

**Read the letter from a Special Correspondent of the Times about the Crimean War.  
Find a word which means:**

- Die
- Unnoticed
- Smelling extremely unpleasant
- Help
- Famous or well known (in a bad way)

**Read the account of Florence Nightingale's experiences in a hospital during the Crimean war.**

1. What is Florence Nightingale viewpoint of the conditions at the hospital?

Read the advice sheet for nurses.

2. Name 5 things you can do to relax.
3. How does the advice sheet help nurses to fight against stress?

**Compare both texts**

4. What do the texts say about the difficulties of nursing? Focus on:
  - What is written;
  - How it is written.
5. A friend or relative is considering taking up a career in nursing. Write a letter giving your views of the situation.

A message came to me to prepare for 510 wounded on our side of the Hospital who were arriving from the dreadful affair of the 5th November from Balaklava, in which battle were 1763 wounded and 442 killed, besides 96 officers wounded and 38 killed. I always expected to end my Days as Hospital Matron, but I never expected to be Barrack Mistress. We had but half an hour's notice before they began landing the wounded. Between one and 9 o'clock we had the mattresses stuffed, sewn up, laid down—alas! only upon matting on the floor—the men washed and put to bed, and all their wounds dressed. I wish I had time. I would write you a letter dear to a surgeon's heart. I am as good as a Medical Times! But oh! you Gentlemen of England who sit at Home in all the well-earned satisfaction of your successful cases, can have little Idea from reading the newspapers of the Horror and Misery (in a Military Hospital) of operating upon these dying, exhausted men. A London Hospital is a Garden of Flowers to it.

We have our Quarters in one Tower of the Barrack, and all this fresh influx has been laid down between us and the Main Guard, in two Corridors, with a line of Beds down each side, just room for one person to pass between, and four wards. Yet in the midst of this appalling Horror (we are steeped up to our necks in blood) there is good, and I can truly say, like St. Peter, "It is good for us to be here"—though I doubt whether if St. Peter had been here, he would have said so. As I went my night-rounds among the newly wounded that first night, there was not one murmur, not one groan, the strictest discipline—the most absolute silence and quiet prevailed—only the steps of the Sentry—and I heard one man say, "I was dreaming of my friends at Home," and another said, "I was thinking of them." These poor fellows bear pain and mutilation with an unshrinking heroism which is really superhuman, and die, or are cut up without a complaint.

The wounded are now lying up to our very door, and we are landing 540 more from the Andes. I take rank in the Army as Brigadier General, because 40 British females, whom I have with me, are more difficult to manage than 4000 men. Let no lady come out here who is not used to fatigue and privation.... Every ten minutes an Orderly runs, and we have to go and cram lint into the wound till a Surgeon can be sent for, and stop the Bleeding as well as we can. In all our corridor, I think we have not an average of three Limbs per man. And there are two Ships more "loading" at the Crimea with wounded—(this is our Phraseology). Then come the operations, and a melancholy, not an encouraging List is this. They are all performed in the wards—no time to move them; one poor fellow exhausted with hæmorrhage, has his leg amputated as a last hope, and dies ten minutes after the Surgeon has left him. Almost before the breath has left his body it is sewn up in its blanket, and carried away and buried the same day. We have no room for Corpses in the Wards. The Surgeons pass on to the next, an excision of the shoulder-joint, beautifully performed and going on well. Ball lodged just in the head of the joint and fracture starred all round. The next poor fellow has two Stumps for arms, and the next has lost an arm and a leg. As for the Balls they go in where they like and come out where they like and do as much harm as they can in passing.

Stressed? Then read our expert guide to dealing with stress in nursing...

A nursing day involves a lot of stress. Whether working with gravely ill patients or helping families cope with the loss of a loved one after death, nurses have to be there for almost every imaginable situation.

It is a job that requires energy on many levels. Physically, the job can be demanding with high levels of physical exertion, culminating in many aches and pains. Mentally, you are required to be 'on the ball', making crucial decisions and answering questions from patients and relatives. Emotionally, the impact is felt when you empathise and help people in an environment where there is pain and sadness. Additionally, the work situation may be characterised by resource limits, poor staffing and organisational change, which all add to the energy expended.

## Work or Life?

Maintain a healthy work/life balance. Ask yourself "Do you live to work or work to live?" Use your free time to recharge your batteries. Remember to plan regular holidays and take them. Small treats like visits to the cinema or a meal at a restaurant will help you switch off and relax.

## Being aware

Be aware of negative thinking when stressed. Instead of thinking 'I must never make a mistake' think more realistically, for example 'I am doing the best I can in tough situations'. Challenge the internal pressures by turning the musts into preferences, from 'I must complete this today' to 'I'd like to complete it today and will do what I can'. If you identify what you can and can't control, then you can learn to accept external pressures. After all, you are not expected to be superhuman!

## Relax

Learning to relax is key to managing stress. This will tell your brain that the threat has gone and the 'fight or flight' response can be switched off. Think of the things that you enjoy that have a relaxing effect on you. For example, a long soak in the bath, a good book or a nature walk. If you treat yourself with more of these simple pleasures then you will find it easier to breathe. There are also meditation tapes available which can have a significant impact on learning relaxation skills. These skills can then be transferred to work situations when you feel tense. Relaxation will also help you sleep.

