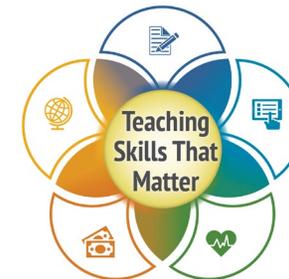


Health Literacy: Problem-Based Learning



The Díaz Family

The Díaz family faces challenges navigating the U.S. health care system. The students read the Díaz family story and work in small groups to develop possible solutions.

At the conclusion of this lesson, the students will be able to:

- Process and analyze information to identify barriers people face accessing health care and navigating the U.S. health care system.
- Think critically about the problems that students face communicating with health professionals and possible ways to overcome those problems.
- Strengthen interpersonal communication skills by discussing their ideas and solving problems in collaboration with other students.

Materials

- The Díaz family story
- Discussion questions
- Web resources

The recommended steps for problem posing are adapted from *Problem-Based Learning and Adult English Language Learners*, by J. Mathews-Aydinli, 2007, Center for Adult English Language Acquisition, Washington, D.C. Retrieved from http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/briefs/Problem-based.pdf

Process for Students	Role of the Teacher	Activity/Task Descriptions and Possible Materials	The Skills That Matter Addressed or Evident
<p>Build understanding of problem-based learning. Warm up to the topic or issue at hand.</p>	<p>Introduce problem-based learning. Make sure the students understand the goals and benefits of a problem-based approach to language. If this is an English class, emphasize the areas of English that are developed in problem-solving activities.</p>	<p>Before beginning this lesson, explain to the students the benefits of problem-based learning. Ask the students to think of a problem they recently had and the steps they took to solve the problem. The students will practice reading, writing, speaking, and critical thinking skills they might need to solve a real-life problem. Specifically, they will look at the problem that one young family had understanding their doctor. Especially if this is an English language class (although the problem often affects native English speakers), the students will benefit from learning strategies for communicating effectively with their health care providers.</p>	<p>Communication Interpersonal skills</p>
<p>Meet the problem.</p>	<p>Summarize the problem. Introduce the students to the problem, using an example of a somewhat controversial picture, video, or text. Ask the students about previous personal experiences with the problem. Introduce vocabulary related to the problem as challenging or unknown words come up.</p>	<p>Have the students work in groups of two to four. In these groups, the students can read the case example (Appendix A) silently or take turns reading the story aloud.</p>	<p>Processing and analyzing information Communication Critical thinking Navigating systems</p>



Process for Students	Role of the Teacher	Activity/Task Descriptions and Possible Materials	The Skills That Matter Addressed or Evident
<p>Explore knowns and unknowns.</p>	<p>Group students and provide resources.</p> <p>Make sure that the students understand the problem and what is expected of them.</p> <p>Emphasize that there is no single answer or solution and that the students need to choose what appears to them to be the most viable solution and be prepared to explain why they chose that solution.</p> <p>Group the students according to their strengths. As with project-based learning, learners can take on different roles based on their strengths.</p> <p>Provide access to resources such as the internet, Wi-Fi, and a shared online discussion forum where they can share their work (e.g., a class Facebook group).</p>	<p>The students then use the discussion questions to help them identify the problems raised in the story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What problems do the Díaz family face? • What does it mean to be “at risk of preeclampsia”? • What should the Díaz family do? • Who might be able to help the Díaz family? <p>Provide the students with a graphic organizer to use when they are identifying solutions and consequences.</p> <p>Ask a set of true/false questions to confirm that the students understand the problem posed and the task they are being asked to complete.</p>	<p>Processing and analyzing information</p> <p>Critical thinking</p>



Process for Students	Role of the Teacher	Activity/Task Descriptions and Possible Materials	The Skills That Matter Addressed or Evident
<p>Generate possible solutions.</p> <p>Consider consequences and choose the most viable solution.</p>	<p>Provide support as needed.</p> <p>Observe the students and provide support as needed, but do not attempt to direct their efforts or control their activity in solving the problem. Observe, take notes, and provide feedback on student participation in the activity and on language used during the activity.</p>	<p>Students:</p> <p>The students identify and discuss possible solutions to the problem and the consequences of the suggested solutions. They may use the recommended websites to define medical terms and answer other questions they may have.</p> <p>They note their solutions and consequences in a graphic organizer.</p> <p>Teacher:</p> <p>Observe while the students are working together.</p> <p>Assist as necessary with finding resources.</p>	<p>Processing and analyzing information</p> <p>Critical thinking</p> <p>Self-awareness</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Interpersonal</p>



