

- Play ▶ 02 up to the part when the origins of mindfulness are mentioned (... *hundreds of years old*). Elicit or explain that this is the first point, which is given as an example. Then start the recording again for students to write down the other points.

Transcript

▶ 02

Recently, some education experts have become concerned by the concentration levels of students. In an effort to confront this problem, several schools and universities have started regular sessions in an exercise called 'mindfulness'.

The idea of mindfulness is nothing new. In fact, it's originally from Buddhist philosophies hundreds of years old. However, it has become popular in Western societies, not with religious connections, but as a way of improving health, both mentally and physically. Today, there are mindfulness sessions in many workplaces, and it's even practised in some schools with children as young as five.

But what does it involve? It can be summarized in three main ideas. Firstly, being mindful means living in the present moment, not regretting the past or worrying about the future. In other words, being aware of now. Secondly, with mindfulness you notice the thoughts going through your mind. You don't judge these thoughts as bad or wrong; you simply notice them. Thirdly, you pay attention to everything you are experiencing. You actually taste the food you eat; you feel how your body moves as you walk, run or swim.

So, what are the benefits of mindfulness? Well, there are many. It improves concentration and it reduces stress and depression. It has even been shown to boost the immune system. In other words, mindfulness can help us fight diseases and infections.

Admittedly, there have been some criticisms of mindfulness. Nothing is perfect. Some people have found that concentrating on their thoughts has not always been positive. After all, not all thoughts are nice, and sometimes they can be painful; they can make people uncomfortable. Then there are the people who find mindfulness too difficult. As with any skill, learning can be frustrating, especially at the beginning of the process.

Suggested answers

- 1 Its origins
- 2 Popularity in the West
- 3 What it is
- 4 Benefits
- 5 Criticism

5 Compare with a partner. Do you have the same points?

- Students compare their answers. Make sure they understand there are many different possible answers. There is no single correct answer here.
- Elicit answers, explaining a few different possibilities as necessary. There are always different possible ways of interpreting what the 'main points' of a text are. For example, students might include the three definitions of mindfulness in their answers. In the suggested answers, these are contained within the third point (*What it is*).

6 Use the information to write a sentence with the gist of the programme.

- Elicit possible answers, and write the below suggested answer on the board.
- You can explain how using a colon can also keep the gist sentence short and simple.

Suggested answer

The programme is about mindfulness: where it came from, its increasing popularity, what it is, its benefits and the criticism it has received.

Reflect

7  **Think about why listening for gist is important and how you can use it in your studies. Compare your ideas with a partner.**

- Ask students to make some notes on how listening for gist can be helpful in their studies and share them with their partner.
- Elicit answers, emphasizing the idea of seeing the bigger picture, which helps them to see the relevance of the details.