

W H I T H HEALTH SCIENCE Educator

Tips, ideas and opinions for Health Science Education



August 2020

COVID-19 EDITION



A free publication for professionals who choose to make a difference in the classroom – or working from a home office.

You inspire the heroes of healthcare!

In an emergency, what treatment is given by ear?

Words of Comfort.

Abraham Verghese, MD

★ MENTAL HEALTH NEWS: TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF DURING THE PANDEMIC

As a classroom teacher, you've always been an important role model and learning guide for your students. In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, your value has multiplied. You may find yourself in the role of resident public health expert for your colleagues and superhero to your students.

We're going to suggest that your focus includes taking care of YOU.

1. **You can't fix it all.** You think you can, and you're certainly going to try, but let's be honest. There is a lot about this pandemic that we just don't know. The medical experts don't have all the answers, and neither do you. Face the fact that there are some things you can't control right now and don't drive yourself crazy trying to fix it.
2. **Focus on what you can do.** It's very easy to panic over the things you can't do, such as clinical rotations in a nursing home. Instead, focus on what your students need right now. They need to learn in an environment that is uplifting and encouraging. There is a great deal you can teach via distance learning that will help prepare your students to pursue a health profession and show them the importance of a positive attitude in the workplace.
3. **Take care of your physical health.** This one is easy to blow off. You don't have time, right? But the truth is, exercise can improve mood and reduce anxiety, and it doesn't take a treadmill. Make time to move in a meaningful way. Dance around the kitchen – although not while you're on Zoom. Walk around your house. Lift something heavy. Stretch. Bend. And while you're home there is no excuse for unhealthy eating.
4. **Create an at-home work space.** Not in front of the TV. Maybe not your kitchen. (Actually, our kitchen table is now a home office and we actually use our dining room for...dining.) Find a corner of your home and make it your work space. Psychologists tell us it is easier to focus on work when we use a space that is dedicated to work, and the rest of the family will know that when we're in our space, we're working.

It might be worth your time to think about yourself for a change, understanding that your students, and your family, need a happy, healthy YOU to make the best of the world we're in right now.

★ EDUCATION NEWS: *Medical Misinformation*

You've rarely seen this in your classroom.
Until now.

In the process of communicating with your new students, either online or in your classroom, one of your students shares this comment:

"This whole coronavirus thing is a hoax. I watched a video, *Plandemic*, and it's all made up stuff."

How will you respond?

First of all – you're the expert. When students share information that you know to be scientifically untrue, you need to respond in a way that helps bring the truth to light without making that student resentful or worse, cling to their false information.

Understand that it is easy for our socially-connected students to fall for misinformation. According to Peter Adams, head of the education team at the News Literacy Project, "We're all hardwired to trust our senses and respond to our emotions, and it can be challenging to fight those impulses. Sharing something false doesn't make someone foolish or stupid, it just means they got tricked."

Ask where they heard that or why they believe it. When you encourage a conversation (not an argument) sometimes your students will create their own counterarguments. When they realize that what they believe doesn't make sense they are more likely to change their minds.

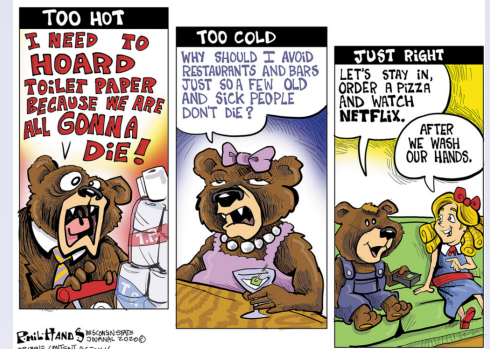
Replace the false information with accurate information. You can't just tell students they're wrong and leave it at that. Instead, provide the underlying science and the facts. Rather than say, "No, wearing a mask doesn't make you breathe in more carbon dioxide," for instance, it's better to say, "Surgical team members wear masks all day, every day, and do not experience CO₂ intoxication."

Talk about information responsibility with your students. As a general lesson and not in response to a specific student, introduce the subject of medical misinformation. Ask them if they ever come across misinformation in social media. Ask them why they think inaccurate information spreads? Can it be harmful? What role can they play as a future health professional in countering medical misinformation?

What if... you asked your students to find examples of medical misinformation and then search for the correct, scientific information, and then share their findings in class. That might be a non-threatening way to change misinformation to good information, and invite your students to be responsible citizens in addition to responsible future health professionals.

CARTOONS IN THE CLASSROOM?

Well, yes. Asking students to analyze and evaluate political cartoons can be instructive and fun. Images are memorable. And when students reach their own conclusions through thoughtful discussion, learning is more durable.



The discussion around this cartoon might be about finding the right balance. The Three Bears is an excellent metaphor for finding a "just right" approach for responding to a challenge.



This cartoon might lead to exploring if the lack of medical supplies is still a concern.



Of course, this is our favorite. Be sure to look for cartoons that teach a lesson without getting personal. Use cartoons that align to course content and not political persuasion and you will find them to be engaging learning tools.

Name _____

Date _____

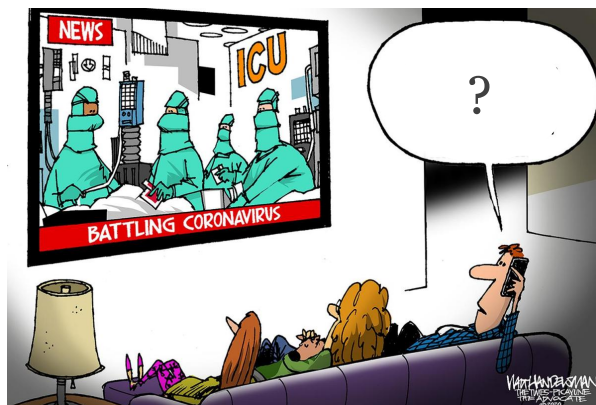
T/F COVID-19

For each statement, circle the letter under the correct column to indicate if the statement is true or false, and then transfer the circled letters to the corresponding table below to reveal the cartoon caption.

