

Getting Started With Managing Stress: Teacher Story

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Stress: Causes and Effects

After brainstorming things that caused us stress and writing the students' responses down (53 items!) I asked students to work in groups to organize the list of items into cause/effect columns. We did this first because there was a little confusion about what caused stress and what the effects of stress are when we brainstormed.

I had one recorder in each group make a master list, but in the end the students wanted their own copy. They marked the items with either a C or an E depending on whether it was cause or effect.

Control/No Control

Then I gave them all highlighting markers and asked them to go through the list again as a group, this time highlighting the the entries they could control in some way.

They worked through the paper identifying what they could control with a highlighter and left unmarked the entries they could not control. This ended up being great and created even more discussion because some people disagreed about what they could control and why (like child support - the men overwhelmingly said it was not in their control and refused to highlight that entry; the women had mixed opinions but generally said it was controllable.)

Integrating Math

Then I asked them to look at their paper and decide what percentage of the entries was highlighted. We made a line graph on the board and each student marked where on the grid their estimated percentages were. Everyone was surprised how many things they could control –most students ranged from 50%-70% of the entries in their control in some small or large way. (How resilient they were in their reasoning!) We wrapped up talking about taking control and doing the difficult things to move ourselves forward.