

Stress & Your Brain



45-minutes

Guiding children towards an understanding of how their brain works

? Inquiry questions: How does our brain work? How does stress impact our brain?

Key Concepts:

- Our brain controls our feelings, thoughts, behaviour
- The parts of the brain that control innovative thinking, feelings and memory.

Essential Vocabulary:

- Head Brain
- Heart Brain
- Gut Brain



Materials:

- Printed Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Colouring pencils

Mindful CHECK-IN

Encourage

Help each student identify their feelings & emotions before the lesson.

Guiding questions could be:

- How are you feeling today?
- What kind of day have you been having so far?
- What has made you ___ (happy, sad, curious, inspired, etc.) today?

Engagement

Use familiar characters, stories or inspirational figures to engage leaders in the lesson activity & concepts.

VIDEO 1: Watch Dr. Shimi Kang's "[3 Brains?](#)" video.

VIDEO 2: Watch Dr. Dan Siegel's [Hand Model of the Brain](#) video.



10-minutes

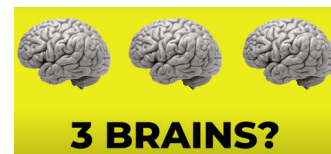


CQ Skills:

- Creativity
- Collaboration

SEL Skills:

- Emotional Awareness



Pause and think

Encourage students to inquire about the information the video is showing.

Grade 2 - 3: Will Follow along by creating their own hand model of the brain later in the lesson.

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OTHERS



Brainstorm



15-minutes

Real life issues, provide a tool, practice tool, & commit to act on the problem using tool in real life.

- **Engagement Question:** Ask a provoking open-ended questions to the group.
- Explain what it means to have *three brains*?
- What is our "head brain" responsible for? What does this brain control?
- How does our brain control our feelings and emotions?
- How can we keep our brain healthy, smart, and strong?



Mindset Tool:

Understanding how our brain works

The more we understand how our head brain works, we're better able to understand how we respond to certain situations as well as how we can use positive coping tools to overcome challenges, obstacles, or stressors.



Share

Encourage students to create dialogue with each other and share their ideas and knowledge with the group.

PLAY



20-minutes

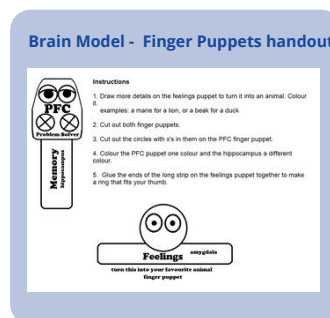
Practice: Guide leaders through hands-on activity to practice the mindset tool.



Activity: Self-reflection

GRADE 2 & 3 - USE THIS WORKSHEET GRADE 4-5 - USE THIS WORKSHEET

Goal: Your brain controls your body--often without you even thinking about it. Did you know it also controls your feelings? Let's learn about 3 parts of the brain that are involved in innovative thinking, feelings and memory.



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Ideas for Lesson Modifications & Extensions

MODIFICATIONS:

- Have leaders draw their head brain and use their creativity skills to describe how their brain helps them think, make decisions, retrieve memories, and control our emotions.
- Split lessons into two blocks to reinforce concepts & practice.

EXTENSIONS:

Extra communication: Encourage the leaders to teach others how their brain works. Using their finger puppets, pair the leaders together and have them walk them through the different parts of their brain.

Fast Finishers: Pose the questions and provide opportunities for the leaders to brainstorm:

- *Why is it important for us to understand how our brain works?*
- *How can we use this knowledge when we feel stressed or upset?*

BRAIN SCIENCE FACT



- Your **Prefrontal Cortex (PFC)** is the problem solver. It helps you think, play and create.
- Your **Amygdala** is for your strong feelings. It keeps you safe by taking over if you are stressed.
- Your **Hippocampus** works with your Amygdala to store your memories.
- We can manage our stress to keep our **PFCs** making careful decisions.

CQ Links



Personal & social communication about their feelings to further understand & find positive ways to care for themselves.



Leaders consider & analyze how their brain works, so they are better able to understand their emotions, feelings, and behaviours.



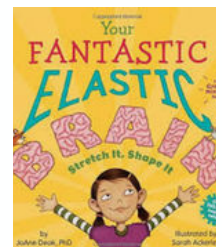
Leaders practice being innovative and tactile, as they use their hands to depict how our brains control our feelings, thinking patterns, and memory.

Literacy Links

What other resources can I use to reinforce this concept?

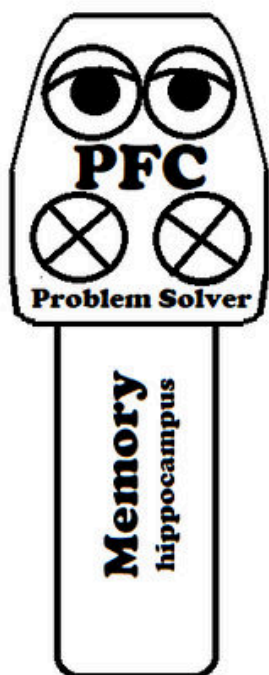
By: JoAnn Deak

Children will learn about the different parts of their brain while also learning the importance of making mistakes, failure, and how we stretch and shape our brains.



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Instructions

1. Draw more details on the feelings puppet to turn it into an animal. Colour it.
examples: a mane for a lion, or a beak for a duck
2. Cut out both finger puppets.
3. Cut out the circles with x's in them on the PFC finger puppet.
4. Colour the PFC puppet one colour and the hippocampus a different colour.
5. Glue the ends of the long strip on the feelings puppet together to make a ring that fits your thumb.



Print and distribute finger puppets handout to class. Follow instructions for putting the finger puppets together.

Objective: Leaders will create finger puppets to help them externalize their worries & fears to realize they are in control of them.

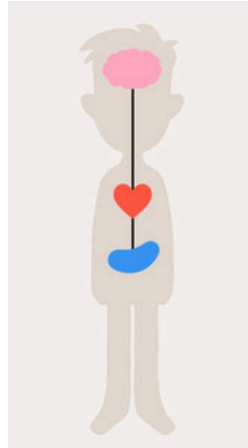
Remember, the PFC is your thinker, the Amygdala is for feelings, the Hippocampus is for memory. Have fun!

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"We have many centres of intelligence in our bodies that we can use to optimize our health, happiness and achievements."
- Dr. Shimi Kang

Key Concepts:



The _____ brain

which helps us _____

The _____ brain

which helps us _____

The _____ brain

which helps us _____

We cope better with stress when we remember to be like dolphins in a pod.

We like to _____, do things with _____, and relax through _____

Vocabulary:

- heart brain
- feel big feelings
- **OTHERS**
- **DOWNTIME**
- head brain
- think critically, create, communicate
- respond to fear & danger
- **PLAY**
- gut brain



Extension Activity for your Family: Which Brain are You In?

1. Teach your family about the three brains.
2. Cut the activities below into word strips.
3. Take turns picking a word strip & deciding which brain you would be in during each activity.

winning a game

worried about a test

feeling lonely

holding your pet

spending time in nature

dancing

crafting

talking to a friend

exercising

playing sports

feeling frustrated

listening to music