



Grade 4: Lesson 2

## Strategies to Manage Stress

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**Optional Mentor texts:** Wemberly Worried – Kevin Henkes  
Wilma Jean the Worry Machine – Julia Cook  
I Believe I Can – Grace Byers  
Olivier Cherche Sa Place – Cale Atkinson  
My Heart Fills With Happiness – Monique Gray Smith

**Time:** Lesson – 1 period  
Extension – 1 period

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS:

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**A1.** apply, to the best of their ability, a range of social-emotional learning skills as they acquire knowledge and skills in connection with the expectations in the Healthy Living strand for this grade.

**D3.** demonstrate the ability to make connections that relate to health and well-being – how their choices and behaviours affect both themselves and others, and how factors in the world around them affect their own and others' health and well-being.

### SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS:

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**A1.2** apply skills that help them to recognize sources of stress and to cope with challenges, including help-seeking behaviours, as they participate in learning experiences in health and physical education, in order to support the development of personal resilience.

**A1.5** apply skills that help them develop self-awareness and self-confidence as they participate in learning experiences in health and physical education, in order to support the development of a sense of identity and a sense of belonging.

**A1.6** apply skills that help them think critically and creatively as they participate in learning experiences in health and physical education, in order to support making connections, analysing, evaluating, problem solving, and decision making.

**D 3.3** demonstrate an understanding of different strategies they can use to manage stress in situations in which they have some control (e.g., peer relationships, maintaining life balance), as well as to adapt to challenging situations over which they have less immediate influence (e.g., moving to a new home, family stresses, environmental stresses).



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## LEARNING GOALS:

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We are learning...

- to define stress and what it could look like.
- to explore different strategies that students can use to manage stress.
- to recognize stress and learn strategies to help manage stress in different situations.

## SUCCESS CRITERIA:

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Consider using these questions to co-develop success criteria with your students:  
“How will we know we are achieving our learning goals? What will that look like/sound like?”

### Sample success criteria to help guide you

- I can determine different strategies to help me manage my stress.
- I can determine in which situations I have less control and know strategies that can help me adapt to that situation.

## MATERIALS & RESOURCES NEEDED:

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### Lesson

- Whiteboard/Chart paper – somewhere to record answers
- “Helpful Strategies When Managing Stress” Poster (provided)

### Extension

- “I Am Strong – My Stress Shield” activity (provided)
- Stress Shield exemplar (provided)
- Markers/Pencil Crayons

## CONSIDERATIONS:

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- Approaches to all instruction, including Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) skills, must be mediated through respectful conversations about students’ lived realities, inequity, bias, discrimination and harassment.
- Reflect about your classroom climate and decide whether all students will feel comfortable with the suggested Minds On activity. Consider alternative approaches that give students an opportunity to reflect privately or in more subtle ways, such as raising a finger rather than standing up. Also consider what approach will be most inclusive for the physical abilities in your classroom.



# Cross Curricular Expectations

NOTE: Language and Visual Art expectations are met when adding the optional extension task. If you are not using, then ignore.

