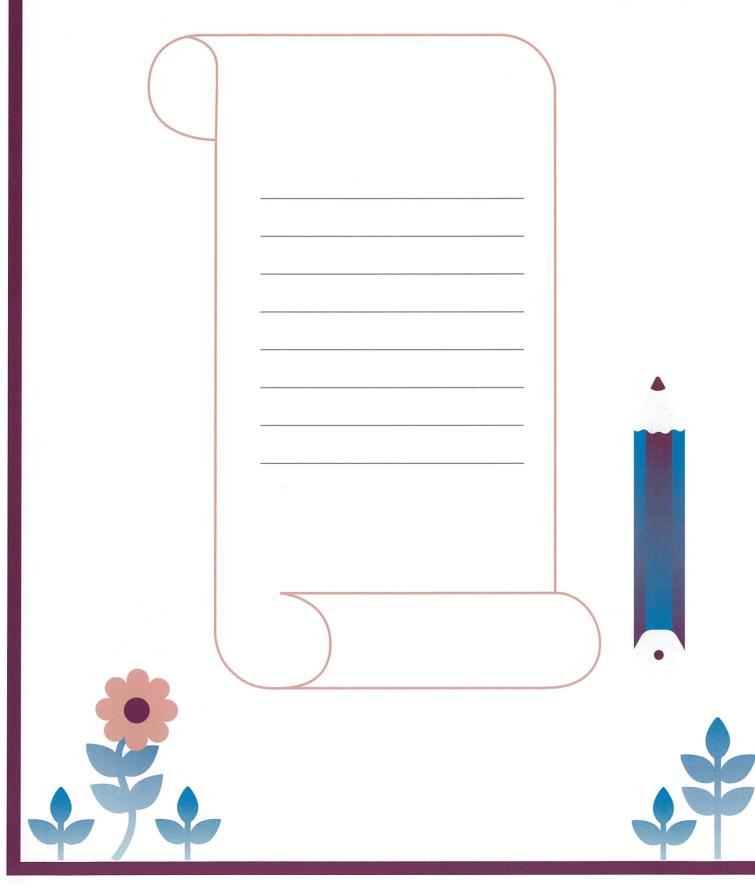
Can you remember a time when things have been hard and you have learned an important lesson? (if you can share a childhood experience of your own, this can be very helpful)

When your day is a bit up and down, what do you like to do to keep going and stay calm?

A Not So Great Day



Sometimes, we have one of those days where everything seems to fall apart. Getting through these days, understanding that everyone has them from time to time can help. Make a list of things you like to do to make yourself feel better after a not so great day. Who helps you on the way to feeling better?



Gratitude and Savouring

Taking in the good doesn't always come naturally. The human brain is wired like velcro for negative experiences and teflon (non-stick) for positive (that negativity bias again!). The stickiness of negative experiences was adaptive and has helped ensure our survival as a species. However, we no longer need to be on the constant look out for threats and danger, yet the hardwiring of our brains remains the same.



Gratitude is being thankful for the good things in our lives. When we appreciate people, places and experiences, we begin to pay more attention to what brings us joy.

Savouring is all about deliberately focusing on enjoyable experiences by tuning into them mindfully and with appreciation. We can savour looking forward to a special experience, as it is unfolding in the moment, or later as we recall it in our minds.

Cultivating gratitude and savouring are ways to velcro the positive. They can serve as an antidote to the natural tendency to take the positives in our lives for granted, and are essential elements of mindfulness. Mindfulness helps us to train our ability to focus on one thing at a time. This present moment awareness is a way to tune into our minds and bodies and become more aware of positive experiences in our lives. When we focus on feeling grateful, our bodies may fill with warm and happy emotions. Areas of the brain associated with connection and building relationships are activated. Savouring helps us to take in and really absorb the positive details of an experience.

As care-givers, we can model this by focusing our own attention on the positives in our lives. When we are grateful, feelings of joy can increase both within us, and in our immediate environment.

Children can be gently encouraged to practise gratitude and savouring on a daily basis. As they do this, they begin to take in the good and notice the little moments of joy that can be easy to miss.



Savouring and Gratitude ABC.



List something you are grateful for OR love to savour for every letter of the alphabet. If you get stuck, just get a dictionary out to give you some ideas.

Choosing Optimism

When we think optimistically, we feel hopeful and confident and often positively place ourselves in the future. Optimism is a future minded emotion that assists us to build a positive perspective about something that is yet to happen, even when we face challenges.



Research shows that when we are optimistic, we are more able to cope with stressful happenings in life. We tend to take a problem-solving approach and mindfully plan our way forward. Alongside this behaviour, we begin to see the best in a situation and move towards the positive in our thoughts, emotions and behaviours.

