

Stress Management

Activity Answer Key

Goal

Help students see that stress is **not isolated—it stacks and interacts**, building the concept of *layered stress*.

Activity 1: Stress Input → Response Journal

Overview

There are no right or wrong answers. The purpose of this activity is to help students begin recognizing the connection between **what happens (input)** and **how their body and mind respond**.

What Parents Should Expect

Students may describe a wide range of stressors, such as:

- School-related (tests, assignments, deadlines)
- Social situations (friends, conversations, comparison)
- Environmental factors (noise, busy spaces, schedules)
- Physical inputs (lack of sleep, hunger, posture, screen time)

Their responses may include:

Physical responses

- Tightness (neck, shoulders, chest, stomach)
- Changes in breathing (shallow, faster)
- Increased heart rate
- Fatigue or restlessness

Mental/emotional responses

- Worry or racing thoughts
- Irritability or frustration
- Feeling overwhelmed or pressured
- Difficulty focusing

Key Concepts to Reinforce

- Stress follows a pattern: **input → response → (possible) recovery**

- The same situation can produce different responses on different days
- The body gives signals (tension, breathing, energy) that can be noticed and understood
- Awareness is the first step in learning how to manage stress

Common Student Insights

Students may begin to notice:

- Certain situations consistently trigger stress responses
- Their body reacts quickly, sometimes before they consciously think about it
- Some stress resolves quickly, while other stress lingers
- Physical and emotional responses often happen together

If a Student Struggles with the Activity

You can help by asking:

- “What happened right before you felt that way?”
- “Where did you feel it in your body?”
- “What were you thinking at the time?”
- “Did that feeling go away or stick around?”

Big Takeaway for Parents

This activity helps students understand that stress is not random—it follows patterns. By noticing these patterns, they begin developing awareness of how their body responds to different inputs, which is the foundation for learning how to manage stress effectively.

Activity 2: Stress Mapping (Layered Stress)

Overview

There are no “right” or “wrong” answers for this activity. The goal is to help students recognize that stress is often **layered**, meaning multiple inputs can combine to influence how the body responds.

What Parents Should Expect

Most students will identify more than one type of stress in a single situation. Common patterns include:

- **Mental/emotional + physical**
Example: Test anxiety + poor sleep → increased tension, difficulty focusing
- **Physical + environmental**
Example: Hunger + noisy classroom → irritability, distraction

- **Mental/emotional + social/environmental**

Example: Social pressure + time constraints → overwhelm, racing thoughts

- **Baseline physiologic + added stressor**

Example: Dehydration or fatigue + normal school demands → reduced resilience

Key Concepts to Reinforce

- Stress rarely comes from just one source—it is often **stacked**
- The body responds to the **total load**, not just a single event
- Small factors (sleep, hydration, posture, environment) can significantly influence stress response
- Awareness of patterns is the first step toward better stress management

Common Student Insights

Students may begin to notice:

- They feel more stressed when multiple factors are present at once
- Physical factors (sleep, food, posture) strongly influence emotional stress
- The same situation feels different depending on what else is going on

If a Student Struggles with the Activity

You can guide them by asking:

- “What else was happening around that time?”
- “How did your body feel?”
- “Were you tired, hungry, or distracted?”

The goal is not perfection, but helping them begin to see that stress is **multi-layered and interactive**, not just a single event.

Big Takeaway for Parents

This activity helps students understand that stress is not just about “what happened,” but about **how many things were happening at once and how the body responded**.

Pre-assessment Quiz: Stress Management 1

1. What best describes stress?

- A. A harmful condition that should always be avoided
- B. A disease caused by emotional problems

C. The body’s response to any demand for change

D. A condition that only affects the mind

2. Which of the following is an example of acute stress?

A. Ongoing family conflict

B. Long-term lack of sleep

C. A sudden loud noise

D. Chronic illness

3. Which type of stress continues over time without full recovery?

A. Acute stress

B. Physical stress

C. Environmental stress

D. Chronic stress

4. Which of the following is an example of physical stress?

A. Worrying about a test

B. Lack of sleep

C. Social pressure

D. Fear of failure

5. What is meant by environmental or shared stress?

A. Stress caused only by personal thoughts

B. Stress that affects only one individual

C. Stress from physical injury

D. Stress experienced by groups due to shared conditions

6. What is the key difference between managed and unmanaged stress?

A. The type of stress involved

B. Whether the body has time to recover

C. The person's age

D. The location where stress occurs

7. What happens in the body during a stress response?

A. Digestion speeds up immediately

B. The body shuts down completely

C. Heart rate and breathing increase

D. The body ignores the stress

8. What is true about real vs perceived stress?

A. The body only responds to real danger

B. Thoughts cannot trigger stress

C. The body responds differently to imagined stress

D. The body reacts similarly to real and perceived threats

9. Why do people respond differently to stress?

A. Everyone experiences stress the same way

B. Only physical health matters

C. Differences in genetics, experiences, and environment

D. Stress only depends on age

10. When does stress become a problem?

A. When it happens once

B. When it is completely avoided

C. When the body cannot recover and stays activated

D. When it is only physical