Health & Physical Education	Language	The Arts
<p><b>Social Emotional Learning Skills – Specific Expectations</b></p> <p><b>Strand A</b></p> <p><b>A1.2</b> apply skills that help them to recognize sources of stress and to cope with challenges, including help-seeking behaviours, as they participate in learning experiences in health and physical education, in order to support the development of personal resilience.</p> <p><b>A1.5</b> apply skills that help them develop self-awareness and self-confidence as they participate in learning experiences in health and physical education, in order to support the development of a sense of identity and a sense of belonging.</p> <p><b>A1.6</b> apply skills that help them think critically and creatively as they participate in learning experiences in health and physical education, in order to support making connections, analysing, evaluating, problem solving, and decision making.</p>	<p><b>Reading – Specific Expectations</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Variety of Texts</b> Read a few different types of literary texts, graphic texts, and informational texts.</p> <p><b>1.4 Demonstrating Understanding</b> Demonstrate understanding of a text by retelling the story or restating information from the text, including the main idea.</p> <p><b>1.6 Extending Understanding</b> Extend understanding of texts by connecting the ideas in them to their own knowledge and experience, to other familiar texts, and to the world around them.</p> <p><b>1.8 Responding to and Evaluating Texts</b> Express personal thoughts and feelings about what has been read.</p> <p><b>Oral Communication – Specific Expectations</b></p> <p><b>1.5 Making Inferences/ Interpreting Texts</b> Use stated and implied information and ideas in oral texts, initially with support and direction, to make simple inferences and reasonable predictions.</p>	<p><b>Drama – Specific Expectations</b></p> <p><b>B1.2</b> Demonstrate an understanding of the element of character by adopting thoughts, feelings, and gestures relevant to the role being played</p> <p><b>Visual Arts – Specific Expectations</b></p> <p><b>D1.1</b> Create two- and three-dimensional works of art that express feelings and ideas inspired by personal experiences</p> <p><b>D1.3</b> Use elements of design in art works to communicate ideas, messages, and personal understandings</p> <p><b>D2.2</b> Explain how elements and principles of design are used to communicate meaning or understanding in their own and others’ art work</p> <p><b>D2.4</b> Identify and document their strengths, their interests, and areas for improvement as creators of art</p>
<p><b>Healthy Living – Specific Expectations</b></p> <p><b>Strand D</b></p> <p><b>D3.3</b> Demonstrate an understanding of different strategies they can use to manage stress in situations in which they have some control (e.g., peer relationships, maintaining life balance), as well as to adapt to challenging situations over which they have less immediate influence (e.g., moving to a new home, family stresses, environmental stresses).</p>		



# Lesson

## Minds On – 5 minutes

Has everyone heard the term – stress?

What does it mean to you?

Let's think about our bodies and how they can sometimes feel. We are going to do an activity together (Stand Up/Sit Down). Stand up if you have felt the way I am describing. Sit down if it does not apply to you. (See the considerations section for alternative approaches to this activity.)

Stand up if...(go one by one through the list)...sit down when it doesn't apply to you.

- you have had a headache that they think might have been caused by stress?
- felt like there's a brick in your stomach, as if you've done something wrong or something bad is going to happen?
- how about butterfly feelings in your stomach if you're excited?
- felt tense, fidgety and like you need to use the toilet a lot?
- felt nervous and worried for a long time?
- felt irritable and moody?
- had trouble sleeping?
- felt sad?
- felt like you're turning red or feel flushed?  
(Feel free to add any of your own)

Let students know that those are just a few ways that stress can affect your body as well as your emotions. It's important to keep in mind that talking about stress and difficult emotions can be hard for some students. Be aware of students who may be feeling overwhelmed and have a plan for how you will support students who may be vulnerable.

## Action Task – 25 minutes

**Suggested Teacher Prompt:** (*Ontario Curriculum, Health and Physical Education, 2019, p180*)

"Stress is something your body feels when you are worried or uncomfortable about something. It is a part of life, and there are times when stress can be helpful and give you energy or motivation.

Being aware of our thoughts and feelings helps us to decide what we can do to support ourselves at challenging times, both when we have some control or influence over what is causing the stress and when we don't.

Different strategies work in different situations. What are some strategies you might use in stressful situations where you have some control?" [SEL1.2]



**Possible Student answers:**

“Getting my school work done when I also have a lot of other things to do outside of school, like playing sports or spending time with my friends, is a situation where I may feel stressed but I have some control. I could get help with organizing my time and figuring out when to get things done. I could also talk with my teachers about how I’m feeling.”

**Suggested Teacher Prompt:** (*Ontario Curriculum, Health and Physical Education, 2019, p181*)

“Now, can you give an example of a situation where you might have less influence over what is creating the stress?” [SEL 1.6]

**Possible Student answers:**

“If I were feeling stressed and sad because my friend was moving, I wouldn’t be able to change what was happening, but I would be able to help myself by writing about my feelings in my journal or finding someone to talk with about my feelings. I might find a way to stay in touch with my friend. I would still feel sad, but all of these things could help me feel a bit better.”

**Suggested Teacher prompt:**

“Now we know we will all have stressful situations now and then. What we really have to learn are strategies that can help us deal with the stress.”