Optimism is a strength we can build and practise from early childhood onwards. Children in our care look to trusted adults and model what they see, hear and experience. Being aware of our own thoughts and emotions is therefore very important. When we model a positive outlook, we demonstrate an ability to mindfully navigate challenges effectively without becoming stuck in the negative implications. Children witness this perspective taking place and learn to consider the same positively oriented actions in their own lives.

Cultivating an optimistic outlook can begin with mindfulness. Through awareness and attention, we can begin to notice our thinking patterns. Acknowledging and supporting positive thoughts and acknowledging and then letting go of negative thoughts is a great place to start. This does not mean that we pay no attention to the negative or challenging aspects of life. Rather it is about gently unhooking ourselves from negative thought patterns in order to provide room for a more optimistic outlook.



Flip Side Optimism.



Can you think of a recent time with things did not go your way? What happened and how did you cope? Sometimes, we can flip our thinking like a pancake, to the positive and find solutions. Write and draw about a time when you were able to do this. Add thoughts and emotions to your drawing.



Growth Mindset

Growth Mindset is the belief that with effort, we can train our brains to grow and develop. Our brains are neuroplastic – able to develop and change across our lifespans. The more we challenge our brains, the more neural connections we make, leading to a smarter and stronger brain. Growth mindset helps create a love of learning and a resilience that supports positive development and wellbeing, and is an essential element of mindfulness.



When we practise mindfulness, we create much needed space within our minds to learn and grow. Combining mindfulness and growth mindset helps us to be open to possibilities and challenges. It enables us to cultivate what's referred to as a 'beginner's mind', a mind that is willing to see everything as if it was for the first time and is completely available to the moment. Think of a scientist making a new discovery, or a child examining a new insect or playing in puddles for the first time.

Focusing on what we don't know or can't do can become an unhelpful pattern of thinking. We may also find it challenging to do things in a new way. We call this a fixed mindset. Building a growth mindset does the opposite, expanding our awareness to how we can try things out and improve through learning, even if we make mistakes along the way.

We can model a growth mindset by focusing our own attention on the possibilities for growth and development in our own lives. When we demonstrate that we are able to learn from our mistakes and challenges, we show the children in our care that giving up is not productive and things improve with effort and persistence. A key attitude to model is to always aim to do our best.

Children can be gently encouraged to have an open mind on a daily basis. As they do this, they are more likely to persist and believe in themselves. Cultivating a growth mindset begins with mindfulness as we pay attention to the present moment with curiosity, tuning in to all it has to offer us.





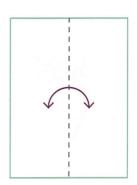


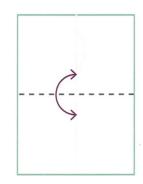


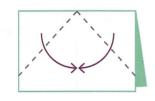
Origami Mindfulness.



Have you ever tried making origami? Origami is a wonderful growth mindset activity. You will need an A4 piece of paper to make this little boat shaped origami and may need an adult's help. Then do the Rock The Boat meditation together. Make more little boats together and see if they can float in water. Keep trying if they don't, you'll get there!







1.

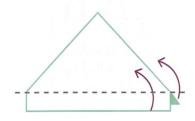
Fold in half

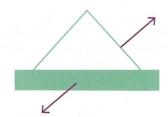


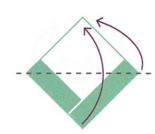
Fold in half again



Fold in corners







4.

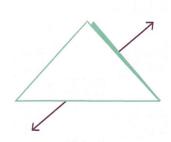
Fold up edges on both sides

5.

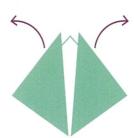
Pull the sides out and flatten

6.

Fold front and back layers up









4.

Pull sides apart and flatten



Pull top flaps outwards

6.

Squish the bottom and pull the sides up. Tada!



Smiling Mind

smilingmind.com.au

Smiling Mind is a not-forprofit organisation that works to make mindfulness meditation accessible to all.

Visit us online or download the free app to get started.



