

CRITICAL THINKING EXERCISE 1.3

What's the Difference between Stress and Anxiety?

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CONCEPT

Students often confuse stress and anxiety because the physical and emotional response can be the same. This activity is designed to help students differentiate between the two terms.

MATERIAL

- [What's the Difference Between Stress and Anxiety: Knowing the difference can ensure you get the help you need](#) article from the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020)
- Student Worksheet *What's the Difference between Stress and Anxiety?*

INSTRUCTIONS

- This activity will take between 15-20 minutes, but may need to be adjusted to fit your particular classroom. It should take the students about 10 minutes to complete the assigned reading and worksheet. The discussion takes about 5-10 minutes.
- Before providing students with the worksheet, ask students the following questions:
 - » Is there a difference between stress and anxiety?
 - » What is anxiety?
 - » Do you use the terms anxiety and stress interchangeably?
 - » What are the physical responses of stress?
 - » What are the physical responses to anxiety?
 - » What are the causes of stress?
 - » What are the causes of anxiety?
 - » Can stress cause anxiety?
 - » Can anxiety cause stress?
- Have students read the American Psychological Association's article, [What's the Difference Between Stress and Anxiety: Knowing the difference can ensure you get the help you need](#) (APA, 2020).
- Have students complete the Worksheet, *What's the Difference between Stress and Anxiety?*
- Have students get into groups and review examples of when students experienced stress versus examples of when they experienced anxiety.
- As a class, discuss the worksheet and review any of the previous discussion questions.

REFERENCE

American Psychological Association. (2020). *What's the difference between stress and anxiety?* <https://www.apa.org/topics/stress/anxiety-difference>

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STRESS AND ANXIETY WORKSHEET

Directions: Read the article [What's the Difference between stress and anxiety?](#) (APA, 2020) and complete the following questions.

1. What is your best definition of stress?**2. What is your best definition of anxiety?****3. How are stress and anxiety similar?****4. How are stress and anxiety different?****5. Have you used these terms interchangeably in the past?**

6. Provide an example of a time you experienced stress?

Indicate how much you agree with this statement: I understand the difference between anxiety and stress.

1	2	3	4	5
100%, I've got it		Somewhat		Not so much