Health Literacy: Barriers to Successful Patient-Doctor Communication Problem-Based Learning Lesson

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Lesson Background	NRS Levels
The Díaz family faces challenges navigating the U.S. health care system, in part because they have difficulty communicating with their doctor. The students read the Díaz family story and work in small groups to develop possible solutions.	Low to High Intermediate Basic Education, High Beginning ESL

Recommendations for Direct Instruction
Although standards are identified, there are no directions for explicit instruction. It is suggested that the instructor choose the right College and Career Readiness Standards level and then add in the direct instruction of the standards where appropriate. Currently, this lesson is complex enough for ESL or lower level ABE; however, for intermediate or higher ABE/HSE, the rigor of this lesson would need to be increased. There are lots of opportunities for adaptation. Strengths of this lesson include language for collaborating, which could be used for direct instruction; furthermore, there is a framework for identifying problems/consequences and deciding on a solution.

Project Title	Approximate Instruction Time
Barriers to Successful Patient-Doctor Communication	75 minutes

Instructional Objectives *(written in teacher language primarily derived from content standards and includes evidence of mastery)*:	Learning Target Statements *(written in student-friendly language and helps learners reflect on what they are able to do as a result of the project)* for learners' exit tickets, learning logs, or reflection:
By the end of this project, 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	Content objectives: • I can identify common communication problems between patients and health care workers. • I can analyze a doctor-and-patient communication problem (or problems) and pose solutions. • I can use a graphic organizer to categorize solutions and consequences while problem solving. Language objectives: • I can read closely and identify key details in a text. • I can actively participate in team and class discussions using academic or professional language to build consensus. • I can clarify using the teach-back method and other clarification strategies.

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ELA/Mathematics/ELP Standard(s) Addressed:	**College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards:** • **R1:** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. • **SL1:** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
Central Skills Taught:	☐ Adaptability and Willingness to Learn ☒ Communication ☒ Critical Thinking ☒ Interpersonal Skills ☒ Navigating Systems ☐ Problem Solving ☒ Processing and Analyzing Information ☐ Respecting Differences and Diversity ☒ Self-awareness
Language Demands: (Include academic language, language skills, etc.)	Demonstrate comprehension of domain-specific terms and phrases from the reading (*preeclampsia, at risk of*) as well as additional terminology from the websites if used during instruction. Academic discourse is required during the problem scenario discussions and while teams build consensus on their solutions and consequences chart, for example, identifying cause and effect: *If they <u>ask too many</u> <u>questions</u>, the doctor might/will <u>get annoyed</u>.* Phrases of affirmation: • That's an excellent solution.

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	• I hadn't thought of that consequence.
	• My solution is similar to …
	Phrases of disagreement:
	• I don't see it that way.
	• I disagree because …
Assessing Mastery of the Objective(s) and Central Skills: (Indicate <u>when</u> and <u>how</u> assessment – formative and/or summative - will occur during the project.	**Proof of Learning:** ☒ Via observation of a team task (e.g., discussion, work on project) ☐ Via team self-assessment ☒ Via individual self-assessment ☐ Via team product ☐ Via individual product ☐ Other (Please list): **Proof of Learning Tools:** ☒ Rubric ☐ Checklist ☐ Quiz ☐ Other (Please list): **Ongoing Formative Assessment** ☐ Nonverbal responses to comprehension questions (e.g., answer cards, Kahoot!) ☐ Peer-to-peer quizzing ☐ Exit/admit tickets ☐ KWL charts

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	☒ Other (Please list): <u>Graphic organizer</u>
Adaptations and/or Accommodations: *(How will you increase access to the content of the project? Identify differentiation strategies.)*	**For learners with limited language proficiency**: • Create a version of the problem scenario and the first two discussion questions that are level-appropriate. Share the scenario orally, first using visual support. • Confirm comprehension of the first two discussion questions and then have partners ask and answer the questions together, finding evidence for their answers in the text. • Distribute a T-chart to learners. Break apart the solution and consequence discussions. Model how to use the T-chart (on the board or poster paper) as the learners brainstorm solutions. Then, have learners copy the solutions onto their own T-charts. • Model identifying consequences using a think-aloud about the consequences of the first solution, writing your ideas on the right side of the T-cart across from the first solution. • Conduct a class brainstorm on the consequences of the remaining solutions. • The remaining activities in the lesson can be tackled by adjusting the language level of the exchange between the doctor and patient for the clarification strategy practice. **For more advanced learners**, draw on learners' personal experience of communication barriers in health care settings. Then, provide a more sophisticated scenario that employs more medical terminology. Have learners first make use of the website resources to confirm or build their comprehension of the terminology in the scenario, then proceed in teams to carry out the problem-solving process, and finally present their solution and support for their solution to the class.

