



## CURRICULUM GUIDE

### Stress Mess

### Activity 1

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*Below is suggested language and structure for curriculum activities.*

#### **Summary of Activity:**

After watching “Stress Mess,” students will experience a calming activity called a meditation drawing. By closing their eyes, taking deep breaths and drawing a meditation squiggle, students will explore a strategy designed to lessen their anxiety.

#### **Objective:**

Students will learn a strategy, meditation drawing, that may help to lessen their anxiety when they are stressed.

#### **Kid Prompt:**

In this episode of the Super D! Show, the gang shared strategies and activities that help them to destress. In this activity, let go of your stress by making a meditation drawing! First, close your eyes and take deep breaths. Notice how taking calming breaths makes you feel. Then start drawing a continuous scribble without lifting your marker from the page. Let the calm inside you direct your hand as you draw. After a while of drawing, look closely at the squiggle and wait for an image to emerge. Turn the squiggle into whatever you want; it can be something made up or something that people will recognize. Every time you look at your meditation drawing, let that calm feeling come back to you!

#### **Possible Discussion Questions:**

- Have you ever tried meditation as a way to lessen your stress?
- For those who have tried meditation, in what ways does guided meditation help you to manage stress?

#### **Activity Prompt/Procedure:**

- The teacher will facilitate the following sequence with a calm tone and a quiet voice. If possible, it may be helpful to dim the classroom lights, or to allow students to sit in a place of their choosing within the classroom.

- Have students close their eyes and take deep breaths for about a minute. Direct them to be mindful of the changes in their bodies as they calm down. During the duration of this activity, they should continue to take deep breaths and focus only on the drawing.
- Direct students to pick up a marker and start drawing a continuous squiggle without lifting their marker from the paper, almost like the calm inside of them is directing their hands. Allow students to draw a continuous squiggle for 2-5 minutes.
- Ask students to look at the squiggle and see if an image emerges. They can turn the paper side to side, or turn it over as they calmly examine the squiggle.
- Using other colors or materials, give students 2-5 minutes to turn the squiggle into whatever they want. The finished product can be a made up shape or an object or scene that people will recognize.

**Closure:**

- Possible reflection questions:
  - How did you feel during this activity?
  - In what ways might this activity help you if you are feeling stressed?
- If appropriate, students can share with a partner or with the class.

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## CURRICULUM GUIDE

### Stress Mess

### Activity 2

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*Below is suggested language and structure for curriculum activities.*

#### **Summary of Activity:**

Students will discuss what stresses them out at school and what it feels like to be stressed. By sharing with and listening to others, students will understand that it's okay to get stressed sometimes and that they are not alone in having this feeling.

#### **Objective:**

Students will build empathy towards themselves and others by discussing their connections to the themes of "Stress Mess."

#### **Kid Prompt:**

In this episode of the Super D! Show, Kaia has a panic attack because she is so overwhelmed by everything she has to do at school. Her friends, Dylan, Hudson, Ari, and Ellie remind her that she is not alone in feeling stressed sometimes. They share their experiences and what they like to do to de-stress.

During our discussion today, we are going to share our own experiences of feeling stressed out. What causes you to feel stressed at school or outside of school? What do you do to help yourself feel calmer?"

#### **Activity Prompt/Procedure:**

- To prepare for the discussion, give students 2-3 minutes to sketch a picture of themselves as they appear when they are stressed out.
- The teacher can introduce the discussion by commenting that everyone, both kids and adults, feels stressed out from time to time. It is okay to feel that way, and it can be very productive to learn what it feels like when you are stressed so you can make a plan to reduce that stress.
- The teacher can invite students to respond (with a partner or in a whole class meeting) to the following prompts.
  - What causes you to feel stressed at home or at school?
  - What does it feel like when you get stressed out? How does stress affect your

body? Your thoughts? Your behavior?

- What do you do to help yourself feel less stressed? Or, if you haven't tried a lot of stress reduction strategies yet, what do you want to try in the future?

**Closure:**

- Lightning Share: what is one idea you will take away from our discussion?

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## CURRICULUM GUIDE

### Stress Mess

### Activity 3

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*Below is suggested language and structure for curriculum activities.*

#### **Summary of Activity:**

Students will brainstorm ideas of strategies and/or activities that help them to lessen anxiety. In groups of 2 to 3, students will pick one idea (i.e. yoga, an exercise routine, a meditation) brainstormed by the class or demonstrated on the video and create a short routine to share. These will be videotaped and will be used as “brain breaks” in the classroom.

#### **Objective:**

Students will explore strategies they can use to lessen anxiety.

#### **Kid Prompt:**

In this episode of the Super D! Show, the gang share strategies and activities that help them to de-stress. What do you do to relieve anxiety when you feel stressed out? Do you do yoga, meditate, do an exercise routine, or just take deep, cleansing breaths? Choose your favorite way to de-stress and videotape a 1-3 minute routine to share with our Super d! Show community!

#### **Possible Discussion Questions:**

- What makes you worried or anxious at school?
- How do you feel when this happens?
- What are some strategies that we can use to lessen anxiety?
- Brainstorm and record possible ideas on the board or on chart paper.

#### **Activity Prompt/Procedure:**

- Teacher says, “Let’s think about all of the ideas we have brainstormed. There are a lot of them! For example...”
  - Yoga

- Meditation
- Exercise Routines
- Using a Stress Ball
- Tell students: “I am wondering if it would help us to practice these when we are not anxious so that they are more effective for when we are anxious.”
- Assign groups and direct the groups to pick one of the strategies the class brainstormed.
- Explain that the challenge will be to make a short de-stress routine (1-3 minutes) to share with our class. Let students know that the routines will be videotaped and used for ‘brain breaks’ in the classroom.

**Closure:**

- Possible reflection questions:
  - How do you feel when you use these strategies?
  - Which strategies do you think might work best for you?
  - How will these strategies help you be a more effective learner?

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## CURRICULUM GUIDE

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### Activity 4

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*Below is suggested language and structure for curriculum activities.*

#### **Summary of Activity:**

In “Stress Mess,” Kaya is very anxious. Luckily, the gang shared strategies and activities to help her de-stress. In this activity, students will practice mindfulness activities as presented in the book Meditation is an Open Sky by Whitney Stewart.

#### **Objective:**

Students will try some mindfulness activities in order to alleviate stress and anxiety, as well as to quiet their minds.

#### **Kid Prompt:**

In this episode of the Super D! Show, Kaya is very anxious. Luckily, the gang shared strategies and activities to help her de-stress. At the end of the episode, Kaya states “When I just focus on one thing at a time, like my breath, I feel a lot better!” Some people use mindfulness to achieve this goal of focusing on one thing at a time. Mindfulness is a powerful way to alleviate anxiety. Today, we will try some mindfulness activities from the book, Meditation is an Open Sky, by Whitney Stewart.

#### **Possible Discussion Questions:**

- Why do you think focusing on one thing at a time can help you to destress?
- During what parts of your day are you the most mindful?
- How do you feel about trying mindfulness strategies?

#### **Activity Prompt/Procedure:**

This text is a practical guide that details mindfulness strategies. As you read aloud to the students, pause together to try out strategies of your choice.

#### **Closure:**

- Possible reflection questions:
  - How did you feel during our mindfulness activities?
  - What was easy about mindfulness for you? What was more challenging?

- How can we use mindfulness to help us in our daily lives?

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