

# Stress: Taking Control

**AIM**

To have students gain an understanding of how they can try to control the amount of stress in their lives and live a healthier life as a result.

**OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Respond to questions about their health.
- Conduct interview-style surveys in the classroom.
- Summarize and reflect on answers gathered in surveys.
- Design a weekly plan of action for reducing stress.

**TARGET GROUP**

Intermediate to high-level ESL students, level 5 to level 9  
Some of the activities in this lesson are suitable for level 5, but for the most part this lesson targets ESL learners at the advanced levels (levels 7 to 9). (For the purpose of this lesson, the target group levels range from 1 through 8, with the following guidelines: 1 = beginning, 5 = intermediate, 8 = advanced.) Lessons can also be adapted for 8<sup>th</sup>-through 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students on health and health education programs.

**LENGTH**

One 50-minute class period

**OVERVIEW**

In this lesson, students consider the health implications of living with stress and devise an action plan for reducing stress in their lives.

**ACTIVITIES**

1. Ask students to respond to the following questionnaire about their health and lifestyle and to write a brief paragraph summarizing how they would describe their health.
  - How many hours a day do you sit? Move?
  - Do you exercise?
  - How do you deal with stress?
  - Do you feel you are a healthy person?
  - For me to be healthy, I need to ...

Have them share their writing in small groups.

**2. Survey**

Moving around the classroom, students ask each other the questions in CHART B on ways to reduce stress in their lives. In small groups, students summarize and reflect on the data retrieved from their surveys, then report their findings to the class.

**Chart B**

Name	What do you do now to help with stress?	What could you change to make your life less stressful?

**3. Lifestyle Changes**

Suggest that students fill out a weekly planner on ways to release stress and improve their health.

Action Plan	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Exercise							
Diet/Food							
Fun things to do							

Share charts in small groups. Check on students' progress after one week to see if they are following their action plan.