

PART 3: A Closer Look at Supplemental Activities

Supplemental Activities – This material covers a wide range of activities, usually designed to reinforce and give more “hands-on” application of the Core Lesson content. The type of activity is denoted by the following codes:

- **(W)** – indicates a writing activity
- **(O)** – indicates an oral activity
- **(C)** – indicates a comprehension/reading activity
- **(V)** – indicates a vocabulary activity

Supplemental activities vary considerably. Instructors should take a look at the activities for each Section and decide which ones are appropriate for their students. Many involve much more challenging medical terminology which has not been altered or made simpler, in an attempt to simulate “real world” experiences. Instructors and students may find that the Supplemental Activities provide some of the most engaging and worthwhile experiences in the Health Literacy Materials.

Instructions for how to conduct each Supplemental Activity appear **in the activity documents themselves**. Often there is an **Instructor Page** in addition to the worksheets and other materials for students.

As you might expect, many students will find writing activities to be very challenging. They may resist activities like keeping a log of their diet and physical exercise, filling in sample medical forms, or writing short answers to questions, particularly because of embarrassment over poor spelling skills. Instructors should put students at ease and let them know that correct spelling is not the focus of these activities.

Extended Reading Articles – Tips for Guided Reading

The Intermediate Health Literacy Materials include a number of extended reading articles on a variety of health-related topics, from understanding the role of pharmacists to examining the media’s messages about medications. The following tips for “Guided Reading” could apply to any text introduced in the classroom.

Research has shown that explicitly teaching students how to self-monitor their comprehension by asking themselves questions as they read results in improved comprehension. Instructors must consciously demonstrate and model these strategies, which good readers employ automatically.

- Always begin by discussing students’ **background experience and knowledge**.
- Always **provide an introduction** or “lead-in” to the article, which establishes the context.
- **Introduce key vocabulary** which will be essential for understanding the selection prior to reading.
- **Read the first paragraph or two aloud to students.** Their job is to listen, to visualize, and to retell. Say, “Tell me what these words make you picture.” Encourage

detail. Help students create a vivid mental picture of what is being discussed BEFORE it's their turn to read.

- Students take turns reading a paragraph or two aloud. The main focus here should be on students **getting the picture**. That means the instructor's job is to model asking questions AS YOU GO ALONG about what's being read, in order to be sure everyone is getting the gist of it. Explicitly teach students to stop periodically on their own and ask themselves, "Can I say what this is about in my own words?"
- The types of questions you ask should vary. Some will require straight **literal recall**. It's a recall question because the answer is right there in the text. For example, "Give me two examples of fruits or vegetables that are blue or purple." In factual articles, asking students to recap what's been discussed so far is also a form of recall question. Say, "So tell me what this is about?"
- Some questions should require students to think and **infer information**. The answer is likely there in the text but you have to put 2 + 2 together to get it, for example, "If someone gets a lot of urinary tract infections, what fruits and vegetables could you recommend they eat more of?" (Ones that are blue/purple or red, because these help maintain urinary tract health.)
- Some questions should require even more **critical thinking** on the students' part, such as, "If you were going to try to incorporate more 'color' in your diet, how would you go about doing that? What would you do first?"
- Sprinkle questions throughout the reading, but don't be obsessive about it. You don't want to overly disrupt the flow.
- In reference to not disrupting the flow, supply students with sight words and words that don't play fair phonetically if they get hung up on them. Some words may be perfectly regular phonetically, but if you haven't taught the concept yet then just supply the word so they can keep reading.
- Assist students as necessary in actively decoding words that DO follow general phonics principles taught to date. Don't be afraid to tell a student, "Use what you know." Ask leading questions to guide them to the answer, like "Is there a digraph in that word?" or "Do you see an r-controlled vowel?" or "Is there a suffix at the end?"
- Re-read sentences over which students have stumbled, so they can be heard correctly.
- Ask questions after reading each article to generate discussion. The main purpose of these questions is to encourage not only a **recap or summary of the main points** of the article, but to find out how the information might **relate to your students' personal experiences**.

To watch a Literacy Solutions' [Tutoring Techniques](#) video clip demonstrating a portion of a Guided Reading activity with a beginning level ABE student, [CLICK HERE](#)

Other Reading Options:

- For texts that are too difficult, **the instructor can read the remaining text aloud**, continuing to ask questions. Students should continue visualizing, making predictions, recapping and paraphrasing the article or story.
- **Students read silently** to themselves, up to an agreed-upon point. Discuss what's happened and ask a variety of questions before they continue, to make sure they are on track.
- The instructor and students **take turns reading aloud**. Throw a critical thinking curve ball at students and ask THEM to ask YOU comprehension questions after you have read. Model giving complete and thoughtful answers.
- Students can **take turns reading with a partner**, although you must have frequent agreed-upon stopping points so you can do a group comprehension check.
- Ask students to answer certain questions by raising a "True" or "False" card, or make "thumbs up if you agree; thumbs down if you disagree" statements. In this way everyone in the class can be engaged in answering the same question.
- Perhaps in the next lesson you will decide to **re-read the same article**. The reason for doing this is to focus on phrasing, fluency, and building students' self confidence through repetition and practice. Instructors may want to try **Echo Reading** for a paragraph or two. The instructor models reading aloud one sentence, which students "echo" by imitating the intonation and phrasing.

