

Colouring



10 - 15 Minutes



Mental Health

OVERVIEW

This activity is designed to be used at the beginning or midway through a class that deals with emotionally challenging topics. Colouring is a meditative activity that allows our attention to flow away from ourselves and into our body and what it is doing. Additionally, it allows the participant to relax their brain and, potentially, work through worries and other intrusive thoughts while they perform the repetitive motion of colouring and focus on the page in front of them.

USEFUL FOR

- Creating inner calmness
- Provides a break from challenging material or from life outside of the class
- Allows students to recenter through performing a repetitive and soothing motion
- Introducing healthy coping strategies

MATERIALS

- Colouring pages - There are a number of excellent colouring books produced by Black, Indigenous, and racialised peoples. Here are some links that allow you to print individual pages. Make sure that you print a variety of pages for your students.
 - [Indigenous Words Colouring Pages](#) by the National Arts Centre
 - [What We Believe: A Black Lives Matter Principles Activity Book](#) by D.C. Area Educators for Social Justice
- Crayons, pencil crayons, markers – Professor should plan to bring materials that all can share

PROCEDURE

1. **Share** the purpose of the activity, orally, before you actually begin the exercise. For instance, “This is an activity that is meant to help students recharge and refocus their minds. Also, the activity is meant to bring calm in the face of challenging subject matter.” You might also mention that students can use colouring on their own as a way to help them with anxiety or big feelings.
2. **Give options.** Make sure that you provide a variety of colouring pages for your students.

3. **Foster a calm and relaxing environment.** Music may be played at a lower volume if you feel it may help students to relax and focus on colouring. Students may be allowed to chat with each other; however, it is important that the noise level stays low.
4. **Continue** the colouring as you move on to begin your lesson or lecture. Allowing the students to continue to colour, particularly as you move through challenging or emotionally laborious material, may help them to cope with and process what you are saying.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Students may want more information on how colouring specifically helps mental health and inner calmness. You may direct them to the following resources:

- [Colouring is good for your health](#) by the Mayo Clinic
- [3 reasons adult colouring can actually relax your brain](#) by Cleveland Clinic