



OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINE SAFETY

LESSON 1: Comparing Over-the-Counter and Prescription Medicine

Students will learn the difference between over-the-counter medicine and prescription medicine, as well as the safety precautions of each.

Students will compare over-the-counter medicine and prescription medicine.

Grades: 5 and 6

Duration: 40 minutes

Pre-instructional Planning

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Define over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and prescription medicines
- Understand the similarities and differences between OTC medicines and prescription medicines
- Learn how to responsibly use medicine

MATERIALS

- Over-the-Counter vs. Prescription Medicines printable
- OTC Medicine Safety Pre-Assessment Quiz printable
- OTC Medicine Safety Answer Key printable
- Over-the-Counter Medicine Safety Classroom Poster printable
- Medicine Safety for Families Newsletter printable
- Empty fever reducer medicine bottle with dosing cup
- Paper

- Pen or pencil
- **Optional:** Computer with Internet access

During Instruction

SET UP

1. Before each lesson in the OTC Medicine Safety program, inform students that they should never take medicine without the supervision of a parent or trusted adult.
2. Make copies of the printables for each student in your class.

LESSON DIRECTIONS

Step 1: Assess students' knowledge of medication before you begin. Explain that research shows students in their age range are beginning to self-medicate; and without the information and comprehensive understanding that they need to make safe choices about medicine, kids can easily do more harm than good. Tell students that it's important to have an understanding of safe medicine use before they become more responsible for their own self-care. Have students complete the OTC Medicine Safety Pre-Assessment Quiz printable. Save the completed quizzes, as students will complete the same quiz for a post-program comparison.

Step 2: Begin a class discussion by asking students to brainstorm a list of symptoms they have had when they were not feeling well. (Answers may include: upset stomach, headache, fever, cough, etc.)

Step 3: Then invite students to share a personal story that describes what happens when they get sick. (Answers may include: go to the doctor, take medicine, rest, drink water or juice, stay home from school, etc.)

Step 4: Discuss how there are many different ways that doctors treat sickness, one of which is recommending medicine. Medicines fall into two main categories: OTC or prescription. These categories are defined as follows:

Over-the-counter (OTC) medicine: Medicine that is bought in a pharmacy, drugstore, or supermarket and obtained without the need for a doctor's prescription.

Prescription (Rx) medicine: Medicine that is specially ordered for you by a doctor or other qualified healthcare practitioner, available only from the pharmacist.

If students need more support, ask them to brainstorm different medicines they are familiar with. As a class, decide whether each medication belongs in the OTC or Rx category. Make sure the list includes OTC medicines that students may not think of as medicines, such as cough drops and eye drops.

Step 5: At the front of the class, display and identify each of these components: a sample of an OTC bottle of fever reducer, the age-appropriate dosing device (child dosing cup), the sealed bottle PDF, the medicine label PDF, and the Over-the-Counter Medicine Safety Classroom Poster printable.

Step 6: Describe how every medicine is unique and has a certain set of characteristics that enable it to treat specific symptoms. Have students recall a time when they had to take medicine. Ask students:

- What measuring tools or devices has your parent or a trusted adult used to give you liquid medicines?
- Has anyone ever taken medicine without the permission of a trusted adult? If so, why?
- Have you ever read the Drug Facts label on an OTC medicine container?

Step 7: Explain how every medicine comes with dosing directions, and that dosing instructions on OTC medicines appear on the Drug Facts label. **Reinforce the importance of always communicating with a trusted adult before taking any medicine.** The purpose of these instructions is to help make sure that the medicine is taken correctly. When we do not follow instructions, the medicine may not work the way it is meant to, it can make you feel worse, or it can even hurt you. You may have allergic reactions or experience side effects like dizziness or nausea. Sometimes when you mix certain foods with a medicine, the medicine does not work properly.

Step 8: Organize the class into groups of five or six. Distribute the Over-the-Counter vs. Prescription Medicines printable and have teams complete it. Discuss their answers as a class and invite any follow-up questions about the lesson.

Step 9: Distribute the Medicine Safety for Families Newsletter printable and encourage the students to continue the discussion at home.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Provide students with the following prompt:

How does a medicine become approved for over-the-counter use? Are there any medicines that used to be available by prescription only but are now available over-the-counter? Research the answers to these questions, and write a paragraph describing your findings.

Encourage students to discuss what they have learned about the Poison Help number. Distribute copies of the Medicine Safety for Families Newsletter printable, and encourage students to post the number in a visible place in their home, and to get family members to save the number in their mobile phones.



OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINE SAFETY

LESSON 2: Reading and Understanding the Drug Facts Label

Students will learn how to properly read a drug facts label.

Students will use visuals to learn how to read the drug facts label.

Grades: 5 and 6

Duration: Two 40-minute class periods

Pre-instructional Planning

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Identify the drug facts label
- Learn the definitions of the terms on the drug facts label
- Know the importance of reading and understanding all of the information on the drug facts label
- Learn the potential consequences of not reading and understanding all of the information on the drug facts label
- Identify the steps to take in the event of a medicine mistake

MATERIALS

- [FDA's Medicines in My Home video](#)
- Understanding the Drug Facts Label printable
- OTC Medicine Safety Answer Key printable
- Over-the-Counter Medicine Safety Classroom Poster printable
- Find a Drug Facts Label Scavenger Hunt printable
- Medicine Safety for Families Newsletter printable
- Two empty fever-reducer bottles (suggestion: use a liquid product and a solid-dose product)
- Two empty bottles of pain reliever

- Two empty bottles of antacids
- Two empty bags of cough drops
- Paper and pen or pencil
- Computer with Internet access and projector
- **Optional:** Additional empty medicine containers that correspond to the Find a Drug Facts Label Scavenger Hunt printable
- **Optional:** Whiteboard
- **Optional:** *The Perfect Project* Digital Storybook

During Instruction

SET UP

1. Before each lesson in the OTC Medicine Safety program, inform students that they should never take medicine without the supervision of a parent or trusted adult.
2. Make copies of the printables for each student in your class.
3. Set up a projector to show the FDA's Medicines in My Home video and *The Perfect Project* Digital Storybook to your students.

LESSON DIRECTIONS

Step 1: Begin the discussion by challenging students to focus on the overall importance of reading directions. Ask students:

- What could happen if you only read part of the directions on a test?

Discuss responses and emphasize the importance of reading informational text in order to understand key information or directions that are vital to completing a task properly or getting the desired results.

Step 2: Explain that all directions are not the same, meaning that sometimes the directions won't appear at the top of the page like on a test. You may have to look for them, and you should always ask your teacher, parent, or a trusted adult to clarify them so you fully understand what to do.

Step 3: Explain that the class is going to learn about the importance of reading and following all of the instructions found on the drug facts label of OTC medicines.

Step 4: Organize the class into groups of five or six students and give one medicine container to each group. Distribute Understanding the Drug Facts Label printable.

Step 5: Show the [FDA's Medicines in My Home video](#) pause it when necessary to highlight the different sections on the drug facts label and have students ask questions. In support of the video, have students look closely at the medicine samples they have in their groups.

Step 6: Before beginning the Understanding the Drug Facts Label PDF, ask students:

- Which medicine does your group have?
- Where are the directions on your group's medicine and what do they tell you?
- Where are the warnings?
- Where is the ingredients section?

Step 7: Explain that directions and drug information for OTC medicines are found on Drug Facts labels, which appear on OTC medicines per FDA regulation.

Step 8: Walk students through each section of the labels on the Understanding the Drug Facts Label PDF. Create a vocabulary list to reinforce new terms, explaining that these terms provide us with the information we need to use medicine responsibly. If you are using a whiteboard, project the image of the Drug Facts Label image onto the board. Review the different sections of the label (use the Over-the-Counter Medicine Safety Classroom Poster printable to support the discussion) and reinforce the new vocabulary words or terms:

Key Terms

- **Active Ingredients:** The ingredients in the medicine that make it work.
- **Warnings:** Safety information including side effects, the questions you should ask a doctor before taking the medicine, and which medicines to avoid using at the same time.
- **Other Information:** How to store the medicine.
- **Uses:** Describes the symptoms that the medicine treats.
- **Directions:** Indicates the amount or dose of medicine to take, how often to take it, and how much you can take in one day.
- **Inactive Ingredients:** Ingredients not intended to treat your symptoms (e.g. preservatives, flavorings).
- **Questions or Comments?:** Call the company if you have questions about a specific medicine.

Step 9: Add the new terms to the whiteboard as you review each and discuss the definitions. Have students refer to their medicine containers to reinforce these terms.

Step 10: If students need more practice with reading drug facts labels on different medicines, provide an assortment of empty medicine bottles, bags, or boxes, and the Find a Drug Facts Label Scavenger Hunt printable

Step 11: Explain to students that when medicines are not used properly, real consequences, including serious harm, may result. **Reinforce the importance of always communicating with a trusted adult before taking any medicine.** The consequences of using medicine improperly can include:

- Ingredients may cause allergic reactions.