What are some ways you deal with stress? [1.2, 1.6]

Students answers will vary. Record their suggestions.

**Suggested Teacher prompt:**

“It’s important for us to think of healthy strategies when dealing with stress. It is also important to recognize that what might work for one person may not work for another. You need to find what works for you, more than one strategy can work. For example, I like to....when I feel stressed (give a example that works for you).”

Show students the “Helpful Strategies When Managing Stress Poster” and go over the different strategies. See if they can think of any others and record them.

**Activity:**

Put students into small groups or pairs and assign a strategy from the poster to each group. Have them role play a scene where they would portray the assigned strategy. Feel free to add the strategies that students came up with. [SEL 1.2, 1.6]. *Remind students that different strategies work for different people and that there is no one strategy that works for everyone.*

## Consolidate – 10 Minutes

Bring the class together and have them share their scenes with the class.

Discuss why these strategies can work and to have them give it a try when they are feeling stressed.



## Optional Extension Task – 40 minutes

1. **Choose** an optional Mentor Text that will best fit your needs.
2. **Read** text.
3. **Go** over the task with your students. The instructions attached will work for any of the activities.

### Task:

#### “I Am Strong – My Stress Shield” Art Activity

Have students make a shield that represents them and the coping strategies they would use when dealing with stress. Feel free to show the exemplar. This shield could be created in a variety of ways. Consider offering students a choice. A paper template is attached as a possible option.

### Overview of the books suggested:

#### WEMBERLY WORRIED

Wemberly worried about spilling her juice, about shrinking in the bathtub, even about snakes in the radiator. She worried morning, noon, and night. “Worry, worry, worry,” her family said. “Too much worry.” And Wemberly worried about one thing most of all: her first day of school. But when she meets a fellow worrywart in her class, Wemberly realizes that school is too much fun to waste time worrying!

#### WILMA JEAN THE WORRY MACHINE

Everyone feels fear, worry and apprehension from time to time, but when these feelings prevent a person from doing what he/she wants and/or needs to do, anxiety becomes a disability. This fun and humorous book addresses the problem of anxiety in a way that relates to children of all ages. It offers creative strategies for parents and teachers to use that can lessen the severity of student worries. The goal of the book is to give children the tools needed to feel more in control of the worries they feel.

#### I BELIEVE I CAN

From the New York Times bestselling creators of I Am Enough comes the empowering follow-up, I Believe I Can—an affirmation of every child’s inherent self-worth and potential. I Believe I Can is an empowering tribute to the limitless potential of children and youth of every background—all they need is to believe in themselves.



### **OLIVIER CERCHE SA PLACE**

Comme la plupart d'entre nous, Olivier cherche sa place. Pourtant, cette pièce de casse-tête ne semble aller nulle part. Comme il ne réussit pas à s'intégrer, il essaie de changer sa forme et sa couleur. Il entre ainsi dans le moule pendant un moment, mais réalise qu'il est inconfortable, et pas très heureux. Pire, il se fait rapidement démasquer par les autres : il n'est pas l'un des leurs. Il n'abandonne pas son exploration et trouve enfin un casse-tête dans lequel il a sa place. La preuve que tout finit toujours par s'emboîter. Cet album de Cale Atkinson est une magnifique métaphore sur la quête identitaire, sur le besoin de trouver sa place.

### **MY HEART FILLS WITH HAPPINESS**

The sun on your face. The smell of warm bannock baking in the oven. Holding the hand of someone you love. What fills your heart with happiness?

## **Suggested Mentor Texts and Guides**

### **WEMBERLY WORRIED**

#### ***Before Reading:***

Ask students if they have ever worried or stressed about something? What was the worry/stress? What did it feel like when you worried/stressed?

Let the students know that this is a story about a mouse name Wemberly who worries about everything. As I read, try and remember some of the things Wemberly worries about. We will be making a list of those things after we are done reading. Remind them that a stress is similar to a worry and that is what the character in the story will be feeling.

#### ***During Reading:***

Feel free to pause at any point to discuss what is happening in the story or check for understanding.

#### ***After Reading:***

Ask students to recall the different things that Wemberly worried about in the book. Record their responses.

