

I Can't Stress This Enough

Stress Management

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Grade Level 7th – 8th Grade **Time Frame** 3-4 class period(s)

Essential Question

What effect does stress have on my health? How can I effectively manage stress?

Summary

This stress management lesson will challenge students' ideas about stress and its effects on the body. Students will participate in a high-pressure competitive activity, learn about good and bad stress, research and evaluate articles about stress, and create SMART goals for stress management. By the end of the lesson, students will be able to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy stress, evaluate the credibility of health information, and identify healthy behavior for managing stress. This lesson includes optional modifications for distance learning. Resources for use in Google Classroom are included.

Snapshot

Engage

Students play a high-pressure, low-stakes game to experience the physical symptoms of stress.

Explore

Students read about the body's physiological reactions to stress, then share and discuss their findings.

Explain

Students complete a table listing the physical indicators of stress and discuss scenarios in which they might experience these indicators.

Extend

Students evaluate high-quality, corroborating sources for authority, currency, and credibility.

Evaluate

Students create a SMART goal for dealing with stressful situations.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards for Health (Grades 6, 7, 8)

2.8.8: Explain the influence of personal values and beliefs on individual health practices and behaviors.
3.8.2: Access valid health information from home, school, and community.

Attachments

- CER Notetaking—I Can't Stress This Enough - Spanish.docx
- CER Notetaking—I Can't Stress This Enough - Spanish.pdf
- CER Notetaking—I Can't Stress This Enough.docx
- CER Notetaking—I Can't Stress This Enough.pdf
- Lesson Slides—I Can't Stress This Enough.pptx
- SMART Goal Organizer—I Can't Stress This Enough - Spanish.docx
- SMART Goal Organizer—I Can't Stress This Enough - Spanish.pdf
- SMART Goal Organizer—I Can't Stress This Enough.docx
- SMART Goal Organizer—I Can't Stress This Enough.pdf
- Stress Indicators—I Can't Stress This Enough - Spanish.docx
- Stress Indicators—I Can't Stress This Enough - Spanish.pdf
- Stress Indicators—I Can't Stress This Enough.docx
- Stress Indicators—I Can't Stress This Enough.pdf
- Website Evaluation Checklist—I Can't Stress This Enough - Spanish.docx
- Website Evaluation Checklist—I Can't Stress This Enough - Spanish.pdf
- Website Evaluation Checklist—I Can't Stress This Enough.docx
- Website Evaluation Checklist—I Can't Stress This Enough.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides
- Stress Indicators table (attached)
- CER Notetaking handout (attached)
- Website Evaluation Checklist handout (attached)
- SMART Goal Organizer handout (attached)
- Tournament materials (may include stackable cups, spoons and table tennis balls, or straws and tissue)
- Computers or devices with Internet access (one per student)
- Internet-connected and sound-enabled device to share video(s) with students

Engage

Use the attached **I Can't Stress This Enough lesson slides** to guide the lesson. Begin with **slides two** though **four,** introducing students to the lesson title, the essential questions, and the lesson objectives.

Go to **slide five**. As the students enter the room, use a Bell Ringer instructional strategy to have them make a claim based on this question: *Can stress be beneficial*? Ask students to write down these claims to be used in a later phase of the lesson.

Teacher's Note: Tournament Prep

Decide on a game that your class can play in teams to simulate the stress of competition. You may want to choose a cup stacking tournament, a spoon relay race, a straw/tissue relay, or anything else that you feel is appropriate for your class. Gather any materials prior to the class period and plan to prepare a competition bracket to show winners advancing. Try to create an atmosphere that is both exciting and competitive.

Go to **slide six.** Organize students into groups of four. Invite them to compete in a high-pressure activity that you have determined. Make sure a tournament-style bracket is displayed on the board to heighten the stakes of the competition. Most students will be familiar with cup stacking. See video links of cup stacking competitions here and here. These videos can be used for your own reference and to exhibit a high-level competitive atmosphere.

