

# Health Literacy - Tutor's Guide

## **General Tips**

1. There are five sections of the unit: General Vocabulary, Taking Medication, Eating Healthy, Parts of the Body, and Medical Forms. Most sections contain an informative portion, a reinforcing activity or game, and additional resources for the tutor. Below you will find descriptions to guide you through each of these sections. Do not feel pressured to complete all of these sections. If your student is only interested in two of the topics, just teach those two. Remember, your tutoring sessions are “student-focused” – let that guide how you spend your time together.
2. Don't rush through these lessons. Some students may be able to finish each section in one class period, but be happy if topics spark discussion. Conversation is always a great way for students to link new information with their real life experiences. Also, talking allows students to learn from each other and you, the tutor.
3. Notice how I built this unit. I simplified a medical document; I created a sequencing activity. Use these ideas to create supplemental activities of your own. If your student really likes the one page story with pictures, would you feel comfortable in the future writing another story embedded with vocabulary words? Can you create a matching game or fancy picture flashcards? Use creative teaching methods that expand beyond your text series. Let the Literacy Council know what you are creating...your work could end up in a future online unit!

This unit contains five sections. The following will help guide you through teaching each part.

## **General Vocabulary**

This section contains a vocabulary list, a story, after reading activities, and additional resources. Students will not be able to learn all of the vocabulary words in this list. Because you should never spend time teaching what a student already knows, find out which words are already familiar. Then, from the unknown words, pick about 6-8 words for each class. Focusing on a smaller amount of words will increase the chance that your student will retain the information.

The same vocabulary story is written at two different levels. The beginner version of “Accidental Akona” is written at a second grade reading level. The intermediate/advanced version is written at a fourth grade reading level. So that you don't waste paper, print only the version your student needs (OR: to encourage pre-reading knowledge, your student can read the beginner's version first. Knowing the plot before reading the harder story will help your student to read the intermediate/advanced version easier). Before you read the story together, talk about the title and the pictures. Doing this will help build context in the student's mind. Ask your student some questions about what he/she thinks will happen in the story; this is called predicting. Building context and predicting before reading a story will help your student to read better (more fluently) and understand the story better (comprehend better).

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The after-reading activities help build "Critical Thinking Skills." Sometimes new readers will have difficulty thinking about what they have just read. People new to the English language face similar challenges; thinking at a higher level in the new language is sometimes difficult. These after-reading activities will help to engage the higher-level thinking processes. The sequencing activity is for any student, beginning or advanced; however, do adjust the writing activity to your student's needs. For example, if you have a beginning student, ask him/her to write a 2-3 sentence answer. If you have a more advanced student, ask for a half page story.

## **Taking Medication**

Approximately 33% of English speaking adults misunderstand medication labels and directions (annals.org). This section attempts to teach our students the most important information about prescription directions in order to prevent these harmful and sometimes fatal errors. "Taking Medication" is organized into four sections: prescription labels, warning stickers, grammar/punctuation practice, and additional resources.

Tutors, notice that in each section, there is information and then there is a section to practice the new knowledge. Whenever you teach your students something new always give them a chance to practice it. This helps reinforce and apply the new information. Additionally, in creating this section, I found that the command form of verbs appears quite frequently. I decided to turn these appearances into a "teachable moment," and I created a grammar practice sheet to accompany the main lesson. You may notice on the "Prescription Labels" page, the possessive appears many times (for ex: doctor's information). Consider creating a teachable moment with the possessive "s" (followed by practice questions). As you spend time with your student(s) in the future, pay attention for any time a teachable moment appears.

## **Eating Healthy** and **Parts of the Body**

These two sections were created by a Miami literacy program. They contain vocabulary words followed by games and activities that help reinforce these terms. Can you think of a creative way for the students to apply their new vocabulary knowledge? One possible activity is a homework assignment: write a story using 10 of the vocabulary words. What other ideas do you have?

## **Medical Forms**

This section contains two important types of medical forms. One is the "Health History." Talk about this form with your student: discuss the reason why each doctor has patients answer these questions, explain each section heading, and ***suggest that your student carry this paper to future doctor visits.*** Help your student answer all sections. Note: The "Family Health History" section should include how family members died (if death was a result of an illness or medical condition) and any current illnesses or conditions these relatives have. Students do not have to include distant relatives.

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The "Explanation of HIPAA" is meant as an informative paper. The student will know the term HIPAA after this exercise. Most doctors' offices require a HIPAA form to be completed so the patient can take this form to doctor visits also.

Be careful in teaching this section. The forms require your student to reveal very personal information. If your student does not feel comfortable telling you this information, then explain the terms on the forms and their importance, and suggest he/she take it home to fill out the rest. Even this can be very beneficial.