Process for Students	Role of the Teacher	Activity/Task Descriptions and Possible Materials	The Skills That Matter Addressed or Evident															
	<p>Follow up and assess.</p> <p>Provide the students with opportunities to present and share the results of their work. Provide follow-up activities based on your observations, possibly instruction on grammar, academic language, pronunciation, or pragmatic issues. Assess the students' participation and success in the activity and provide opportunities for peer assessment.</p>	<p>Each group shares its answers to the discussion questions aloud with the whole class. After all groups are heard from, the whole class discusses the common themes of the solutions and reaches consensus on how best to help the Díaz family.</p> <p>To assess small-group work, have the students rate themselves on the following self-assessment scale:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="772 548 1646 1016"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="772 548 947 613">Name: ____</th> <th data-bbox="947 548 1121 613">Emerging</th> <th data-bbox="1121 548 1295 613">Developing</th> <th data-bbox="1295 548 1470 613">Satisfactory</th> <th data-bbox="1470 548 1646 613">Exemplary</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="772 613 947 800">Student participated in small-group discussion.</td> <td data-bbox="947 613 1121 800"></td> <td data-bbox="1121 613 1295 800"></td> <td data-bbox="1295 613 1470 800"></td> <td data-bbox="1470 613 1646 800"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="772 800 947 1016">Student can state the problem and recommend solutions.</td> <td data-bbox="947 800 1121 1016"></td> <td data-bbox="1121 800 1295 1016"></td> <td data-bbox="1295 800 1470 1016"></td> <td data-bbox="1470 800 1646 1016"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Ask the students if they ever have trouble understanding their doctor explain a diagnosis or procedure. This is a common problem because doctors often use medical terms most people do not understand.</p> <p>Ask the students to brainstorm what they can do if they have trouble understanding their doctor. One solution might be to ask the doctor the following questions:</p> <ul data-bbox="821 1252 1602 1328" style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't understand. Can you say that again? • I still don't understand. What does _____ mean? 	Name: ____	Emerging	Developing	Satisfactory	Exemplary	Student participated in small-group discussion.					Student can state the problem and recommend solutions.					<p>Communication</p> <p>Navigating systems</p>
Name: ____	Emerging	Developing	Satisfactory	Exemplary														
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		<p>Another possible solution is to use the teach-back method by saying back to the doctor what you understood, and if your version is not correct, the doctor can explain again. For example, students can say the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let me check to be sure I understand what you said. (Then repeat back in your own words what the doctor said. If it is not correct, your doctor will explain again.) • (Or if you don't speak English as your first language, you can ask for an interpreter!) "Can I please have an interpreter? I speak _____." <p>To assess health literacy content objectives, have the students work in pairs. One student role-plays the doctor, and the other practices asking the clarifying questions.</p>	



Appendix A. The Díaz Family Story

Reading Grade Level: Sixth Grade

Edith and José Díaz moved to the United States to find work. José found work painting houses. Edith works full time cleaning offices. Through her work, Edith gets health insurance for the family. Both Edith and José have learned some English, but they work long hours and their coworkers all speak Spanish, so their English has not significantly improved.

In the Díaz family’s home country, people went to a doctor only when they were very sick. When people went to a clinic, they were not charged fees. Edith and José are young and healthy and have not had to access the health care system in the United States.

That changed, however, when Edith became pregnant with their first child—their daughter, Maria. People kept telling Edith to see a doctor to make sure she and the baby were healthy. During her first examination, when Edith was 6 months into her pregnancy, the doctor saw a problem. Working with a Spanish-speaking interpreter, the doctor explained the problem to the Díaz family. The doctor told Edith that she was at risk of preeclampsia and looked very worried. Edith and José were not sure what their doctor said, but they were very scared. The nurse gave them some papers describing preeclampsia. Although the papers were in Spanish, Edith and Jose still had a hard time understanding the medical terms.

Discussion Questions

1. What problems does the Díaz family face?
2. What does it mean to be “at risk of preeclampsia”?
3. What should the Díaz family do?
4. Who might be able to help the Díaz family?

Resources

- www.medlineplus.gov—This website provides health information on many topics. The website is designed for use by patients and caregivers and is in English and Spanish.
- www.healthfinder.gov—This website contains health information and information on health services and where to locate nearby services.
- <https://www.nwglobal.com/blog/hospitals-required-provide-language-access-services/>—Read this article, “Are Hospitals Required to Provide Language Services?”

