

Life Skills Literacy

**Things to Know About
Medicine and Health**

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To the Teacher

Things to Know About Medicine and Health is another title in the growing *Life Skills Literacy* series from J. Weston Walch, Publisher. *Things to Know* books are reproducible, thematic compilations of information aimed at youth and adult English language learners, including ESL students new to American or Canadian culture. These books are intended to help build vocabulary, expand culturally-based knowledge, and develop real-life and survival skills. *Things to Know* books include interactive, authentic, cooperative, and idiomatic materials and activities. The books lead to success with language and success in the classroom, the family, and the community.

The *Life Skills Literacy* series is appropriate for ESL learners at intermediate levels and for native learners reading at the fourth-grade level and higher. Its vocabulary lists include nearly 400 words and phrases, most of them specifically related to preventive and corrective health care. Illustrative and contextual clues offer assistance with lexical development. Verb forms are generally simple, and use of the passive voice is limited.

The activities in *Things to Know About Medicine and Health* and its companion books can help individual students build reading and writing proficiencies. They can help full classes and small groups of students develop speaking and listening competencies as well. They can help all learners understand personal health matters, and explore related subjects like medical specialties.

Their brevity and focus make *Things to Know* titles excellent resources for tutors working with individual students, whether the books are also used in the classroom or not. Their basic level makes *Things to Know* suitable for a

wide range of circumstances and student abilities. Their controlled language and high-interest topics give the books appeal for students as well as teachers.

Like other books in the series, this one devotes 3 pages to each of 24 lessons. The first page of each lesson is for teachers. It provides information and suggestions ranging from general concept considerations to specific Internet sites you and your students might visit. The second and third pages are reproducible, for student use. The second page presents topic information and a dialogue, story, or student challenge relating to it. The third page includes a word list plus writing and discussion activities for individual, small group, and full class use.

This book cannot cover all health-related vocabulary or all medical subjects of possible concern to students. Nor can it be designed to be exactly at the level of each and every student. But it can be—and is—very flexible, covering the basics at a consistently low reading level and then offering numerous ideas for moving beyond. It also provides extension activities to meet a wide range of classroom and personal needs. General ideas for use and adaptation of materials appear on the following page of Teaching Suggestions. More specific suggestions can be found on the teacher page provided with each lesson.

We believe you will find the Walch *Life Skills Literacy* series and its individual *Things to Know* titles useful with many different students in many different settings. We'll be pleased to hear how well it works for you, to know what other titles you think should be added to it, and—as always—to learn what more this company can do to serve you and your students.

—J. Weston Walch, Publisher



Teaching Suggestions

You can use *Things to Know About Medicine and Health* basically as is, having learners work through the two reproducible pages of each topic in one or two class sessions. Or you can make *Things to Know* the core of a broader approach to health and medical issues by following the many suggestions in the topical Teacher Pages and expanding each lesson to cover several sessions.

The first step in deciding how to use these pages is, of course, assessing the needs, interests, and abilities of your learners. The second step is considering the characteristics of your own community. Wherever you teach, you'll find that your classes benefit most when knowledge of local business and customer resources are added to the *Things to Know* mix.

The "Preparation possibilities" on the Teacher Pages provide some ideas of what you might wish to do in advance to enrich your classes, particularly if you are presenting a topic over several class sessions. But these pages are designed for immediate use, and you need not spend hours preparing for their presentation. If you think local information will be helpful to your groups, follow the suggestions on the teaching pages and assign students to do the research. They will become true learners and enjoy themselves as well when they discover the practical value of outside projects. Or invite outsiders to join the class and talk about such complex matters as insurance.

Some of the "Technology resources" suggested on the Teacher Pages assume an Internet connection and use of a search engine like Yahoo to look for information and suggested Web pages.

Each word list contains between 12 and 15 terms. Those about health and medicine avoid

the highly technical and should interest all learners with health care interests and concerns. The more general terms are all important to the passages in which they occur, and have been selected with reference to readability levels and vocabulary frequency-use studies. In some cases, you may want to adjust the lists to help meet the needs and interests of your own students. You can underline the words you wish to stress, tape over those you don't want, and add others you find useful. But be careful not to eliminate terms required for the fill-in sentences that follow.

The idioms and slang and the "fascinating facts" given in the teacher pages are presented as fun and informative extras for some classes. If you use the idioms and slang, consider asking students to try them in sentences and to share other terms they know. You can treat the word lists in the same way, if you like, asking students to build sentences around them and to supply related vocabulary that interests them.