Add some pressure to your classroom atmosphere with your own play-by-play commentary and by encouraging students to cheer for their teammates to succeed. As the competition unfolds, make sure the atmosphere is simultaneously fun and competitive, as you cultivate pressure to succeed.

Optional Modification for Distance Learning

If you are modifying this lesson for online or distance learning, you can turn the above cup stacking tournament an activity that is accessible from home by inviting students to video record, time, and submit their attempts on a site such as Flip.

You may also choose to assign a different game that is timed online, such as one from the Word Games website. Students can still experience the stress of competition when competing against themselves for time. Download all attachments to use this lesson in Google Classroom.

After the activity, ask the groups to discuss what they were experiencing physically during the competition. Have the students categorize what they were feeling as good or bad (healthy vs. unhealthy). Ask the students to decide whether they felt the feelings were healthier or unhealthy and illustrate their decision by moving to opposite sides of the room—one side representing “the tournament was stressful in ways that made me feel unhealthy” and the other side being “the tournament was stressful in ways that were healthy and fun.” Some students may have difficulty deciding.

Wrap up the activity by asking the students if they believe that stress is good, harmful, or a little of both. This conversation is less about the results of the poll and more about getting students thinking about the “good/bad” dichotomy of stress.

Explore

Go to **slide seven.** In the same groups of four as before, invite students to use the Jigsaw strategy to read the online article, "Why Stress Can Be Good for You—No, Really." Share this link with your students (the full URL can also be found in the **Resources** section below.) Each group will read a different section of the article and become the "experts" on that part of the reading.

Teacher's Note: Recommended Reading Sections

To jigsaw the reading, consider dividing it in the following way: Group 1—start through "meaning-making instinct," Group 2—"The Pros of Stress" through "expected to do poorly," Group 3—"Four ways to embrace" through "life and less depression," Group 4—"What can happen when you embrace" through the end. If more than four groups are engaging in this activity, you may choose to have more than one group read the same section. Even if two groups cover the same part of the reading, the findings they share with the class may differ.

Optional Modification for Distance Learning

To make this activity accessible for distance learners, you can choose to have students read the entire article instead of using the Jigsaw strategy. Students should still use the Stop and Jot strategy to read the article. If you would like to utilize the Jigsaw strategy, you can invite students to share about the section of the reading they are assigned in a discussion board on a web-based platform (e.g., Google Classroom). You may choose for students to do any portion of this lesson that would be done collaboratively in class individually, or you may still allow them to collaborate using Google Suite applications (i.e., Google Docs, Google Slides) to which they can all contribute. Download all attachments to use this lesson in Google Classroom.

Tell the students that while they are reading they should make note of any vocabulary or concepts they don't understand and then clarify among their group (this is an informal use of the Stop and Jot strategy).

Go to **slide 8.** Have the students share their findings within their groups and come to a consensus about what the author is saying in their assigned section. After sufficient time, ask a representative from each group to share out a summary of their section with the entire class. Then, prompt the class to make connections to their own lives.

Optional: Integrating Technology

For online or distance learning, have the class collaborate to create a Google Slides presentation that summarizes the content of the entire article. To do so, create the shell of the presentation beforehand, labeling one slide for each group number. Share this document with the class. Each group should work on the assigned slide that corresponds with their group's reading to describe their findings, resulting in a complete presentation that summarizes the entire article.

Explain

Continue to **slide 9.** Begin by sharing a portion of the video, "How to Make Stress Your Friend." Follow the link here or in the slide presentation (the full URL is also listed in the **Resources** below.) Stop the video at the 7:29 mark.

Prompt the class to explain how the information they heard in the video or read in the article that can help them turn their physical responses to stress into a benefit.

Distribute the attached Stress Indicators table. Ask students to work independently to complete the table, following instructions on **slide 10**.

Teacher's Note: Handout Usage

Have students keep track of the Stress Indicators table. This handout will be used again later in the lesson.

After sufficient time has been allowed to complete the handout, move to **slide 11**. Ask students to discuss their work with an Elbow Partner.

