

# Managing Stress and Anxiety: Classroom Lesson Plan

## Lesson Topic:

Identifying Stress and Anxiety and Planning to Manage It

## Lesson Objective:

Students will be able to identify sources of stress and anxiety and list methods for coping.

## Materials:

- Chart paper, divided into two columns
- Projector or other method to watch the movie

## Advanced Preparation:

- [Preview the video](#) before sharing it with your students [1:41].
- Divide chart paper into two columns. The first column should be titled "Stressful Situations", and the second should be "Methods to Manage Stress".

## Warm-up Activity:

1. Ensure students know the meaning of the words "stress" and "anxiety". If necessary, define these two words so that all students have a basic definition to work with.
2. Ask students to turn and talk to a partner about situations in their lives or from TV, the movies, or books that were stressful or

caused anxiety. Partners should work to come up with as many examples as possible in the allotted time.

3. Bring the class together to create a list of stressful or anxiety-producing situations. Write this list on the chart paper in the column titled, "Stressful Situations". For example, a student may share that she feels stressed the night before big projects are due.
4. Ask, "What makes all these situations stressful or anxiety-producing?"

### **View the Video: "Managing Stress and Anxiety"**

1. Tell students they will be watching the video titled, "Managing Stress and Anxiety".
2. Explain that the video presents role models talking about smart ways to handle stressful or anxiety-producing situations.
3. View the video together and ask the students to listen for ways that the role models suggest handling stressful situations.
4. View the video again; this time, invite students to formulate questions or comments about the ideas discussed in the video and to be prepared to discuss these after viewing the video.

### **Video Follow-up:**

1. Ask students to offer their questions, comments, reactions and responses to the video.
2. Work with students to create a class list of the role models' methods for dealing with stress and anxiety. Write this list on the chart paper in the column titled, "Methods to Manage Stress".
3. Then, ask students to select one situation from the "Stressful Situations" column to use as a short story writing prompt.

4. Each student will be creating a short story about a girl overcoming their chosen stressful situation. Students' stories should first describe the situation and the girl's feelings. They should then describe one or more solutions that the girl uses to overcome or lessen her feelings of stress or anxiety. Give students 10–15 minutes to complete this step.
5. Bring students together into small groups. Each student should share their story with the small group.
6. After all students have had a chance to share in their small group, ask the groups to discuss the following questions:
  - What methods for dealing with stress and anxiety did our characters use?
  - How did these methods help each character? How did they feel before and after?
  - Does everyone have feelings of stress or anxiety occasionally? How do you know?
  - Have you ever used any of these methods to handle stress or anxiety? Have you used any methods that the role models didn't mention? What happened?
7. Encourage students to take their stories home to share with friends and family. Tell them that their friends and family might have even more ideas about how to handle stress and anxiety.

**Extension Activities:**

1. Use the “Related Questions to Explore” as discussion springboards or writing prompts to help students further explore methods to manage stress and anxiety.
2. To encourage a home–school connection, ask students to collect additional ideas about managing stress from their friends and family. Add these new ideas to the class list of “Methods to Manage Stress”.
3. One role model told listeners that they should “pay themselves first” by doing things like taking a hot bath. Ask students to make a chart listing various ways that they could pay themselves first. Then, have students write a few words telling about how they might feel after completing each activity. A student’s chart might look like this:

Things I Can Do to “Pay Myself First”	How I Might Feel After...
Take a hot bath	Relaxed, sleepy
Eat a healthy breakfast	Full of energy, ready to take on the day
...	...

**Related Questions to Explore:**

- Do you have a support system to help you deal with stress and anxiety? How do these people help you when you’re feeling anxious?
- Do some people feel stressed and anxious more often than others? Explain your thinking.
- “Paying yourself first” and “making yourself a priority” are phrases that are often heard when talking about reducing stress and



anxiety. Why do you think there is a focus on you and your health when discussing stress?

- Do all people find the same situations stressful? For example, speaking in public is a commonly discussed stressful situation. Do you think everyone finds speaking in public to be stressful? Why or why not?
- How can learning to handle stress and anxiety now help you in your future career?



## Ideas for Future Lessons/Activities Related to Managing Stress and Anxiety:

1. What Do I Need to Do to Manage Stress? Exploring and Understanding Common Stress-Reducing Methods
2. Conducting and Recording Interviews about Stress Management with Real-Life Inspiring Women
3. What Would You Do? Stressful Scenarios for Students to Imagine and Discuss
4. Managing Stress and Anxiety in Action: Roleplaying Positive and Negative Methods of Handling Stress
5. What Stressed Me Out—Preschool to Now: Analyzing How Stressors Change With Age
6. Is Stress Always Bad? Looking at How Stress Can Lead to Resilience and Growth
7. Classifying Stress: Is It Really Worth Worrying About?