- Medicines can be harmful if you take too much and may not be effective if you do not take the proper dose.
- Certain medicines can interact with other medicines and may cause side effects or harm when mixed.
- Many medicines contain the same active ingredients, and should never be taken at the same time.

Step 12: Discuss how to use the **Poison Help number, 1-800-222-1222**. This number should be used if a student or his or her parent or a trusted adult has questions about how to take or give medicine, if there's been a medicine mistake, or if there's been an accidental ingestion of medicine. Inform students of the following:

- Calls are free.
- Calls are confidential.
- Experts answer the phone 24/7, 365 days a year.
- Unlike 911, it doesn't have to be an emergency to call. Call with questions or for information, or if you have an emergency.
- Poison center experts get more than 3 million calls a year about all kinds of things. They have heard everything, so don't be embarrassed to call.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

1. Provide students with the following prompt:

Research the regulation that required drug facts labels to appear on OTC medicines. Write a paragraph to describe the regulation and identify some of the problems that it helped to address.

2. Project *The Perfect Project* Digital Storybook for students to view. Have students discuss what they have learned about the Poison Help number. Post the number in a visible place in their home and encourage family members to save the number in their mobile phones.

HOME CONNECTION

If you haven't already, send home the Medicine Safety for Families Newsletter printable so students may continue the discussion at home.



OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINE SAFETY

LESSON 3: Understanding Medicine Measuring Tools, Storage, and Safe Disposal

Students will practice pointing out information on the drug facts label and learn about measuring tools, where to store medicine, and how to safely dispose of it.

Students will learn the importance of reading dosing instructions and where to properly store medicine.

Grades: 5 and 6

Duration: 40 minutes

Pre-instructional Planning

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Identify information found in dosing instructions on drug facts labels (when, how, and how often to take the medicine)
- Explain the importance of reading and understanding dosing information
- Understand why using proper dosing tools is important
- Discuss possible consequences of not following dosing instructions
- Describe what makes a location safe or unsafe for medicine storage
- Identify potential consequences of unsafe medicine storage
- Brainstorm ways students can talk to family members about safe medicine storage and safe disposal

MATERIALS

- Responsible Medicine Dosing printable
- OTC Medicine Safety Answer Key printable

- Safe Medicine Storage printable
- Over-the-Counter Medicine Safety Classroom Poster printable
- [Up and Away interactive website](#)
- Pediatric medicine bottle filled with colored water
- Dosing device that came with pediatric medicine
- Adult medicine bottle filled with different-colored water
- Dosing device that came with adult medicine
- Kitchen spoons of different sizes
- Paper and pen or pencil
- Medicine Safety for Families Newsletter printable
- Computer with internet access
- Projector
- Whiteboard and markers

During Instruction

SET UP

1. Before each lesson in the OTC Medicine Safety program, inform students that they should never take medicine without the supervision of a parent or trusted adult.
2. Make copies of the printables for each student in your class.
3. Set up a projector to visit the [Up and Away website](#).

LESSON DIRECTIONS

Step 1: Begin with a class discussion about the importance of using the right tools when measuring different things. Ask students:

- If I wanted to measure how far it is from the school to my house, would I use a ruler? Why or why not?
- What are some different ways that people make mistakes when measuring things out?

Step 2: Encourage students to think about why accurate measurements are important. Ask:

- When is it okay to get less-accurate measurements or even to estimate?
- When is it important to get really accurate measurements? Why?

Step 3: Ask students to think back to Lesson 2: Reading and Understanding the *Drug Facts* Label.

- Do you remember which section of the label talks about how much medicine to take?

Discuss different information contained in the Directions section of the Drug Facts label (amount of medicine to take, how often to take the medicine, and how to take it). If you deem it appropriate, display the Over-the-Counter Medicine Safety Classroom Poster printable. Explain that students are

going to learn why reading and understanding dosing instructions is important, and why medicines should always be measured using the proper dosing devices under adult supervision.

Step 4: Show students the different medicine bottles (filled with colored water) and measuring devices.

Step 5: Read the dosing information for the pediatric medicine. Then try to measure out the correct dose using the dosing devices that are not meant for the pediatric medicine. Reflect on the results. Next, measure out the dose using the correct dosing device. Discuss with the class why using the correct device is important.