		True	False
1.	Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.	T	S
2.	Most people infected with COVID-19 have a mild illness and are able to recover at home.	C	L
3.	Symptoms of the infection may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.	I	M
4.	Someone who shows signs of fever, chills or cough should call 911 and seek emergency medical care immediately.	D	G
5.	It has been proven that people who recover from COVID-19 are immune and will never get re-infected.	F	P
6.	Antibody tests check your blood by looking for antibodies, which may tell you if you are currently infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.	O	E
7.	People with mild symptoms of COVID-19 who are not tested should stay home and social distance for 14 days.	U	I
8.	Face shields protect the eyes, which masks do not, but a shield is no substitute for a mask.	T	P
9.	Getting results from a coronavirus test may vary from hours to even a week or longer, depending on the severity of a person's infection.	B	W
10.	Doctors recommend that anyone who experiences a sudden loss of smell or taste should self-isolate and contact their healthcare provider.	R	W
11.	Researchers have found that the virus cannot live for more than a few hours on cardboard, plastic and stainless steel.	N	H
12.	People infected with the coronavirus who don't have symptoms cannot spread the infection.	U	O
13.	Men are more likely to die from coronavirus than women.	A	E
14.	Minorities and people of color are more at risk from coronavirus.	B	M
15.	People with obesity are considered a high-risk population for COVID-19.	N	L

Cartoon Callout – What is he saying?

											-
9	6		10	6		14	3	15	4	6	
9	13	8	2	11	3	15	4		13		
1	11	12	9		13	14	12	7	8		
											!
1	7	5	6	10	11	6	10	12	6	1	



LEARNING SCIENCE

Puzzles

Puzzles...in the classroom?

Games are great tools for interactive learning. Sometimes that means interacting with another person or interacting with technology in the case of video games.

Puzzles are typically something we do individually, which makes them a perfect tool for independent learning.

According to neuroscientist Daniel Bor, our brains take great pleasure in pattern-finding and solving puzzles. Why is filling out a crossword puzzle more fun than answering questions on a worksheet? Or why do students who "hate" math spend hours completing a Sudoku puzzle? Or, why do scientists love research?

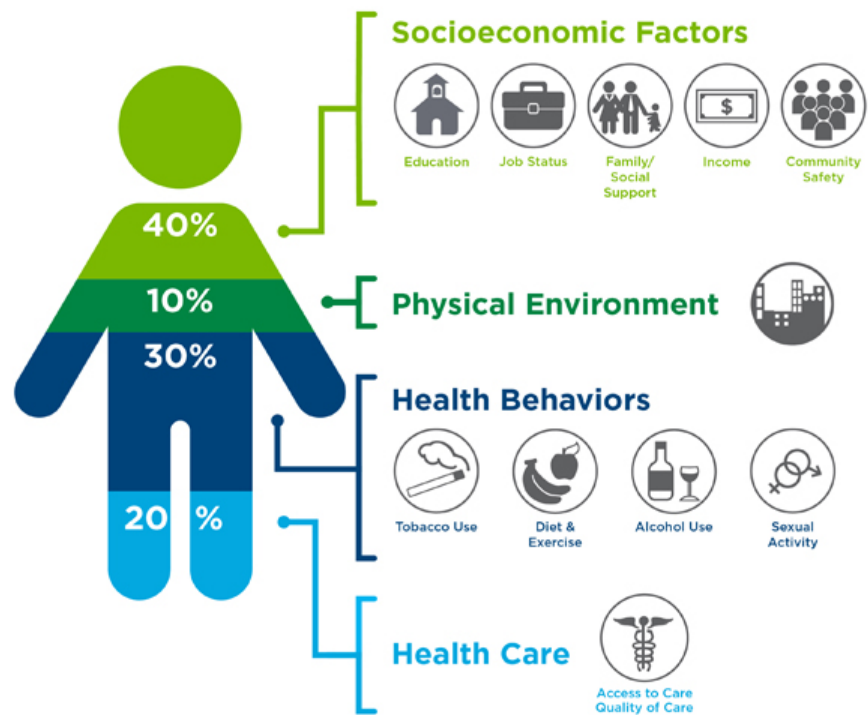
Because puzzles are good for our brains.

Imagine if you could provide a learning activity that asks students to recall course content AND helps them develop problem-solving skills, lowers their stress, and improves mood. Wouldn't that be an assignment worth doing?

Still puzzled? To learn more about the learning benefits of solving puzzles, check out this online article:

<https://www.goodnet.org/articles/7-surprising-ways-puzzles-are-good-for-your-brain>

What Goes Into Your Health?



Source: Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement, Going Beyond Clinical Walls: Solving Complex Problems (October 2014)

The Bridgespan Group

↑ This is my favorite infographic. A picture is worth a thousand words...

T/F Covid-19 - Cartoon Callout KEY

W	E	'	R	E		B	I	N	G	E	-
9	6		10	6		14	3	15	4	6	
W	A	T	C	H	I	N	G		A		
9	13	8	2	11	3	15	4		13		
S	H	O	W		A	B	O	U	T		
1	11	12	9		13	14	12	7	8		
S	U	P	E	R	H	E	R	O	E	S	!
1	7	5	6	10	11	6	10	12	6	1	

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We'd love to hear from you! Send us an email and share your experience with using the ideas in this newsletter or let us know what you would like to see in future issues.