All materials on the Activity Pages have been prepared with references to varied thinking skills, learning styles, and the several intelligences proposed by Howard Gardner and others. But no mix can be perfect for every class, and these also can and should be adjusted to meet the needs of your own groups. The role-plays based on dialogues, stories, and challenges are useful examples. Some students with very limited language skills will benefit from working in pairs and reading dialogues aloud to each other. More advanced students will enjoy and benefit from more creative approaches in which they make up their own parts and decide what might happen next to the characters in the story.

Lesson 17: Skin Care



Themes:

- Dangers of the sun
- Dermatology

Background notes: Skin cancer is becoming a major problem, with more than 700,000 new cases occurring every year in the United States. Yet beaches fill each summer with people exposing themselves to the sun for hours, many of them using very little protection. These pages introduce learners to skin conditions that the sun can cause, and to the field of dermatology. The lesson also offers extension activities leading to consideration and discussion of other dermatological conditions, and to the question of why some people take big health risks despite frequent warnings.

Preparation possibilities:

- Think about: The probability that sun exposure is a problem in your area
- Bring to class: Copies of recent reports about sun-caused problems, skin care, cosmetics

Technology resources:

- Search topics: *skin cancer, cosmetics, sun safety, sunscreens* (by brand name)
- Web pages to try: Safe Sun Tips, American Academy of Dermatology

Student pages:

- Page 50 includes: An introduction to sun and skin; a story about overexposure to the sun
- Page 51 includes: A word list you can adjust for your class and student activities

Especially for ESL: Ask: Is exposure to the sun a problem in your first country? Do people

there spend a lot of money on sunscreens and other products to protect them?

Extra idioms and slang to introduce:

- *Dolled up:* dressed up
- *Zit:* pimple or other small skin blemish

Thoughts to share with learners: Sunscreens are rated with a sun protection factor (SPF). Ratings go from 2 to 45; the higher the number, the more protection you get. Most dermatologists recommend an SPF of 15 for general use, but some people with sensitive skin need a higher rating. If you aren't sure what is right for you, ask your doctor. The answer will depend on the color and condition of your skin.

Questions to ask learners: Why do some people who know the danger stay out in the sun? Why don't people always do what is good for them? What do you think of body piercing and tattoos? Are they healthy? Harmful? Why do some cosmetics cost so much? Where is the best place to buy them? Do most people you know protect themselves from the sun? Whom can you ask if you aren't sure that a skin care product is safe?

Projects to assign learners: Look at some skin care products, including cosmetics and sunscreens. Read what the labels say. Do they have warnings? Do you understand them? Share what you find with your class. Go to a beach or another outdoor location with a lot of sun exposure. A ski mountain might be a place to try in winter. Are people protecting themselves? Taking chances? Share what you see with your class.

A fascinating fact to share: The skin of an average adult human weighs about 6 pounds.

Lesson 17: Skin Care



Most people like sunshine, and some even write songs about it. But the sun is like a lot of other things. A little can be great—just what the doctor ordered. Yet, if you get too much, it can be dangerous. So you need to limit your **exposure** to the sun. Too much can burn you badly. That means bad **blisters** and a lot of pain, and this is just for starters. If you keep getting too much sun, you get long-term problems. **Wrinkled** skin is one, but it's a small one. Cancer is the worst one. That can be very serious. It can even kill you.



Story: The new job

Betsy Hurd wasn't happy. She had a bad sunburn, with blisters and a lot of pain. She put some burn **ointment** on, and she took some aspirin. But nothing helped much. She couldn't even sleep, so the next day she called a skin doctor.

"This isn't good," the **dermatologist** said. "I can give you an **antibacterial** ointment. That will help prevent infection. But you'll still have some pain."

"The next time, I'll call sooner," Betsy told him.

"I've got a better idea," he said. "Don't have a next time. Stay out of the hot sun."

"But I'm a **lifeguard**," Betsy told him. "Yesterday was my first day on the job. I took the training last winter, and I need to go back tomorrow."

"Then I'll see you in the hospital tomorrow night."

"Is it that bad?"

"Yes," said the dermatologist. The sun's **ultraviolet rays** are very dangerous, he told her. Even people with dark skin can get burns. And Betsy had light skin. She was at high risk of being burned again.

"What about **sunscreen**?"