Step 6: Repeat the activity with the adult medicine, but try to measure it out with devices that are too small for the correct dose. Reiterate the potential dangers of using the wrong device and why using the correct one is important.

Step 7: Show students a medicine bottle that recommends a dose of 2 teaspoons of medicine. Then take out a handful of different-size household spoons, the kind that students might find in their kitchen drawers at home. Measure out 2 spoonfuls of “medicine” into any of the spoons, pouring the measured liquid into a dosing cup that has an accurate measurement for 2 teaspoons. Discuss the discrepancy with the class.

Step 8: Distribute the Responsible Medicine Dosing printable. Have students complete the worksheet; this can either be done individually or you can lead the class and work through it together, discussing each example.

Step 9: Talk about how measuring doses incorrectly (measuring out tablespoons instead of teaspoons, for example) can cause an overdose or underdose. **Reinforce the importance of always communicating with a trusted adult before taking any medicine.** Connect this discussion with a brief introduction to safe storage, which, when ignored, may lead to accidental ingestion and medicine poisoning.

Step 10: Ask students to name the locations where medicines are stored in their households. Write answers on the board for students to refer to later. Common answers may include kitchen cabinet, bathroom cabinets, or parents’ or trusted adult’s bedroom.

As students answer, ask for specifics.

- Are the medicines in drawers or cabinets or on the countertop?
- Are the medicines easy for young children to see or reach?

Get students thinking about how easy it is for young children in the house to find medicine. Explain that medicines need to be kept out of reach and sight of their naturally curious younger brothers and sisters, or young visitors to their home.

Step 11: If using a whiteboard, visit the [Up and Away interactive website](#) to learn more.

Step 12: Distribute the Safe Medicine Storage printable. Explain to students that they are looking at the inside of a home and it is their job to identify the medicine storage errors that could lead to accidental medicine poisoning.

Step 13: Ask students how their families get rid of unused medicine. Common answers may include putting the medicine in the trash or flushing the medicine.

Step 14: Explain to students that just as safe storage is important for keeping medicines away from people who shouldn't have them, safe disposal is also important. Before throwing away OTC medicines, mix them with an unappealing substance (such as kitty litter or coffee grounds) and place them in a closed container (such as a sealed plastic bag). The FDA has additional guidelines for certain prescription medicines (like disposal by flushing or using the National Take-Back Initiative). The Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222) can answer any questions you have about how to dispose of medicines.

- Why do you think that the FDA has these guidelines for safe disposal of medicines?
- What could happen if a medicine is not disposed of properly?

Step 15: After the students have completed their Responsible Medicine Dosing printable, continue the discussion.

- What did you learn about safe storage?
- Is there anything from today's discussion that might be important to mention at home?

Step 16: After you've discussed safe storage of OTC medicines as well as being mindful of the importance of reading and understanding dosing information, explain that you'll be moving on to misuse in Lesson 4.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

1. Ask students to create a tool or advertisement to help people remember how to keep a home medicine-safe. Some possibilities include:

- An idea for an app that can help families remember all of the ways to make a home medicine-safe. Research for the app idea may involve connecting with a local health expert (pharmacist, nurse, etc.) or an expert from an organization similar to Safe Kids via email for insight.
- A jingle for the Poison Control Center's purpose and phone number
- A mnemonic device to remember the directions for safe medicine storage and disposal
- A survey to distribute to families to determine how medicine-safe their home is

HOME CONNECTION

1. If you haven't already, send home the Medicine Safety for Families Newsletter printable so students may continue the discussion at home.

2. Encourage students to discuss what they have learned about the Poison Help number, to post the number in a visible place in their homes, and to get family members to save the number in their mobile phones.



OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINE SAFETY

LESSON 4: Exploring the Harms of Medicine Misuse

Students will learn about the misuses of medicine and how to use them responsibly.

Students will learn that misusing medicine can be harmful.

Grades: 5 and 6

Duration: 40 minutes

Pre-instructional Planning

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Define "misuse" as it relates to over-the-counter (OTC) medicines.
- Understand why misusing OTC medicines can be harmful.
- Identify the steps to take when encountering an OTC medicine misuse situation.

Note: After completing Lessons 1–3, students will have foundational knowledge about OTC medicines, the Drug Facts label, and the importance of using the dosing device that comes with the medicine.

