

Before You Watch

Discussion Questions

The week prior to showing *Rafaela's Test*, let students know about the topic that the class will discuss in that class. Tell them that together as a class they will be talking about how the characters in the episode respond to the situations in the episode, and about the City services available to support all New Yorkers. Remind the Site Coordinator about the upcoming episode topic and ask about any additional resources the site may have available for community members dealing with mental health challenges. Contact the WSNYC Team with any additional questions.

1. This episode is called *Rafaela's Test*. It's about a woman named Rafaela and a test she has to take. Let's talk a little about tests. How do you prepare for a test?
2. Do tests make you nervous? Why or why not? In your opinion, what can make tests stressful?
3. What can you do to manage and reduce your stress when you have a test?
4. What can you do to manage stress in general?
5. Where can you go? Who can help?

In this episode, you will meet a character named Rafaela. Rafaela is dealing with anxiety about a test, and facing other difficult issues. Let's watch the show and see how Rafaela manages, and the support she receives.

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Discussion Questions

***Rafaela's Test* is a story about managing stress, anxiety and depression, and how to give and get support when someone struggles with these issues.**

Rafaela's Test may bring up strong emotions. Many people have had experience—either their own or the experience of someone they care about—with anxiety, depression or other mental health issues. When you show and discuss the episode, refer to the characters in the story and what they do to help manage their problems. Ask what the characters learn from their experiences. It may also be helpful to ask what the students learn from the characters.

What the Characters Learn: Rafaela

In the beginning, Rafaela says she is fine, but she is not doing well. She resists getting help. She thinks she can help herself, and she doesn't want to be a burden on her family.

- What makes her change and seek help? What do you think she learns from her experience? What do you learn from her experience?

What the Characters Learn: Rafaela's Mom

Early on in the story, Rafaela's mother is angry with Rafaela. She doesn't realize what Rafaela is going through. She doesn't know how to help her daughter. She loses her patience with her.

- Why do you think she is impatient with Rafaela? What makes her change? What does she do to help Rafaela? What does she learn from the experience? In what way is Rafaela an inspiration to her mother?

What the Characters Learn: Zara

Zara is very concerned about Rafaela. In the beginning, she tells Rafaela not to worry about the test. After Rafaela's panic attack, she visits her at Rafaela's home. She encourages her to seek help.

- What do you think she learns from the experience? What do you learn from Zara's actions?

What the Characters Learn: Martin

After Rafaela takes the test, she doesn't want to open the envelope. He's happy when he learns that she passed the test. But Rafaela doesn't seem happy. Martin reminds his mother about *NYC Well*.

- What do you think Martin learns from the story?

About *NYC Well*

- *NYC Well* is a free New York City program that helps people find support to help manage stress, depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues. *NYC Well* also helps people who are dealing with substance abuse.
- The *NYC Well* website—nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/—has useful tips to manage and reduce anxiety and stress.
- *NYC Well* is free and confidential. It's available day and night, you can call, and if you don't want to talk on the phone, you can text or chat. The phone number is: **1-888-NYC-WELL**. You can text "WELL" to: 65173
- *NYC Well* peer support specialists (peer counselors) are people who have experienced anxiety, depression or other mental health conditions, and their own experiences can help you get through difficult times.
- *NYC Well* peer support specialists and counselors can introduce some of the options that are available for you to deal with your mental and emotional challenges.
- *NYC Well* has interpreters in more than 200 languages.

