**Letter to the Editor—Beginning Health Advocate**

NOTE: Teachers should decide whether to use the lesson for BHA (Beginning Health advocates) or AHA (Advanced Health Advocates), depending on the students’ prior experiences with Healthy NewsWorks and students’ developmental/ability levels.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Objective(s)</th>
<th>Students will brainstorm ideas relating to one or more health-related topics, and then choose one and write Letters to the Editor of the school health newspaper.</th>
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| **Standards Addressed** | **W.5.1** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.  
**W.5.1.A** Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer’s purpose.  
**W.5.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. |
| **Essential Understandings** | 1. Readers think and have strong opinions about health issues.  
2. Readers can turn their opinions into written responses that will make other people think.  
3. Readers can get their writing published in future newspapers. |
| **Key Vocabulary** | **editor** - a person who is in charge of and decides the final content of a text, such as a newspaper or magazine.  
**opinion** – a belief, thought, or feeling  
**fact** – a true piece of information  
**response** - a verbal or written answer to a question or new information learned. |
| **Materials Needed** | 1. School health newspapers  
2. An article related to one of the issues related to heart health and the environment. Example below uses “smoking.”  
3. An article related to health that is of interest to your students. |
| **Introduction** | Choose a single health issue that you think students will care about. This issue can be one that:  
- Is featured in an article in the school’s newspaper  
- Is a topical issue for the year’s theme which is heart health and the environment (Smoking; stress; heart health & spending time outdoors; the benefits of locally grown fruits and vegetables)  
- Is based on other health issues which interest students (pollution, climate change) |
| **Lesson** | 1. Read together a select article or story featuring one or more health issues.  
2. Discuss by asking students for comments, questions, or connections (CQC) to the issue raised by the article or story  
   *** Note a few of students’ CQCs on board or chart paper  
3. Model how a CQC can turn into a RESPONSE (in pictures and/or words). Explain that you could send this response to the newspaper editors and they could decide to print it in the next paper.  
   *** Use sentence starters and a sample CONNECTION to model a student-written RESPONSE on the board; i.e., “This article tells about how bad secondhand smoke is. I remember one time I was in a friend’s...” |
car and they were smoking. My eyes started to tear and it smelled terrible. I think one thing I can do is tell my friend about second-hand smoke, and I think smokers should only smoke when they are alone.”

4. Pair students to practice using a CQC into an oral response.
5. Listen to a few responses
6. Write a whole-class Letter to the Editor.

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<th>Dig Deeper (Optional)</th>
<th>If students “get it,” they can write individual responses, accompanied by illustrations.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check for Understanding</td>
<td>Exit slip: Ask students to choose another CQC from those generated today and tell how they might make it into a response/letter to the editor.</td>
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**Letter to the Editor**

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