

Grade Four: Integration with Language Arts and Media Literacy

Key Understandings of Asthma

Developing a basic understanding of asthma

- Asthma is a disease of the airways
- One in five Canadian children suffer from asthma. In a class of 30 children, three are likely to have asthma
- Asthma has two components:
 - The muscles surrounding the airways tighten, narrowing the airways, making it difficult to breathe. When this occurs you get the symptoms of asthma. These symptoms are treated with "rescue" medications on an as-needed basis.
 - The muscles that surround the airways become sensitive and start to twitch and tighten, causing the airways to narrow. This usually occurs if inflammation is not treated. Airway inflammation is treated with daily anti-inflammatory medication.
- When inflammation is not properly addressed, airways react to common triggers of asthma including cold air, flu or upper respiratory infection, exercise, tobacco smoke, perfume and exposure to allergens such as pollen, dust and animal dander
 - 85% of exacerbations are triggered by colds in young children
- Common symptoms of asthma include difficulty breathing, wheezing, coughing and chest tightness
- Asthma cannot be cured, but it can be controlled
- Controlling usually requires several medications. One or several types of "controllers" may be needed to fully address the underlying inflammation and "rescue" medications for asthma attacks.

Developing a basic understanding of the September Asthma Peak

- Asthma attacks increase in September. With the start of a new school year kids are in close contact with each other and germs, like the common cold. Also, low use of appropriate asthma medications may fuel the September Asthma Peak and can increase asthma attacks throughout the school year.
- The viruses responsible for the majority of September asthma exacerbations include the rhinovirus, coronavirus, influenza virus, parainfluenza virus and respiratory syncytial virus
- 20-25% of annual hospital admissions for asthma of children in Canada occur in September
- On average, the hospitalization rate for school-age children peaks 17.7 days after Labour Day

What parents and children can do to prevent the September Asthma Peak

1. Reduce cold transmissions
 - School-aged children have an average of eight colds per year which is equivalent to one asthma flare-up per month if asthma is not controlled
 - **To reduce cold transmissions children should practice consistent and correct hand washing, obtain enough rest and eat a balanced diet**
2. See the doctor before the child goes back to school
 - If a child tends to catch a lot of colds and has asthma, mention this to the doctor
 - Ask the doctor for medication that will help prevent asthma attacks caused by the common cold

Language Arts: Media Literacy

Specific Expectations:

3.1 Describe in detail the topic, purpose, and audience for media texts they plan to create (e.g. an album of camera shots to help classmates understand the uses of different camera angles and distances in photography and/or film)

3.2 Identify an appropriate form to suit the specific purpose and audience for a media text they plan to create (e.g. a poster advertising a school science fair, a flyer to encourage students to participate in the fair)

3.4 Produce media texts for specific purposes and audiences, using a few simple media forms and appropriate conventions and techniques

Activating Prior Knowledge

The teacher will participate in the following tasks to assess the children's knowledge level on the topic at-hand.

- Circulate copies of recent newspapers and magazines (supplied by the students or the teacher).
- Ask the entire class what they have seen in the media (television, newspapers, and magazines) on any health condition.
- The teacher can make a list on the chalkboard of the students' ideas and suggestions.
- The teacher can lead a discussion on the communication of messages and their purpose.
- Circulate a copy of the September Asthma Peak information and students can read through with the opportunity of asking questions.

Working on It

- Students to work in small groups and simulate a commercial to last no more than 3 minutes. The audience will be their peers.
- Create a script, designate roles for their group members and generate a list of props required for them to perform their commercials, focusing on a minimum of 5 ideas from the September Asthma Peak information sheet. The focus of the commercial should be to explain and create a visual of the September Asthma Peak and its implications for themselves and those with asthma.

Consolidation

Students will present their commercials to their classmates and follow up with an explanation of why a televised commercial is an appropriate media form: how the commercial communicated the key ideas to students of a similar age and what was the most significant point about asthma.

The following rubric can be used to assess the commercial:

Commercial Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Ideas and key concepts were communicated in the commercial	Few ideas were evident and/or information was unclear to the audience	Few ideas were somewhat clear to the audience	5 ideas were communicated clearly	The number of ideas exceeded 5 and were communicated effectively
Commercial was created with use of props, students and script to communicate key concepts	The commercial was poorly designed and poor use of props, students and the script was evident	The commercial was designed effectively and made use of props, students and the script to communicate key concepts	The commercial was clear and the use of props, students and the script communicated the key concepts effectively	The commercial was well done, communicated ideas clearly, students understood key concepts
The script was clear, grammatically correct and creatively expressed	Little creativity, and/or script unclear and/or poor grammar used in the commercial	Some creativity and/or script was somewhat clear and it was mostly grammatically correct	The commercial was performed with creativity, script was well expressed grammatically and expressively	The commercial was exemplary and used more than the suggested or typical forms to replicate a creative and informative media source

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