MATERIALS

- OTC Medicine Safety for the Community printable
- OTC Medicine Safety Answer Key printable
- Culminating Student Activities printable
- Medicine Misuse Activity Pages printable
- Computer and projector

- OTC Medicine Safety’s Family Newsletter printable
- **Optional:** Computer with Internet access for student use

During Instruction

SET UP

1. Before each lesson in the OTC Medicine Safety program, inform students that they should never take medicine without the supervision of a parent or trusted adult.
2. Set up your computer and a projector to show students the Medicine Misuse Activity Pages printable.
3. Make copies of the printables for each student in your class. If you don’t want to project the Medicine Misuse Activity Pages printable, make copies of this as well.

LESSON DIRECTIONS

Part 1

Step 1: Begin this lesson by prompting an open class discussion:

- **Do you think OTC medicines are dangerous if they are misused, or used in a manner other than what is directed by the Drug Facts label or a doctor?**

Allow students to offer opinions. Through a show of hands, tally the "yes" versus "no" opinions on the board. Inform students that by the end of this lesson, the class will revisit the question.

Step 2: Help illuminate how students’ preconceived ideas can sometimes cloud the real facts about a topic. Reinforce this idea by projecting (or distributing) the Medicine Misuse Activity Pages (sun, potatoes, vitamins, and ibuprofen). Do not reveal the “Answer” or “Now You Know” sections on each slide. At the end, ask students:

- **How are these three items related?**

Answer: All are okay when used or stored properly and used in moderation, but when they are not, all can have detrimental health effects.

Step 3: Afterward, go back through the Medicine Misuse Activity Pages printable and uncover the answers beneath each item.

SLIDE #1: Sun

ANSWER: Fifteen minutes of sun per day is essential for maintaining a healthy level of vitamin D, which promotes the retention of calcium, mostly in your bones. Calcium is very important in the development of your bones and teeth. Too much sun, however, may cause

skin damage or even skin cancer. To protect against damage from the sun's rays, avoid the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when its rays are strongest; wear protective clothing, and use a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher.*

Now you know: Use a good sunscreen when outdoors for more than 15 minutes and avoid prolonged sun exposure.

[*Source: American Skin Association]

SLIDE #2: Potatoes

ANSWER: Potatoes are an excellent source of carbohydrates, which your body needs for energy. But potatoes naturally contain solanine, a toxic ingredient that can cause a number of health problems. Solanine thrives in well-lit environments and is present when you see a green tinge under the potato's skin and experience a bitter taste.

Now you know: Store potatoes in a cool, dark place and be on the lookout for discoloration and bad taste.

SLIDE #3: Vitamins

ANSWER: Vitamins can be purchased over the counter and are widely available. They're easy to access, but can have risks if not used appropriately. They should be taken under the guidance of a parent or trusted adult. Vitamins can be dangerous if they're misused or if a person isn't using them in accordance with the *Supplement Facts* label on the bottle.

Now you know: Read the label and talk to a trusted adult before taking vitamins.

SLIDE #4: Ibuprofen

ANSWER: Ibuprofen has been used for decades for pain relief and is available over the counter. When ibuprofen is used as directed, it reduces inflammation (swelling) and can reduce fevers. However, large doses of ibuprofen can cause damage to the stomach or intestines.

Now you know: Follow directions on the Drug Facts label and talk to a trusted adult before taking an anti-inflammatory medicine.

PART 2

Step 1: Discuss how the three items from the Medicine Misuse Activity Pages are common in our lives and appear safe, but there are specific guidelines for using or consuming them. If you do not

follow the safety precautions for proper use and storage, there could be harmful consequences. Explain that when you dig a little deeper, you often discover new information that you might ordinarily overlook.

Ask students:

- **Can you think of other items you come in contact with regularly that are safe when used properly, but dangerous when misused?**

Answers may include: appliances, cars, medicines, cleaning supplies, etc.

Step 2: Select medicine as a topic for further discussion. Post the following questions on chart paper around the room. Have students rotate to the six stations and write down their responses to this prompt:

- **Are the following actions safe or dangerous?**
- **What negative effects could result from:**
 - Not reading and following the Drug Facts label?
 - Taking more than the recommended dose?
 - Redosing more frequently than directed on the label?
 - Using more than one medicine with the same kind of active ingredient at the same time?
 - Taking medicines for longer than directed on the label?
 - Taking medicines for reasons or symptoms other than what is directed on the label?

If students have access to technology, they could quickly research the negative effects as they rotate through the stations. Alternatively, students could brainstorm ideas with a partner, then share their answers with the entire class.