Procedure	Description	Central Skills	Materials
Build understanding of problem-based learning. **Warm up to the topic or issue at hand.** Role of the teacher: Preteach. *Make sure the students understand the goals and benefits of a problem-based approach for language. If this is an English language acquisition class, emphasize the areas of English that are developed in problem-solving activities.* **Timing: 5 minutes**	Before beginning this lesson, the teacher explains to the students the benefits of problem-based learning. The teacher asks 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.	• Communication • Interpersonal Skills	
Meet the problem.	Working in groups of two to four, the students read the case example (Appendix	• Processing and Analyzing Information	• Diaz Family Story (Appendix A)

Procedure	Description	Central Skills	Materials
Role of the teacher: Introduce problem and vocabulary. *Introduce the students to the problem using pictures, video, or texts. Ask the students about previous personal experiences with the problem. Introduce vocabulary related to the problem. Provide prereading/previewing exercises about the problem.* *These can be preselected problems chosen by the teacher based on learner needs; alternatively, facilitate a process of learner-chosen problems.* **Timing: 5 minutes**	A) silently or take turns reading the story aloud.		
Explore knowns and unknowns. Role of the teacher: Group students and provide resources. *Make sure that the students understand the problem and what is expected of them. Emphasize that there is no single answer or solution and that they need to choose what appears to*	Working in groups of two to four, the students read the case example (Appendix A) silently or take turns reading the story aloud. The students then use the discussion questions to help them identify the problems raised in the story. • What problems do the Díaz family face? • What does it mean to be "at risk of preeclampsia"?	• Communication • Critical Thinking • Navigating Systems • Processing and Analyzing Information	• Diaz Family Story (Appendix A)

Procedure	Description	Central Skills	Materials
be the most viable solution to them and be prepared to explain why they chose that solution. Group the students according to their strengths. As with project-based learning, learners can take on different roles based on their strengths. *Provide access to resources such as the internet, books, magazines, brochures, newspapers, television, and community experts. Make sure that the students are aware of the range of resources available and know how to use them. Encourage the students to draw on materials in their first language and materials that present different viewpoints.* **Timing: 20 minutes**	• What should the Díaz family do? • Who might be able to help the Díaz family?		
Provide language supports for the students. <u>Role of the teacher:</u> Provide language frames the students may need (e.g., frames for stating a problem or proposing a solution).	Provide the students with a graphic organizer to use when they are identifying solutions and consequences. 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.	• Critical Thinking • Processing and Analyzing Information	• Graphic organizer for identifying solutions and consequences • Pencils

Procedure	Description	Central Skills	Materials
Provide planning tools (e.g., graphic organizers) for working through the problem and coming up with solutions. **Timing: 5 minutes**			

Name: ___	Emerging	Developing	Satisfactory	Exemplary
Student participated in small group discussion.				
Student can state the problem and recommend solutions.				

Procedure	Description	Central Skills	Materials
Generate possible solutions. **Consider consequences and choose the most viable solution.** Role of the teacher:	**Students:** The students identify and discuss possible solutions to the problem and the consequences of the suggested solutions. They may use the recommended websites	• Communication • Critical Thinking • Interpersonal Skills	• Whiteboard and markers

Procedure	Description	Central Skills	Materials
Observe and support. *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.* **Timing: 30 minutes**	to define medical terms and answer other questions they may have. They note their solutions and consequences in a graphic organizer. **Teacher:** Observe while the students are working together. Assist as necessary with finding resources. 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. To assess small-group work, have the students rate themselves on the following self-assessment scale: (See the following table.)	• Processing and Analyzing Information • Self-awareness	
Follow up and assess progress. <u>Role of the teacher:</u> Provide the students with opportunities to present and share the results of their work. Provide follow-up activities based on your observations and possibly provide	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. 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:	• Communication • Navigating Systems	

Procedure	Description	Central Skills	Materials
instruction on grammar, academic language, pronunciation, or pragmatic issues. Assess the students' participation in the activity and level of success and provide opportunities for peer assessment. **Timing: 10 minutes**	• I don't understand. Can you say that again? • I still don't understand. What does _____ mean? 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: • 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 _____." 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.		

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

Appendix A. The Díaz Family Story

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 six 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.nwiglobal.com/blog/hospitals-required-provide-language-accessservices/ — Read this article, "Are Hospitals Required to Provide Language Services?"