

Coping With Stress and Frustration

Lesson Objective:

Students will learn how to identify stress and frustration in their lives, explore coping strategies, and use their personal strengths to manage these feelings effectively.

Materials Needed:



- Copy of Chapter 7: Coping with Stress and Frustration
- S.T.A.R. Strategy Poster
- Pencils and markers
- Personal Coping Plan
- Home Connection Letter

Introduction to the Topic (10 minutes)

Greeting Outline:

- Welcome the children and have them sit in a circle (if applicable)
- Begin by discussing the concept of stress and frustration. Ask students if they have ever felt overwhelmed by too many tasks or felt frustrated when something didn't go as planned.
- Explain that they will learn how to cope with these feelings, just like Ollie and his friends do in the chapter.

Greeting and Circle Time Teacher Script

1. Warm Welcome and Opening Discussion:

- "Good morning, everyone! Have you ever felt like there's too much going on, and it's hard to focus or stay calm? That's something we call stress, and it happens to everyone—even Ollie and his friends. Today, we'll read a chapter where they learn how to manage stress and frustration. Then, we'll talk about ways you can cope with these feelings too."
- Wait for the children to settle.

2. Discussion Starter

- "Who can share a time you might have felt stress?" Wait for a few children to respond and acknowledge their answers.
- "How did you deal with those feelings?"

Read the Chapter (15 minutes)

Story Time Outline:



- Read Chapter 7 aloud. Pause at key moments to engage students and make sure they are following the story.
- Ask questions during key parts of the story.

Story Time Teacher Script:

1. Prepare the Students for the Story:

- "We're going to read Chapter 7 from *Ollie's Superpower Squad- Fourth Grade Challenges*, where Ollie and his friends learn about stress and frustration and how to manage those challenging feelings."
- (Read the chapter aloud, pausing at key moments to ask questions and engage the children.)

2. Read the Chapter with Emphasis on Key Moments:

- **While reading**, pause during key moments.
- **Ask Questions:**
 - How does Buzz feel when he tries to juggle and think about his costume?
 - Why do you think Betty gets frustrated with her math project?
 - What emotions is Sammy feeling about his reading goal?
 - How does Harriet feel about her running goal?
 - What does Ollie notice about how his friends are feeling?
 - What advice does Grandma give about coping with stress?
 - How can taking a break help when you feel overwhelmed?
 - Why is it important to recognize your emotions before acting on them?
 - How does the group use their strengths to manage their stress?
 - What are some coping strategies the characters decide to try?

Chapter 7: Coping with Stress and Frustration

As Halloween approached, the excitement in the air grew thicker. Ollie, Harriet, Benny, Sammy, Buzz, and Betty were all preparing their costumes, making plans for trick-or-treating, and finishing up the last of their Halloween decorations. But with all the fun came an unexpected amount of stress.

Between school projects, homework, and their personal goals, the group found themselves feeling overwhelmed. What had started as a fun and festive time of year was now filled with moments of frustration and anxiety.

One afternoon after school, the friends gathered at the park, each of them carrying a bit more stress than they'd like to admit.

"I feel like I'm juggling a million things," Buzz said, flopping down on the grass. "I have so much homework, I'm still trying to learn how to juggle, and now I can't stop thinking about my costume."

Betty nodded, her forehead creased with worry. "I'm trying to finish my math project, but every time I sit down to work on it, I get so frustrated. I just want to give up."

Sammy, who was usually calm and collected, sighed. "Yeah, I've been feeling overwhelmed too. Between keeping up with my reading goal and trying to be ready for Halloween, it's hard to focus."

Harriet, always energetic, sat down next to them. "It feels like there's too much happening all at once. I'm usually good at staying active, but lately, it's like my brain can't keep up with everything I need to do."

Ollie, ever the thoughtful one, sat quietly, thinking about what they could do. He remembered what Grandma had told them about emotions, and how sometimes their brains made predictions that could lead to frustration. Maybe this was one of those times.