Step 3: During the discussion of students' responses, make sure that students understand that all of these scenarios are dangerous because there are very real and potentially dangerous consequences when someone misuses OTC medicines. The Drug Facts label provides instructions for using the medicine safely. OTC medicines can be harmful if misused or if not used as directed by the Drug Facts label.

Step 4: Ask students:

- **What is the perception among your friends about misusing prescription or OTC medicines?**

Answers may include: Misusing prescription drugs is dangerous and can be deadly; no one really gets hurt from misusing OTC medicines.

- **Based on the information you've learned in OTC Medicine Safety, do you believe that there is a need to inform people about the dangers of misusing OTC medicines?**

Step 5: Distribute OTC Medicine Safety for the Community printable and invite students to conduct research for their writing via OTC Medicine Safety or an additional web resource. Explain to students that this worksheet can be used to launch a larger community-wide campaign. A coalition of families, students, and community leaders can show collective support for making their communities and schools safer places for children and their families. A coalition will help to increase and disseminate information within the school and community about the safe use and storage of OTC medicines and the dangers of misuse. Students can work with their families and neighbors to submit a collection of letters to local town officials and leaders that encourage getting the word out about safe medicine use.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Discuss the impact of visuals or videos in helping to increase the safe use and storage of OTC medicines, and assign a photo or video documentary that deals with taking safety precautions at home.

HOME CONNECTIONS

1. After you've introduced the concept of "misuse" as it pertains to OTC medicines, reviewed the importance of understanding the Drug Facts label, and explained that safety precautions for proper use and storage are critical, tell students that you'll be moving on to the program's Culminating Student Activities printable.
2. Send home the OTC Medicine Safety's Family Newsletter printable so students may continue the discussion at home. Encourage students to discuss what they have learned about the Poison Help number, to post the number in a visible place in their home, and to get family members to save the number in their mobile phones.



OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINE SAFETY

LESSON 5: Reading About Medicine Safety: A Review of Informational Text Features

Students will strengthen their analysis skills while also learning about a critical topic—medicine safety.

Students will read informational texts about medicine safety.

Grades: 5 and 6

Duration: 45 minutes

Pre-instructional Planning

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Identify the central idea and key details of an informational text
- Create text features to enhance an informational text

MATERIALS

- Know the Facts: Over-the-Counter vs. Prescription Medicines printable
- Over-the-Counter Medicine Safety Classroom Poster printable
- Chart of Text Feature Options printable
- Informational Text Features printable
- Pen or pencil per student
- Whiteboard

During Instruction

LESSON DIRECTIONS

Step 1: Tell students that they will be reading an article about medicine safety. Ask them what they already know about the topic of medicine, such as the purposes of medicines, types of medicines, medicine safety, etc. Create a word splash on the board to record students' ideas.

Step 2: After students brainstorm their ideas, be sure to inform students that they should only take medicine with the supervision of a parent or trusted adult.

Step 3: Explain that students are going to read an article that includes a lot of information about medicine safety, but that the article is missing many text features that would help the reader understand the text.

Step 4: Review the relevant text features (title, section heading, pull-out quote, diagram, and glossary). Refer to the Over-the-Counter Medicine Safety Classroom Poster printable to review some of the text features while also previewing the content of the article. Alternatively, refer to an informational article the class has read recently. If needed, project the Informational Text Features image and review the relevant text features. Encourage students to share their ideas about the uses for each text feature before revealing each row.

Step 5: Distribute Know the Facts: Over-the-Counter vs. Prescription Medicines printable with blank gaps in place of text features. Students should imagine that they are editors who are preparing the article to be published, and they want to make sure that all of the text features will help readers understand the key ideas in the article.

Step 6: After students have finished reading the Know the Facts: Over-the-Counter vs. Prescription Medicines printable and adding their text features, ask them to complete the accompanying worksheet. They will need to explain their choices for the text features they filled in, as well as answer a series of critical-thinking questions on the content of the article.

SUPPORTING ALL LEARNERS

If necessary, provide students who need more support with options for the text features using the Chart of Text Feature Options image.

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Explain to students that they will now have a chance to create a public service announcement (PSA) or poster to share the key information from the article and worksheet printable with the rest of the school community.

Explain that some PSAs or posters will be selected to hang in the nurse's office, main office, or hallway. For students who find competition invigorating, this activity could culminate in a class vote for the top entry, or top five entries, to be showcased (especially if wall space is at a premium). Alternately, a new group of posters could be showcased each week until all entries have had a chance to be in the spotlight.

HOME CONNECTIONS

Family Connection: Visit the family page for take-home options.