## Get physical

Exercise helps to combat stress levels. Exercise burns up the excess adrenaline and releases feel-good hormones. If you enjoy keeping fit and this area of your life has been squeezed then make time for this again. If you're not used to exercising start small with what you enjoy – swims or a gentle work out with a class,- and build up to a level that suits you. Joining a club or gym can lead to new social horizons and keep you motivated.

## Getting help

Counselling is often helpful as a way of giving yourself a regular space to reflect on the problem. You may decide to see a counsellor individually or you could join a group. Your workplace can provide access to a counsellor through their occupational health scheme.

Seeing your GP is not a sign of weakness, it can be a courageous first step towards recovery. Your doctor will advise you on the ways that can make it easier for you to reduce and manage stress. Medication can control symptoms enough to enable you to put into practice some of the methods already outlined.

## **Letter from Special Correspondent:**

Not only are the men kept, in some cases, for a week without the hand of a medical man coming near their wounds; not only are they left to expire in agony, unheeded and shaken off, though catching desperately at the surgeon whenever he makes his rounds through the fetid ship; but now, when they are placed in the spacious building, where we were led to believe that everything was ready which could ease their pain or facilitate their recovery, it is found that the commonest appliances of a workhouse sick-ward are wanting, and that the men must die through the medical staff of the British army having forgotten that old rags are necessary for the dressing of wounds. If Parliament were sitting, some notice would probably be taken of these facts, which are notorious and have excited much concern; as it is, it rests with the Government to make inquiries into the conduct of those who have so greatly neglected their duty.

## **Spot the embedded clauses below:**

This chocolate, which is only 20 calories a bar, tastes wonderful.

The oldest man in Texas, who worked for an insurance firm for 90 years and hasn't visited a doctor for forty years, is running for governor.

The supermodel, aged 26, has revealed she is getting married this summer.

I, and all my friends, agree.

## **Remove the embedded clauses below:**

A field-officer, whose name I have forgotten, being shot from his horse, requested to be lifted back into the saddle, and died shortly afterward. Captain McDougal, of Newark, Ohio, commanding a company in the 3d Ohio, who, with sword upraised, and cheering on his noble boys, received a fatal shot, actually stepped some eight or ten paces before falling. Colonel Loomis, of the celebrated Loomis Battery, who did such service in that engagement, says he saw no dead about him; yet there they lay, within a few feet of his battery. Loomis at one time sighted one of his favorite pieces, taking what he called a "fair, square, deliberate aim," and, sure enough, he knocked over the rebel gun, throwing it some feet in the air.

## Which answer has the greatest range of points:

- A.** The hospital conditions are very bad according to Florence. There are lots of horrible injuries to cope with and she has written the letter to show the people in England how bad the hospital conditions are. She has to deal with 540 men arriving last minute and has very little time to prepare for their arrival: “No time to move them”. Florence gives a sense of how horrible it is as she talks about all the injuries in a very graphic way “an average of three limbs per man” and she also describes a man who has “stumps for arms”.
- B.** Florence had little notice (“half an hour”) to prepare for the wounded. She also had little time for herself “wish I had time”. It is also horrific there “horror and misery”. The numbers of wounded are very high – “250 more”. Also the other British nurses are very “difficult to manage”. It is also extremely busy: “every 10 minutes...they have to cram lint” into wounds. There is “no room for the Corpses”. They also have to deal with the cruelties of war – the balls “go in where they like”, and see a range of awful injuries “leg amputated”.
- They have little time to prepare for the wounded;
  - She has little time during the day;
  - There is “Horror and Misery” there;
  - The number of wounded is very high – 540 wounded;
  - It is tiring – “fatigue”
  - It is very busy there “every ten minutes...”
  - Injuries are horrific – three limbs per man;
  - There is much death/despair “last hope”;
  - It is overcrowded “no room for Corpses”;
  - The injuries are random – “Balls...go in where they like”

## Which question is nearest, and why?

How does the article persuade you that nursing is a good job?

How does the article show that nursing is really stressful?

How does the article advise nurses about how to fight stress?

How do nurses feel about nursing?

A friend or relative is considering taking up a new career in nursing. Write a letter giving your views on the situation?

The letter below is to a cousin thinking of taking up teaching. Spot the key elements:

Hi Arthur,

I have just heard from Aunt Margaret that you are taking up teaching.

All I'd say is to think about this very carefully. I know you like to order people around (like the time when you led us up the wrong mountain on our last family holiday), but sometimes you get a bit impatient when people don't agree with you. You might well be faced with 30 teenagers who don't quite agree with your 'methods'. What will you do then?

You were a bit of a tearaway yourself when you were at school so I'm sure you will be able to relate to some of the naughty kids. However you've still got that famous temper of yours. I still remember that time when you broke your wrist thumping the wall after I beat you at Monopoly. You'll have to learn to control your emotions a little better if you're in the classroom!

**Exclamative**

**Abbreviation**

**Chatty language**

**Question**

**Parenthesis (brackets)**

**Anecdote**

**Shared experience**

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