

## READING COMPREHENSION ACTIVITY: ASK MARIA



Read a problem page letter. What is the best way of preventing stress?

Dear Maria:

I'm 17 years old and my life is causing me a lot of stress. I have to do homework, exam revision, extra science classes and football practice -and then I have to help my parents around the house! Being a teenager can't always be this tough, can it? Adults say you must enjoy your school days because they're the happiest days of your life, but these can't be the happiest days of my life! This isn't happiness- I'm really suffering! What should I do to cut down on the stress?

Mark G.

Dear Mark:

Being a teenager is stressful! Although adults romanticise their childhood, they must have given up things they wanted to do too. Here are four stress cures. Follow them, and you will be able to sort out your stress issues and live a busy but happy life.

<b>A.</b> You must exercise at least three times a week. You can do sports or work out, or even walk the dog...! Exercise relaxes your body and your brain, and relaxation helps you to prevent stress.	<b>B.</b> Take your mind off the stress by discovering new interests, like judo, sudoku or even fishing!	<b>C.</b> Remember: "you are what you eat" Burgers, chips and sugary food may be enjoyable, but this diet makes your body scream: "No! stop!" You should listen to your body, go without junk food, and feel the stress melt away!	<b>D.</b> Networking sites, emails, Twitter and texts might be useful, but you mustn't give up face to face communication with people. Laughing with your mates will make a big difference and probably the most effective form of stress prevention.
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**I. Match the headings (1-4) to the suggestions (A-D) in the text.**

1.  Take up something new.
2.  Don't put off seeing friends.
3.  Be active.
4.  Sort out your eating habits.

**II. Match the words from the text (1-8) to the definitions (a-h)**

1. <input type="text"/> stress	5. <input type="text"/> diet
2. <input type="text"/> tough	6. <input type="text"/> junk food
3. <input type="text"/> melt	7. <input type="text"/> romanticise
4. <input type="text"/> brain	8. <input type="text"/> mates

- a. make something seem more exciting or interesting than it really is.
- b. things you eat which are bad for you
- c. pressure and worry
- d. difficult
- e. friends
- f. organ inside the head
- g. become liquid
- h. all the food that you regularly eat.

**IV. Answer the questions:**

1. Why is Mark's life stressful?
2. How do parents remember their early years?
3. Why is exercise important?
4. Why might a new interest reduce stress?
5. What shouldn't you eat?
6. What's the problem with only emailing and texting friends?