As if on cue, Grandma appeared, her warm smile easing some of the tension in the group. She could see that something was weighing on them.

"It looks like you're all feeling a little overwhelmed," she said gently. "What's going on?"

The friends all started talking at once, sharing their frustrations and the mounting stress they were feeling. It seemed like everything was piling up—school, goals, and the excitement of Halloween were all becoming too much to handle.

Grandma listened patiently and then spoke. "It sounds like you're all experiencing stress. And stress is a normal part of life, especially when there's a lot going on. But the important thing is learning how to cope with it."

"How do we do that?" Buzz asked, looking eager for a solution.

"Well," Grandma began, "one way to cope with stress is to recognize how your emotions are influencing how you feel about your tasks. Remember what we've learned from Lisa Feldman Barrett's theory of constructed emotion? Your brain is predicting that all these tasks are overwhelming because you're feeling stressed. But by using your strengths—and some new coping strategies—you can manage those feelings."

The group listened closely as Grandma explained.

"First," Grandma said, "when you're feeling overwhelmed, it's important to *stop* and take a breath. That helps calm your brain and body so you can think more clearly. Then, you can *break down* your tasks into smaller, more manageable pieces. It's easier to handle one thing at a time than to think about everything at once."

Betty, the problem-solver, perked up. "That makes sense! If I break my math project into smaller parts, I won't feel so frustrated."

"Exactly," Grandma smiled. "And next, it's important to remember that sometimes you need a break. Your brain can only handle so much at once, so giving yourself time to rest or do something fun—like working on your Halloween costume—can help recharge your energy."

Harriet, always full of energy, nodded. "So it's okay to take a break and come back to my running goals later?"

"Of course," Grandma said. "Your goals are important, but so is your well-being. Taking a break doesn't mean giving up—it means giving yourself time to reset so you can come back stronger."

Ollie, who had been quiet, added thoughtfully, "I think our strengths can help us cope too. Like, my strength is planning, so maybe I can make a schedule that includes breaks and time for fun, not just work."

Sammy agreed. "And I can use my strength of understanding emotions to help remind us to check in with how we're feeling. If we notice that we're getting too stressed, we can talk about it before it gets worse."

Buzz buzzed with excitement. "I could use my creativity to find fun ways to de-stress. Like making juggling practice part of my break instead of something that stresses me out."

"That's a great idea," Grandma said, her eyes twinkling. "And Benny, your strength is helping others stay balanced. You can remind everyone to stay focused but also to have fun."

Benny smiled. "Yeah, I can help everyone remember that it's okay to relax and enjoy the fun stuff too."

The group felt a weight lift as they realized they had the tools to manage their stress. By using their personal strengths and practicing some new coping skills, they could handle the pressure of their schoolwork, goals, and Halloween excitement.

As they continued talking, Ollie suggested they each try one of the strategies Grandma had shared. The friends agreed, feeling hopeful and ready to tackle their stress head-on.

For the rest of the afternoon, they practiced their new coping skills. Betty broke her math project into smaller tasks and felt more in control. Harriet took a break from her running goal and spent some time decorating her Halloween costume, feeling refreshed afterward. Buzz used his juggling practice as a fun way to de-stress, and Benny made sure to check in with everyone, keeping things balanced.

By the time they headed home, they felt more at peace. They knew that the coming weeks would still be busy, but they also knew that they had the skills—and the support of each other—to manage whatever came their way.

As they waved goodbye to Grandma and walked down the familiar path toward home, they felt a renewed sense of strength. They had learned that coping with stress wasn't about doing everything perfectly—it was about understanding how they were feeling, taking a breath, and using their strengths to move forward.

With Halloween just around the corner, they were ready to enjoy the fun, tackle their goals, and manage their emotions, one step at a time.

3. Post-Chapter Teacher Script

- **Teacher:** “As we can see, sometimes we have lots to deal with and it can seem overwhelming, just like Ollie and his friends, but Grandma really helps the gang put things into perspective and think about things in small, manageable steps..”