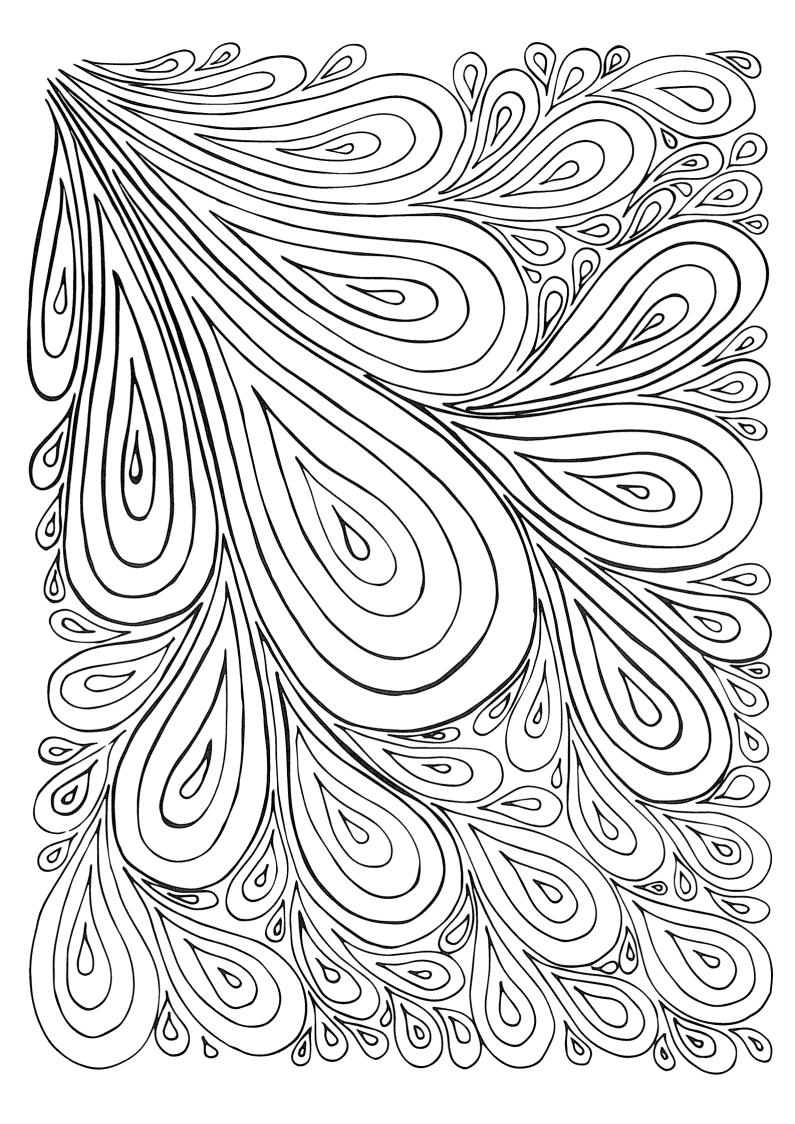


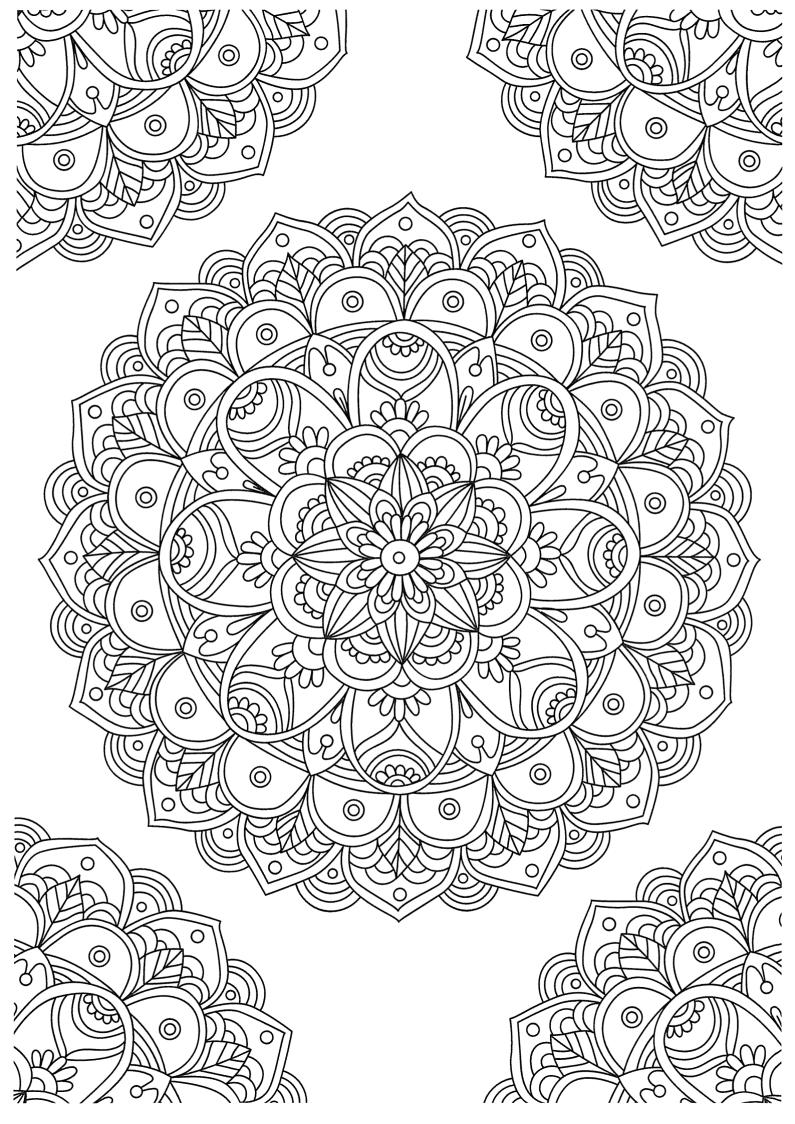


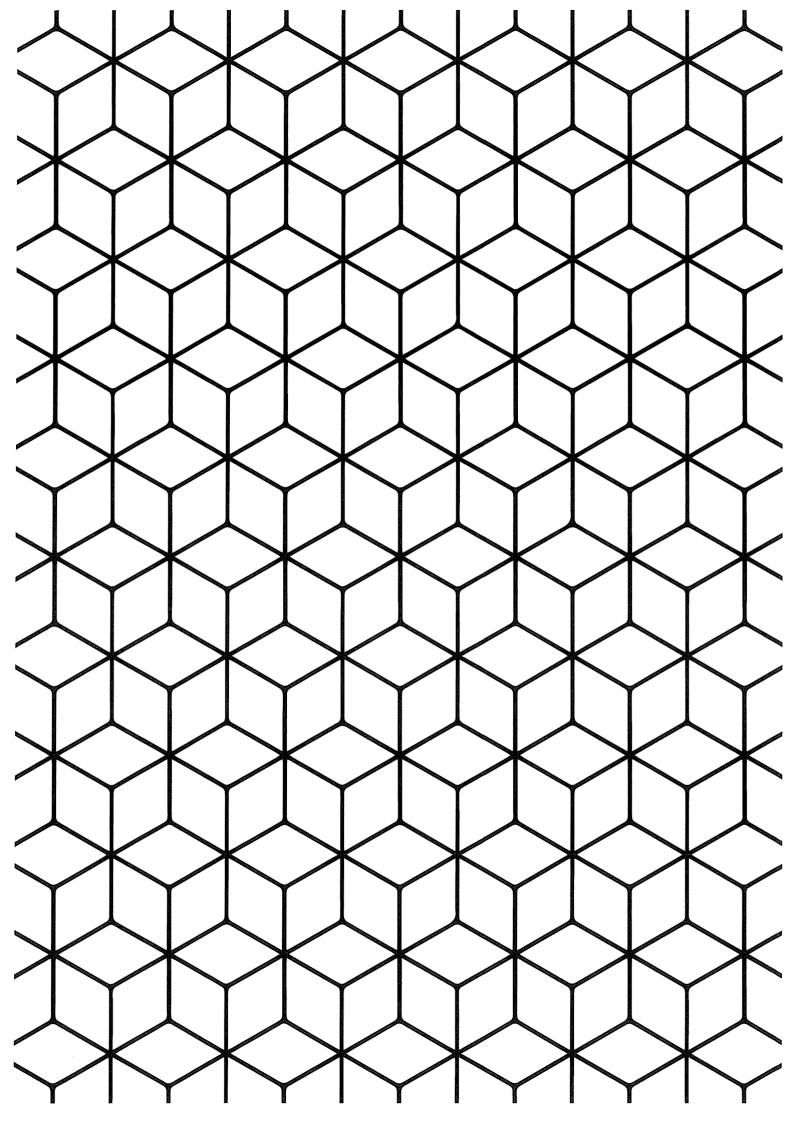












NSW Department of Education

Term 3, Week 10 Overview

Friday 17.09.21	ENGLISH Reading	If you have Netflix access, watch the Fantastic Mr Fox movie!	HANDING IN DAY	Have you returned?: - Fantastic Mr Fox book - science project - Week 10 pack - Writing Publishing pack		Keep safe over the break - see you back for our 10am Zoom on Monday 4th October
Thursday 16.09.21	ENGLISH Reading	MATHS Money PE Bowl in the River		MATHS Number of the Day Subtraction Strategies Volume & Capacity		PE Goalies VISUAL ART Poster
Wednesday 15.09.21	ENGLISH Reading	Writing - Publish Fact Section 3 & Ending With Impact		MATHS Number of the Day Addition Strategies Angles		PE Roll it Under PDH Quiz
Tuesday 14.09.21	ENGLISH Reading	Writing - Publish: Sizzling Start & Fact Sections 1 & 2		MATHS Number of the Day Subtraction Strategies Position		PE Scorcher Ball VISUAL ART Poster
Monday 13.09.21	ENGLISH Reading	Writing - Edit		MATHS Number of the Day Addition Strategies Chance		PE Catches Win Matches VISUAL ART Poster
	Morning		Break	Middle	Break	Affernoon