Ask them if they ever have similar worries. Engage the class in a discussion about their worries.

What caused Wemberly's worries about school to go away?

Do they think that Wemberly will continue to worry?

Invite students to share their thoughts about how Wemberly can overcome her worries. Record their responses on chart paper.

Ask students if they can you make any connections to the story.

Assign the shield activity above on how they can overcome their worries. Students can choose several strategies.



## WILMA JEAN THE WORRY MACHINE

### *Before Reading (all texts):*

Ask students if they have ever stressed about something? What was the stress? What did it feel like when you stressed? Remind them that a stress is similar to a worry and that is what the character in the story will be feeling.

Let the students know that this is a story about a girl name Wilma Jean who worries about everything. As I read, try and remember some of the things Wilma Jean worries about. We will be making a list of those things after we are done reading.

### *During Reading:*

Feel free to pause at any point to discuss what is happening in the story or check for understanding.

### *After Reading:*

Explain that we are going to make a list like Wilma Jean's teacher did. Ask students to draw a line down the middle of the paper or on a student whiteboard. Label the left side as 'Worries'. Label the right side 'Unworries'. Give students several minutes to write down their worries on the left side. Provide an example on the board:

Worries/Stress	Unworries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being late for work</li><li>• Not finishing my day plans</li></ul>	

Ask for volunteers to share their worries with the class and to brainstorm solutions/unworries for the worries. Explain that sometimes we have worries we can't control, like the weather, or things we have less individual control over like systemic racism or poverty, so we need to use different strategies to deal with these worries. Explain that strategies are things that we can do to help us deal with difficult things. Give students an example: when I am scared or upset, I like to talk to a friend or read a book to calm down. Wilma Jean used a hat that she imagined can take away all her worries as her strategy.

Worries/Stress	Unworries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being late for work</li><li>• Not finishing my day plans</li></ul> <p><i>Student example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not doing well on a test</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Getting enough rest and set my alarm clock</li><li>• Make sure I do my 'homework' to make sure I'm prepared</li><li>• Make sure I bring home my books to study and ask my mom and dad for help</li></ul>

Assign the shield activity above on how they can overcome their worries. Students can choose several strategies.





## **I BELIEVE I CAN**

### ***Before Reading:***

Ask students if they have ever felt stress about something? What was the stress? What did it feel like when you stressed?

Let the students know that this is a story about positive affirmations to help us when we feel overwhelmed or stressed. It is important for us to remember what we are capable of – the fact that you can. Once you know who you are, then you will begin to tap into what you can do in this world and be amazing. Think about all the positive messages you hear as I read the book.

### ***During Reading:***

Feel free to pause at any point to discuss what is happening in the story or check for understanding.

### ***After Reading:***

Ask students about the messages they heard throughout the story. How can that help us when we are stressed? Make a list of the student responses.

Assign the shield activity above on how they can overcome their worries. Students should choose several strategies.

## **OLIVIER CHERCHE SA PLACE**

### ***Before Reading:***

What does the front cover of this book tell you about the story?

What do you predict will happen in this story?

### ***During Reading:***

Feel free to pause at any point to discuss what is happening in the story or check for understanding.

### ***After Reading:***

What is the author's message in this text?

What connections did you make to the story? Or did you make any additional connections to the story?

Why do you think I read this story to you if our topic is focused on healthy living?

Assign the shield activity above on how they can overcome their worries. Students should choose several strategies.



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## MY HEART FILLS WITH HAPPINESS

### *Before Reading:*

What does the front cover of this book tell you about the story?

What do you predict will happen in this story?

### *During Reading:*

Feel free to pause at any point to discuss what is happening in the story or check for understanding.

### *After Reading:*

What is the author's message in this text?

What connections did you make to the story? Or did you make any additional connections to the story?

Why do you think I read this story to you if our topic is focused on healthy living?

Assign the shield activity above on how they can overcome their worries. Students should choose several strategies.