4. Post-Chapter Questions

Ask these questions to help students reflect on the chapter and connect it to their own experiences:

- Have you ever felt like Buzz or Betty when working on something hard?
- What do you do when you feel frustrated or stressed?
- Why is it important to take breaks when you're feeling overwhelmed?
- How can recognizing your emotions help you make better decisions?
- How can using your personal strengths help you manage stress?
- What does it mean to balance work and fun? How does this help with stress?
- What can you do if your emotions are getting in the way of reaching your goals?
- Can talking to someone, like Grandma, help when you're stressed?
- How can you use a strength like creativity or planning to make stress easier to manage?



- What are you going to try next time you feel stressed or frustrated?

Do an Activity (20 minutes)

- Students will create their own “Personal Coping Plan” by identifying situations that cause them stress, what emotions they feel in those moments, and what strategies they can use to manage those emotions.

Activity: Personal Coping Plan (20 minutes)

1. Introduce Activity

"Now that we've seen how Ollie and his friends used their strengths to cope with stress, it's time to think about how you can do the same. You'll each create a personal plan to help you deal with frustration or stress. Think about times when you feel overwhelmed, what emotions you experience, and what strategies can help."

2. Activity Instructions

- Hand out the "Personal Coping Plan" template to each student.
- Explain that they will work with a partner to fill out the plan

Example: Personal Coping Plan Worksheet

- What stresses you out?
 - List a situation where you feel stressed (e.g., homework, group projects, balancing school and fun).
- How do you feel when stressed?
 - Write down emotions (e.g., frustration, anxiety, distraction).
- What strengths can you use to help manage stress?
 - Think of one of your strengths (e.g., planning, creativity, problem-solving).
- What coping strategies can you try?
 - List strategies such as taking a break, talking to a friend, break tasks into smaller steps.



3. Reflection



"Great job creating your coping plans! Remember, stress and frustration happen to everyone, but by using the strategies you've learned, you can manage those feelings and keep moving forward with your goals."

Wrapping it Up

Wrap Up the Lesson (5 minutes)

1. Review and Reflection Overview:

- Ask a few students to share their personal coping strategies with the class. Reinforce the idea that recognizing stress is the first step toward managing it.
- Encourage students to keep their coping plan in their school binder or at home to remind them of their strategies.

Review and Reflection Teacher Script

1. Gather in a Circle for Reflection:

- "Let's all come back together in a circle."



"As I mentioned, stress can get the better of all of us at times and what stresses out one person, might not stress out someone else. However, we all have strengths that we can rely on and use to combat stressors. Knowing what might be stressful for us and planning ways to deal with that stress is the first step in dealing with it."

- Listen to a few responses and provide positive reinforcement.

2. Closing

- "Great job, everyone! I recommend you keep your Personal Coping Plan in a convenient place so that you can refer to it when you feel stressed."

Home Connection Letter

1. Sending Information Home:

- “Before you go, I have a letter for you to take home. It explains that we learned about stress, what stresses us out and ways we can combat it. I encourage you to share your Personal Coping Plan with your family so that they can offer support when you’re feeling stressed out.”
- Hand out the letters as the children prepare to leave.

Parent Letter

Sending Information Home:

- Provide each child with a letter to take home to their parents explaining the lesson.

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Today in class, we discussed how stress and frustration can sometimes get in the way of reaching personal goals. We read Chapter 7 of *Ollie's Superpower Squad*, where the characters learn how to cope with stress by using their personal strengths and strategies.

Your child has created a "Personal Coping Plan," where they identify situations that cause stress, how they feel in those moments, and strategies they can use to manage those feelings. We encourage you to discuss this plan with your child and support them in using these strategies at home.

By learning how to cope with stress, your child is building important life skills that will help them handle challenges both in and out of school.

Thank you for your continued support!

Best Regards,



Personal Coping Plan

Make a list of situations that stress you out.



- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



What emotions do you experience when feeling stressed?



What personal strengths can you use to help manage the stress?



What coping strategies can you try?