The following two tables provide a guide to instructors of all of the Supplemental Activities in the Intermediate Health Literacy Materials.

Activity Code	Supplemental Activity Name and Description	Health Literacy Section
W	Personal Health Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create a personalized contact list of health service providers and emergency numbers 	1
W	Extended Writing - Dental Checkup <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use picture prompts to generate a story 	2
W	Extended Writing – The Emergency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use picture prompts to generate a story 	2
W	Extended Writing – Talking to Health Professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use picture prompts to generate a story 	3
W	Beth Jones Patient Forms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a sample case history to fill in personal, medical and dental patient forms 	3
W	Personal Patient Forms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a complete set of medical forms for students to practice filling in at home 	3
W	Personal Physical Activity Logs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • record your weekly physical activities 	4
W	Personal Nutrition Log <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • record your weekly diet; perform a food group analysis and describe dietary changes you would like to make 	5
W, O	Personal Nutrition List <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • categorize foods eaten over the past 2 days as either healthy or unhealthy and discuss with a partner 	5
W	Personal Medications List <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • record all prescription and non-prescription medications and supplements 	6
W	Alcohol and Drug Use Case History Worksheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a sample case history to fill in form; includes a personal form for student to fill in at home 	6
W	Physical Activity Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a self-help analysis of one’s physical activities 	7
W	Getting Healthier Action Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fill in chart with a personal action plan to get healthier 	7

Activity Code	Supplemental Activity Name and Description	Health Literacy Section
V	Fill-In-The Blanks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> core vocabulary practice 	1
V	Matching Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> match definitions to core vocabulary terms 	1, 3, 5
V	Crossword Puzzle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> core vocabulary terms 	2
O	Role Play <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogs in which one partner tries to convince the other of the need to talk to a health professional 	2
O	Role Play – Answering a Health Professional’s Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 situational role plays in which patients must answer a health provider’s questions regarding their symptoms 	3
O	Paraphrasing: What Health Professionals Say - What Patients Hear <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 scenarios in which students paraphrase what they heard 	3
O	Asking Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 situational role plays in which patients are given complicated instructions/explanations and must ask for clarification 	3
O	Role Play – After a Visit to a Health Professional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 situational role plays in which a relative tries to convince the patient to adhere to follow-up health care instructions 	3
O	Nutrition Game <ul style="list-style-type: none"> students move around a simple board game reading the questions and answering them orally 	5
O	Problem Solving – What Do You Do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> poses a variety of situations/problems and asks students what they would do 	7
C, V, W	Extended Reading – “Pharmacists” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article with related vocabulary and writing activities 	1
C	Extended Reading Article – “Preventive Skin Care”	2
C, O	Emergency or Not? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> read scenarios; decide if they are emergencies and what action to take (answer key provided) 	2
C, W	Extended Reading – “Emergency Room Guidelines” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article with related writing activity 	2

Activity Code	Supplemental Activity Name and Description	Health Literacy Section
C	Extended Reading Article – “Following Emergency Room Instructions”	3
C	Extended Reading Article – “Making Health Care Safer”	3
C, V	Extended Reading Article – “Physical Activity and Health” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article with related vocabulary activity 	4
C	Extended Reading Article – “Choose the Colors of Health”	5
C	Over-the-Counter Medication Labels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine sample labels and try to answer questions about proper use; stress importance of asking for help 	6
C	Prescription Medication Labels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine stickers commonly placed on prescription medicine bottles and try to understand what they mean 	6
C	Expiration Dates Worksheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • given a fictional date for “today,” decide whether a list of medications is out of date or not 	6
C, O	Case Studies – Medication Information Sheets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students receive 4 sample prescription medication information sheets. Do they understand them? What questions do they ask the pharmacist? 	6
C	Moderate Alcohol Use Case Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • given the definition of moderate alcohol use, decide whether various individuals’ use of alcohol is moderate 	6
C	Extended Reading Article – “Reading the Media’s Messages About Medications”	7

Beyond the Health Literacy Materials

What happens if students pose medical or health-related questions that instructors don't feel equipped to answer? This will likely happen. Situations like this present great learning opportunities in which instructors can model for students how to go about finding more information and/or asking for help. Instructors may help students to:

- formulate specific questions
- use the Internet to research a question
- conduct classroom role plays in which students pretend to phone an agency to ask for information or help. (Note: In these role plays, encourage students to ask the speaker on the other end of the phone to repeat information or spell names if they weren't able to write down what was said. Model for them how you repeat back information as a way of checking that you understood correctly.)
- role play asking for help at the reference desk of the local library

Often, a good place to look for additional information is at your state's Health Department, or with your local city or county departments of health.

Most communities have doctors, nurses, med techs, or dentists who would be pleased to be asked to come to your class and discuss health issues and general health access. Ask your local health clinic for help if you do not know of a medical professional whom you could invite. Some health plans provide health related classes that are free for anyone in the community to attend. Many of these are even presented in languages other than English. You may want to help your students to research available, free health resources in your community and encourage them to participate.