Stress in Stages

Trace how surroundings can shape a response to ongoing stress

P.5.4 "Identify environmental factors that lead to stress and Adaptation Syndrome as a reaction to stress."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Part 1 READ AND MARK: Underline two conditions in Elena's surroundings that could cause stress; circle one clue for each of three different response stages, then number the circled clues in time order.

When the Street Stays Awake

1 Stress is the body and mind's response to a demand. An environmental stressor is a condition in a person's surroundings that creates such a demand, rather than a thought or personality trait. For example, smoke from a wildfire may make outdoor work difficult. Psychologist Hans Selye described a common pattern of responses to ongoing stress called General Adaptation Syndrome, or GAS. In alarm, the body reacts quickly and becomes more alert. During resistance, a person continues functioning while the body stays on guard. If the demand lasts too long, exhaustion may follow, leaving fewer resources for coping. Exhaustion is possible, not guaranteed.

2 On a Monday in October, a city crew begins overnight repairs outside Elena's apartment. Trucks grind against the pavement, and work lights shine through her thin curtains. At midnight, a sharp clang wakes her. Her heart pounds, her muscles tighten, and she scans the room before realizing the sound came from the street. The next morning she feels tired but makes it to school. She tells her brother that the project will take several weeks. He suggests asking their aunt whether Elena can stay at her quieter apartment on school nights, but Elena decides to wait and see.

3 By the second week, Elena has learned to expect the sounds. She still flinches at sudden clangs, yet she completes homework and keeps going to morning classes. She starts wearing earplugs, though the lights still wake her sometimes. After several more weeks of broken sleep, she struggles to concentrate on a simple assignment and feels drained even on quiet afternoons. Her aunt offers a place to sleep, and Elena accepts. After several restful nights away from the repairs, she feels more focused. Her experience shows that surroundings can shape a stress response, and changing those surroundings can help it ease.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Part 2 QUESTIONS: Which two conditions outside Elena's apartment could act as environmental stressors?

2. When the clang first wakes Elena, which GAS stage best fits her response? Give one clue from the passage.

3. Which GAS stage best fits Elena's second week? Explain using what she does and how she feels.

4. After several more weeks, which GAS stage might Elena be entering? What change supports your answer?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Part 3 YOUR TURN: Choose an environmental stressor that is not in Elena's story or the wildfire example. In four sentences, describe an original situation and show alarm, resistance, and possible exhaustion in order, with one specific clue for each stage.

Stress in Stages

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Part 1 READ AND MARK: Underline two conditions in Elena's surroundings that could cause stress; circle one clue for each of three different response stages, then number the circled clues in time order. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Part 2 QUESTIONS: Which two conditions outside Elena's apartment could act as environmental stressors?	**The grinding or clanging from the overnight repairs and the work lights shining through her curtains.**
2	When the clang first wakes Elena, which GAS stage best fits her response? Give one clue from the passage.	**Alarm. Her heart pounds and her muscles tighten immediately after the clang.**
3	Which GAS stage best fits Elena's second week? Explain using what she does and how she feels.	**Resistance. She remains tense and flinches at clangs, but continues her homework and classes.**
4	After several more weeks, which GAS stage might Elena be entering? What change supports your answer?	**Exhaustion. She feels drained and has trouble concentrating on a simple assignment.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During a long heat wave, the cooling system at my school stops working. On the first hot day, my pulse quickens and I feel suddenly on edge, showing alarm. By the second week, I still feel stressed by the heat but keep up with classwork, showing resistance. After several more weeks, I feel worn out and find simple tasks harder, signs of possible exhaustion.

Accept other passage-supported clues for each stage. For Part 3, accept original scenarios with a condition in the surroundings and plausible clues in stage order; students should present exhaustion as a possibility, not an inevitable result.