

## 5 March Lesson: Stress

**Goals:**

- Students will learn how stress impact their bodies
- Students will learn ways of reducing and managing stress.

**Audience:** 5<sup>th</sup> grade

**Materials:**

- Stress Visual Aid
- Stress Brainstorming Worksheet (page 3)

**Common Core Standards:**

- English Language Arts: Speaking and Listening: 5.2
  - Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

**Lesson:**

This month we're going to talk about stress. Raise your hand if you've ever felt stressed. What are some things that make you feel stressed?

- Having a big test coming up
- Going into a new school
- Having too many activities or homework
- Having a fight with a friend or family member
- Being bullied or hurt
- Seeing a scary movie or news report
- Having physical stress like hunger or sickness
- Having someone you love die or move away

Stress is a reaction. Who has ever felt nervous before taking a test or felt their heart racing when they got scared? This is called stress response or the fight or flight response. This reaction protected us. Humans would see a saber-toothed tiger or enemy and their bodies sped up their heart and breathing so they could either fight the tiger or run away.

Having this extra burst of energy can be helpful sometimes, like when you're in a race. However, if you feel really stressed or feel stressed too often or for too long, your body can suffer. Too much stress can lead to

- Feeling worn out and lacking energy
- Weakened immune system so you get sick more easily
- Feeling angry, anxious, or sad
- Eating when you're not hungry or not eating when you are

It is important to keep stress under control. By practicing stress-management skills on a regular basis, when stress does arise, you'll be able to relax and stay calm more easily. Can you think of some things you can do to keep stress under control?

1. Make sure you have time to relax every day – don't over schedule yourself with too many activities.
2. Get regular exercise and eat go foods.
3. Sleep 10 – 11 hours a night. While you sleep your body repairs, grows tissues, fights germs, and stores memories.
4. Do your best, but don't try to be perfect. It's not possible.
5. Ask for help! Family, friends, and teachers want to see you happy and successful. They may be able to help.

Here are some other ideas.

Believe in yourself and take steps to solve problems as they come up. For example, say you are worried that someone is mad at you. Try to talk to that person privately. Find out what's wrong and see what can be done so you both feel better.

Learn how to relax. By focusing on your breath and breathing slowly and deeply, your body will relax. Place your hands on your stomach and breathe in deeply. Did you feel your stomach expand? Let's try again. Try to fill your stomach with air as you slowly and deeply inhale. Now let's breathe deeply as a group. Sit up tall with your arms either gently at your sides or resting in your lap. Close your eyes. When I say inhale, inhale slowly and deeply. When I say exhale, exhale slowly. (Inhale for 2 or 3 seconds, exhale for 4 seconds. Repeat 3 to 4 times.) How does your body feel? Do you feel more relaxed? At peace?

Finally, pay attention to your thoughts. Do you tend to think optimistically that things will work out or pessimistically that things will go wrong? If you often think things will go badly, try keeping a log. Write down what you are worried about. Then brainstorm things you can do to make things more likely to be better. Then write down what actually happened.

For example, if you are worried it will take forever to get your homework done, estimate how long you think it will take to do it.

Some things you can do are

1. do your homework in a quiet place without distractions,
2. make sure you are rested so you can really focus on your homework,
3. get help from a parent, sibling, or friend if you run into problems.

Then time yourself and see how long it really takes.

Over time you'll become more accurate at judging how long it takes to do homework. When you know it really won't take forever, you'll feel less stress.

Let's practice. (Distribute the Stress Brainstorming Worksheet.) Write down something that is worrying you, if there is anything. Then think of a few things you could do to solve the problem. (Give them 3 minutes to do this. If there is time encourage them to share their ideas with a classmate.) Finish filling out the rest of the form at home.

So, to manage stress choose one or two new techniques and practice them over the next month. Hopefully this will result in a much more relaxed, less stressed you!

**Adapted from:** Kids Health [http://kidshealth.org/teen/your\\_mind/emotions/stress.html#](http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/emotions/stress.html#)

## Stress Brainstorming Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I am worried that:

Some things I can do to make things go better are

1)

2)

3)

I did the following:

The result was:

Would you like to speak with an adult at school about stress?

## Estrés Hoja Ideas

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

Me preocupa que:

Algunas cosas que puedo hacer para mejorar las cosas son:

1)

2)

3)

Hice lo siguiente:

El resultado fue:

¿Quieres hablar con un adulto en la escuela sobre el estrés?