"Use it whenever you're in the sun. But you shouldn't have a beach job, not with your skin."

"Even if I'm under an **umbrella** a lot?"

"Even then."

"It's only a sunburn."

"Only a sunburn' can get much worse. Sunburn leads to **melanoma**. That's the most deadly kind of skin cancer. You don't want it."

"So my **prognosis** isn't good?"

"Your prognosis is fine if you stay out of the sun."

"But what about my job? I need the money."

"Here's some good news to go with the bad. My sister owns a hotel with an indoor pool. I know she's looking for an indoor lifeguard."

"Really? Can I call her?"

"Sure. My **receptionist** has her number. You can get it on your way out."



Lesson 17: Skin Care



Word List

exposure	ointment	lifeguard	umbrella	receptionist
blister(s)	dermatologist	ultraviolet ray(s)	melanoma	
wrinkle(d)	antibacterial	sunscreen	prognosis	

Increasing Your Understanding

1. Look at the word list. If you don't know a word, find out what it means. Try to figure it out from the way it is used on page 50. Or look it up in a dictionary.
2. Supply the missing word in each of the following sentences. Use the word list above.
 - (a) Betsy goes to see a _____ in the story on page 50.
 - (b) The sun's _____ are very dangerous, according to the doctor.
 - (c) "But I'm a _____," Betsy says.
 - (d) You need to limit your _____ to the sun, says the paragraph at the top of page 50.
 - (e) Too much sun can cause bad _____ and a lot of pain.

Questions to Discuss

1. Does the dermatologist in the story on page 50 say the same kinds of things that the paragraph at the top of page 50 says? How do they agree or disagree?
2. Skin cancer is just one thing that dermatologists treat. What else do people go to them for? Brainstorm your answers.
3. Look at the sign in the drawing at the top of page 50. What dangers are listed there? Which do you think is the biggest danger? Why?

Things to Write About

1. How do you feel about the wrinkles people get with age? Should people try to hide them? Write a paragraph giving your answer.

2. How can people protect themselves from the sun? Write three simple rules to follow.

Things to Do

1. Role-play the parts of the patient and dermatologist in the story on page 50. Use your own names if you want.
2. How many skin products can you think of? With two or three other students, brainstorm a list. Write down all the products you can think of in two minutes. Then share your answers with your class.
3. How can you warn people to avoid the hot sun? Draw a sign without words that you could use on a hot beach.
4. What's the most important thing that people can do for skin care? Ask two or three people outside of class what they think. Then share what you find with your class.



Lesson 18: Challenges That Don't Go Away



Themes:

- Handicaps, chronic pain, and other continuing challenges
- Attitude as a factor in health

Background notes: Perfect health is an ephemeral thing. If pushed even slightly, most people can find at least a hangnail to worry about. But millions of people need not look for the sore spots. They face continuing problems that make the concept of perfect health a distant ideal belonging to somebody else. In fact, says the National Institute of Health Statistics, 10.3 percent of Americans are somehow “limited in major activity due to chronic conditions.” Yet, chronic health concerns and problems do not mean automatic misery and limitations in all spheres of life. Many people cope with and even triumph over difficult conditions. These pages will lead your learners to consider various ways to meet continuing health challenges.

Preparation possibilities:

- **Think about:** How to use this lesson with sensitivity toward any continuing health problems faced by your own students
- **Bring to class:** Copies of recent news reports about chronic pain, handicapped accessibility, and related topics

Technology resources:

- Search topics: *chronic pain, disabilities* (in general and by type)
- Web pages to try: DAWN: Disabilities Awareness Webring Network, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, North American Chronic Pain Association of Canada, American Society for Action on Pain, National Wheelchair Basketball Association

Student pages:

- Page 53 includes: A brief introduction to chronic health problems; a challenge story about somebody recently confined to a wheelchair
- Page 54 includes: A word list you can adjust for your class and student activities

Especially for ESL: Ask: Can public buildings in your first country be used easily by people with disabilities?

Extra idioms and slang to introduce:

- *Can-do person:* somebody who gets things done
- *Down:* depressed, unhappy

Thoughts to share with learners: (1) A disability makes it hard to do ordinary things. Some disabilities are physical and some are mental. Others are sensory. That means they involve senses like hearing and seeing. (2) In 1990 the United States passed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). That law guarantees disabled people the same rights that the members of other minorities (as well as the majority) have.

