



Clearing The Smoke

Creating Anti-Smoking Ad Campaigns

Subjects: Health, Communication Arts

Overview:

Students explore the many dangers and disadvantages of cigarette smoking in order to create anti-smoking campaigns geared towards other students.

Suggested Time:

2 class sessions, plus homework

Resources/Materials:

The following items are needed:

- student journals
- pens, pencils, paper
- information about the effects of cigarette smoking and smoking statistics (brochures obtained from appropriate medical organizations, health reference books, computers with Internet access)

Activities/Procedures:

1. WARM-UP: In the first five minutes of class, students respond to the following questions in their journals or on a sheet of paper:

OBJECTIVES:



Students will:

1. List reasons why people smoke and reasons why people should not smoke; evaluate whether any of the reasons why people smoke are justifiable and why people smoke when they know that smoking is hazardous behavior.
2. Develop a list of creative ways to disseminate information about the hazards of cigarette smoking in an ad campaign geared towards their peers; develop a set of questions that students feel they need to answer through research to convince other kids not to smoke.
3. Explore the answers to class-developed research questions by using available classroom research materials.
4. Design an anti-smoking ad campaign for other students their age that incorporates the information gained through group research.

Activities/Procedures (Cont.):

Fold a piece of paper in your journal lengthwise. Label the left column "Why" and the right column "Why Not." Then, in the "Why" column, create a list of different reasons why someone might smoke cigarettes. In the "Why Not" column, create a list of reasons why people should not smoke cigarettes.

After five minutes, ask students to share their lists, recording student responses on the board in the two columns. Do students feel that any of the reasons for smoking are justifiable? Why do people smoke if they know the dangers listed in the "Why Not" column?

2. Explain to students that they will be working on *ad campaigns* geared to kids their age to inform them of the dangers and disadvantages of smoking cigarettes. Like all good ad campaigns, the beginning step is research. As a class, brainstorm all of the different questions that students feel they need to answer if they are going to convince other kids not to smoke (e.g., What are the immediate health effects of smoking? What are the long-term health effects of smoking? How much does it cost to smoke? How many people actually smoke? Are they glad they started? Who is "pushing" smoking and why?) Try to develop a comprehensive list of questions.

3. Divide students into small groups of three to five students each, and make available research materials (fact sheets, brochures, etc.) for students to use to answer all of the questions developed in the brainstorm. If computers are available, the small groups of students can work together on a "web-quest" to find answers to their questions. One person in each group should write down the questions so that if the group does not complete its research during the class period, they can finish it as homework.



4. When the research is completed, brainstorm and list creative ways to disseminate this information to kids, in a way that will be attention-getting and appealing to them (commercials, posters, quizzes with answer sheets, flyers, etc.)
5. Have each group select a “theme” on which to build an informative anti-smoking ad campaign (e.g., negative health effects, the social undesirability of smoking, the costs involved). Then, have each group create materials for their campaign. To do so, they need to choose a media to use (such as posters), create an appealing and memorable anti-smoking slogan, and design their product(s) in a way that is visually appealing and attention-grabbing.
6. Once each group completes its project, distribute and/or display it throughout the school.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Why do people start smoking cigarettes?
- Why do people smoke when they know that it is damaging to their health?
- What types of physical damage can smoking cigarettes cause?
- What social, political, and economic factors may cause changes in the number of people who smoke cigarettes from year to year?
- What is smoking cessation, and what different methods are available?
- How might the race, gender, and economic backgrounds of children and adults affect whether or not they smoke?
- What legislation in the United States has been passed to ban smoking in specific areas, and do you think that this legislation is effective and/ or necessary?
- What responsibilities, if any, do you feel the media has to children to present the dangers of smoking?
- Does smoking endanger other people besides the one smoking? If so, how?



Method of Evaluation:

Students can be evaluated on their initial journal response, participation in class discussions and brainstorm, complete and accurate group answers to class-developed research questions, and thoughtful and creative anti-smoking ad campaign geared toward other students their age.

Extension/Reinforcement:

1. Research and create a display about how cigarettes affect the human body. Students can also research how other types of drugs affect the body, as well as the nature of addictions.
2. Create, distribute, and analyze a survey in your school about views of smoking among students and adults. Then, publish the results in your school newspaper or in a visible area in your school.
3. Conduct online research about diseases that develop due to different kinds of tobacco use (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, and smokeless tobacco.) Present your research to your class.
4. Keep a log of instances in which a character smokes on a television show over the course of a few days. How often does the character smoke on this particular episode? When is the character shown smoking? (e.g., after a meal, in a time of stress) How is smoking presented (i.e., a glamorous action or a terrible habit)? Why do actors smoke in their roles?
5. Learn about the recent tobacco settlements by reading and discussing newspaper articles about the causes and results of legal action against tobacco companies.
6. Explore the environmental issues that stem from cigarette smoking and the emission of other toxins into the atmosphere.
7. Invite a doctor or other health practitioner who is involved in helping people to stop smoking to come to your class to talk about methods of smoking cessation and the hazards associated with smoking cigarettes.