# Helpful Strategies When Managing Stress Poster



**Talk to Someone**



**Physical Activity/  
Go for a Walk**



**Read**



**Write in a Journal**



**Play a Game**



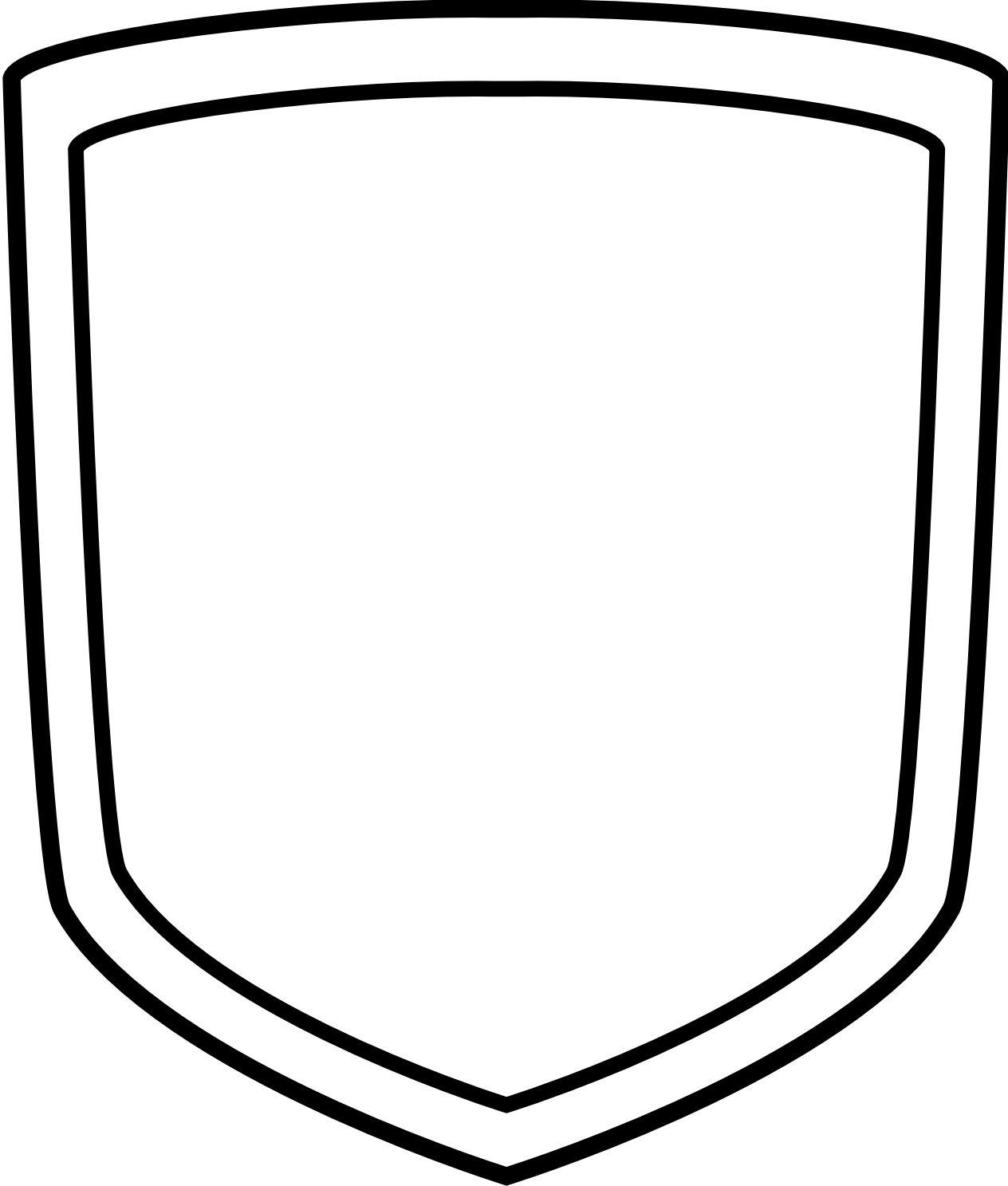
**Get Creative  
(colour/draw/bake)**



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# I AM STRONG – My Stress Shield

Create a Shield that will list your strategies when you are coping with stress. Feel free to divide your shield up into sections to list the strategies. Use pictures and words. Make sure you use colours that represent you. Make this your own!



# Example of Stress Shield