Questions to ask learners: Does your school do enough to help disabled people? How about your city or town?

Projects to assign learners: Find out which organizations in your area help disabled people. Call one and ask what you can do to help. Share the answer with your class.

A fascinating fact to share: A Frenchman named Ambroise Paré invented an artificial hand in 1551.

Lesson 18: Challenges That Don't Go Away



Lots of people have health challenges. Some are **severe**, and some are **mild**. Some can be cured, but some can't. You have to learn to live with them. How? Other people with the same problem can help. So can special doctors and other health workers. Chronic pain is an example. That's pain that seems to stay no matter what you do. People who have it can go to chronic pain clinics. They probably won't get cured there. But they can try **techniques** like **meditation**. They can learn to manage their pain. That will help them live normal lives despite the pain.



Challenge: The accident

First Friend: Did you hear about Sarah's accident?

Second friend: Yes. It's terrible. I heard she'll be in a **wheelchair** for life.

FF: That's what I heard, too. She **injured** her **spinal cord**.

SF: Beyond repair?

FF: That's what they say. She's a **paraplegic**. She can't use her lower body.

SF: How's her **attitude**? Mine would be awful.

FF: I don't know. I'm going to see her tomorrow. Want to go with me? Maybe we can make her feel better.

SF: Gee, I'm not sure. I won't feel too good myself if I see her. She used to be such a great **athlete**.

FF: I know what you mean. But she needs her friends. She probably does feel awful right now. But at least she **survived** the accident.

SF: And now she's **disabled**.

FF: Yes, but that's not the end of the world.

SF: That's easy for you to say.

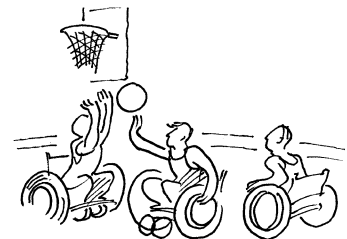
FF: I know. But my uncle is in a wheelchair. It's **motorized**, and lots of buildings are

accessible these days. He gets around pretty well. He even does sports.

SF: It will be a long time before Sarah can do that. Won't she have to be in the hospital for months?

FF: Yes. She has a lot of **rehabilitation** work to do.

SF: I can imagine. Maybe I should go tomorrow. But what if I see her and start to cry? That won't help.



FF: If you do that, at least she'll know you care.

SF: I hope she knows that already.

FF: She might not if you don't go visit.

SF: So what are you going to do? Make jokes?

FF: If that's what Sarah needs. They say that laughter is the best medicine.

Here's your challenge: Imagine that you are a friend of Sarah's. Will you go see her? What will you say? How can you help?



Lesson 18: Challenges That Don't Go Away



Word List

severe	meditation	spinal cord	athlete	motorize(d)
mild	wheelchair	paraplegic	survive(d)	accessible
technique(s)	injure(d)	attitude	disable(d)	rehabilitation

Increasing Your Understanding

- Look at the word list. If you don't know a word, find out what it means. Try to figure it out from the way it is used on page 53. Or look it up in a dictionary.
- Supply the missing word in each of the sentences below. Use the word list above.
 - "I heard she _____ her _____," says the first friend in the story on page 53.
 - "How's her _____?" asks the second friend. "Mine would be awful."
 - Sarah has a lot of _____ work to do, according to the first friend.
 - The first paragraph on page 53 says some health challenges are _____ and some are _____.
 - People can try techniques like _____ in pain centers.

Questions to Discuss

- How do you answer the challenge on page 53? What can people do for friends with serious problems?
- How can computers help disabled people?
- What are some common chronic health problems? Brainstorm some answers.

Things to Write About

- How should people treat other people who are in wheelchairs? Write a paragraph giving your answer. If you really are in a wheelchair, be sure to share your answer with the class.
- Imagine that you are in a wheelchair. Every time you go to the store, the same car is parked in the spot saved for disabled people. You know the driver is not disabled. Write a letter asking the driver to park somewhere else.

Things to Do

- Role-play the parts of the friends in the story on page 53. Use your own names if you want. Talk about what the second friend will decide.
- What can schools do to help disabled students? List three things you think every school should do.
- Can you get people to your clinic? With two or three other students, make up a TV ad for a chronic pain clinic. Don't promise to cure people. Just offer to help. Share your ad with the rest of your class.
- Are there chronic pain clinics in your area? If there are, what kind of help do they offer? Find out, and share your answers with the class.

