

Potential Integration:  
ELA

<b>Health</b>
2.MEH.1.5 Summarize the potential negative effects of stress on the body and mind.

**Materials:**

- Appendix A – Animal pictures
- Book: Don't Pop Your Cork on Mondays by Adolph Moser
- Appendix B – List of stressors

**Focus:**

Hang pictures of animals (Appendix A) on the board. Ask students to describe how each animal responds when it is stressed or upset. Under each picture write students' words that describe the animals actions when it is stressed (e.g. Lion – roars loudly, Bull – breaks things, Turtle – hides inside its shell, Ostrich – ignores what is going on around it by putting its head in the sand, Chimp – hangs on until it's over).

Ask students to think about which animal they most identify with. Explain that all people and animals respond to stress differently. Ask students what they think are stressors that upset animals?

**Statement of Objectives:**

Today's lesson is about stress and how it can affect both our bodies and minds. I'm going to teach you about stress busters that you can use when you start to feel like you have too much to handle.

**Teacher Input:**

Explain that stressors are things that happen to us that can cause stress in our body. They are a natural and normal part of life. Stress is our body's response to the things that happen to us and around us. These can be at home, at school or on the playground. Stress can be healthful or hurtful, depending on how we choose to respond to the stressors. Healthful stress is the type of stress that makes us run faster in a big game or celebrate positive life events (holidays, vacations, a new brother or sister etc.). Ask students to share any other examples of healthful stress that they can think of.

Hurtful stress is the type of stress that gives us butterflies in our stomachs and causes us to worry (e.g. big test, family troubles, divorce, getting in trouble etc.). Ask students to share any other examples of hurtful stress they can think of.

Read Don't Pop Your Cork on Mondays by Adolph Moser. Discuss how stress affects the body and warning signs. Ask students how stress can impact their lives if they do not manage it. What are some decisions they can make to deal with stress?

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**Assessment:**

How does stress feel in our bodies? Read a list of potential stressors (Appendix B) and ask students to explain how their body feels or responds (e.g. butterflies in the stomach, sweaty palms, muscles tense, anger, sadness, excitement, headaches, lose concentration, crying, unable to sleep, aggression, feeling tired or exhausted, irritable, restless or fidgety, upset stomach, grind teeth, back aches, face feels hot, heart beats faster, dry mouth or throat, loss of appetite, dizziness etc.).

When we are stressed it is helpful to have Stressbusters that can relieve the stress. Stressbusters are healthy habits that help us strengthen our physical bodies and responses to stress. Discuss examples of things that students can do to relieve stress? (e.g. take a walk, talk to a friend or family member, sing, dance, exercise, play a game, smile or laugh, care for your pet, read a book, eat a healthy meal, go for a bike ride, write in a journal / diary, draw, count your breaths, close their eyes and take 5 deep breaths, take a nap etc...)

On chart paper, record a list of Stressbusters to display in the classroom. Ask students to reference this list and choose an appropriate Stressbuster to try if they recognize they are feeling stressed about their schoolwork or something in the classroom. Have them draw a picture of the cause of the stress and how the stress buster would help.

**Closure:**

Your pictures are a great way to remember all of the stress busters that you can use whenever you start to feel stressed out.

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# Appendix A





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## Appendix B

1. Parents arguing
2. News on TV
3. Making new friends
4. Speaking in front of the class
5. EOGs starting in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
6. Dance recital
7. Playing in a soccer tournament
8. Being the new student in class
9. Getting a new brother/sister
10. Death of a close friend or family member
11. Being late
12. Brother or sister gets in trouble
13. Argument with a friend
14. Not understanding a math problem
15. Moving to a new town
16. Vacation
17. Parents divorce
18. Violence in your neighborhood
19. A broken arm or leg
20. Joining a new after school group
21. Parents don't listen to you
22. Not being good at basketball
23. Getting into trouble at school
24. Getting a bad grade on an assignment
25. Forgetting your homework