



Grade 9 Sample Lesson Plan: Stress

SOLs

Identify signs, symptoms and sources of stress and anxiety at home, at school, and with peers.

Objectives/Goals

Students will identify the signs & symptoms of stress

Students will identify healthy coping strategies

Students will identify sources of help within the school building

Introduction

Step 1

Introduce the vocabulary below to ensure that students can talk about this topic using appropriate, health-literate language.

- Stress - The reaction of the body and mind to everyday challenges and demands.
- Eustress - A good form of stress that can increase our performance at a task and our general happiness and sense of well-being.
- Distress - Unpleasant feelings or emotions that impact your level of functioning.
- Stressor - Anything that causes you stress.
- Coping Strategy - A skill or action that helps an individual handle stress in a healthful, effective way.
- Social Support Network - A network of friends, family and peers that can provide you with a sense of belonging, an increased sense of self-worth and a feeling of security.

Step 2

Ask students to individually list the top 5 stressors in their life. Encourage them to rank them if they can.

Step 3

Get students into small groups (4/5 works best) and ask them to share their stressors with each other before compiling a shared top 5.

Step 4

Ask a group to share their top 5 and write this list on the board. Then ask other groups to add any other stressors not already listed. Conduct a class discussion to create the ultimate Top 5 for this class. (This can be compared with other classes that you teach)

Step 5

Ask students to consider what symptoms they might display when they are stressed. Again this can be done individually, then in small groups and then presented back to the class.

Step 6

Finally, ask students what their go-to strategies are for coping with stress. Again, this can be done individually, then in small groups and then presented back to the class. What you have now is an excellent list of teen coping strategies – created by teens for teens. From this list you can get creative and make posters, or record the suggestions for a podcast or a PSA. This can allow you to move into discussions on advocacy.

Step 7

Before your discussions on this topic end it is important that you ask students who they should go to within the building if they or a friend are finding their stress levels too unhealthy.

- Optional Video - TedTalk: How to make stress your friend

https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend?language=en

- This gives a positive spin on the healthy benefits of stress, as long as a balance and positive mindset is achieved.

Procedure*Step 1*

Using the teacher instructions work your way through the discussion questions. Students will work individually, in small groups and also as a class to create lists of stressors, stress symptoms, and healthy coping strategies.

Step 2

The associated TED talk looks at ways of embracing stress. You can prompt student discussions by asking them:

What did you learn from the TED talk?

What emotions did you feel during the TED talk?

What information from the TED talk do you think you could apply to your own life?

Step 3

By the end of this discussion your students will have compiled a great list of resources – stressors, symptoms and healthy coping strategies that can be used to raise awareness of

stress. You could create posters to display. You could use the list to then write a script that could in turn become a podcast, or PSA.

*Ensure that before you end this topic you ask your students where they can go if they or a friend are having trouble coping with stress.

References

Andrew Milne, New Trier High School

TedTalk: Kelly McGonigal - [How to make stress your friend](https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend?language=en)

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