

Grade 3

Health Objective 1.02

Define stress and demonstrate positive stress management strategies.

Language Arts Objective 5.04

Compose two or more paragraphs with: topic sentences, supporting details, appropriate, logical sequence and sufficient elaboration.

Materials Needed:

Balloons: one for each student
Large trash bag
Tape
The Math Curse by Jon Scieszka

Focus:

Begin a discussion of stress. Tell students that stress is a response. What causes that response is known as a stressor. Ask students to brainstorm a list of things that cause stress for them. Ask students to write one of those stressors on a small slip of paper and fold it several times. Place the paper with the stressor inside a balloon, blow up the balloon and tie it off at the top. Move around the room with a large trash bag instructing students to put their balloons into the bag. Once the balloons are in the bag, invite a volunteer from the class to come to the front of the class. Using masking tape, attach the bag to the waist of the student. Now ask the student to lean forward and try to tie their shoe. Explain that it is very difficult to function if our stressors are weighing us down.

Teacher Input:

The first step to managing stress is recognizing ones own signs and symptoms. Brainstorm with students a list of signs and symptoms that students might experience when they are in a stressful situation. Examples might include: muscle tightness, sweating, crying, headaches, etc. Explain to students that stress can be good (eustress) or bad (distress) but either way the event is still stressful because it elicits the same signs and symptoms.

Read The Math Curse. After reading the book ask students to discuss how stress affects our everyday lives. Brainstorm positive stress management strategies that the main character could have used to help manage her math anxiety.

Practice & Assessment:

Ask each student to write three paragraphs about a time or situation that has caused stress for them. After student have finished their paragraphs, place students into pairs. Each student should then read their story to their partner and together students decide on positive stress management strategies that each could use. Finally send students back to work alone and finish their story using at least one positive stress management technique.