Transition to a whole-class discussion where students can share their thoughts. Encourage the students to fill in any gaps in their table based on the information gleaned from the group.

Extend

Go to **slide 12.** Have students reassemble into the same groups of four that participated in the opening activities. Introduce the class to the Claim, Evidence, Reasoning (CER) strategy. Distribute the attached CER Notetaking handout and ask the groups to choose one group member's Bell Ringer claim from the Engage phase (in response to the question "*Can stress be beneficial?*"). Or, referencing multiple group members' responses, groups can formulate a new claim. Ask the groups to write their agreed-upon question in the space next to "Claim."

Invite students to gather evidence for their claim with a provided list of websites. Let students know they will first need to evaluate the reliability of these websites, as well as to corroborate information found in multiple sources.

Distribute copies of the attached Website Evaluation Checklist handout to each group. Engage the class in a discussion over each category in the checklist (Authority, Accuracy, Currency, Objectivity, and Purpose). Ask for volunteers to share ideas about why each area is necessary to determine the quality of a source.

Optional: Source Evaluation

If your students haven't had an opportunity in class to discuss how to evaluate sources, consider allowing extra time for discussion as it suits your classroom needs. It may be helpful to select one of the websites below as a model and work through the entire checklist as a class demonstration.

Go to **slide 13.** Have students select two or three articles from the list below to evaluate in their groups. Each group should complete one Website Evaluation Checklist for each source they evaluate. Ask students to keep in mind two overarching questions while reading: *"Is this a quality resource?"* and *"Does this resource give any evidence to support our claim?"* Have students use the CER Notetaking handout and the Website Evaluation Checklist to complete this activity.

- "3 Ways to Use Stress to Fuel Peak Performance"
- "How to Be Better at Stress"
- "Stress Can Be a Good Thing if You Know How to Use It"
- "Harnessing Stress for Good: The Power of Mindset"
- "Embracing Stress is More Important Than Reducing Stress, Stanford Psychologist Says"

Teacher's Note: Provided Sources

All of the websites provided above are trustworthy and reliable. The intention behind this activity is to avoid getting bogged down verifying each site and to instead reinforce the importance of considering the credibility of resources.

After the groups have completed the website evaluations, ask them to record evidence they found that supports their claim in the "Evidence" section of the CER Notetaking handout. They can use the "Reasoning" section to take notes for how the evidence they found supports their claim.

Ask students to, on a separate sheet of paper, write a three to four sentence conclusion that supports their claim, based on their evidence and reasoning notes, and incorporating the evidence and sources they found credible.

Evaluate

Using **slides 14–17**, review the SMART acronym and share an example of a SMART goal with the group.

Go to **slide 18.** Students will work independently to create a SMART goal for managing stress using all available resources from the lesson. Pass out the **SMART Goal Organizer handout** for students to complete. Have the students refer back to the Stress Indicators table that they completed earlier in the lesson as they work.

Optional: Integrating Technology with Canva

Consider having students use Canva to create a visual product showcasing their SMART goal. A basic Canva account is free, and students can sign up using an existing Google account.

Resources

- Crum, A., & Crum, T. (2015, September 3). "Stress can be a good thing if you know How to use it."
- K20 Center. (n.d.) Bell ringers and exit tickets. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/125
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Canva. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/612
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- K20 Center. (n.d.) Elbow partners. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/116
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Flip. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/1075
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Google classroom. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/628
- K20 Center. (n.d.) Jigsaw. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/179
- K20 Center. (n.d.) Stop and jot. Strategy. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/168
- International Challenge Finals | Wssa 2019 World Sport Stacking Championships - Wssc. (2019). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JIdJ0Y6XaMw
- McGonigal, K. (2013, September 4). "How to make stress your friend." https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=RcGyVTAoXEU
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- Speed Stacks Inc. (0AD). Speed stack set. https://www.speedstacks.com/store/retail/speed-stacks-sets/
- Teotonio, I. (2015, June 2). "Why stress can be good for you - no, really." https://www.thestar.com/life/2015/06/02/why-stress-can-be-good-for-you-no-really.html