

Everyday Literacy

Book 2

by Anne Vize



Contents

Introduction	1
Unit 1 Healthy Living	9
Unit 2 Living for Tomorrow	33
Unit 3 Using Forms	57
Unit 4 Cooking up a Storm	75

SAMPLE

Introduction

The purpose of this book is to provide information and meaningful activities for teachers working with students who have low literacy skills and therefore have a special learning need related to their literacy learning.

They may be:

- students who have missed large or critical parts of their schooling due to health issues, frequent absenteeism, a move from one country to another, or family difficulties
- students who are English Language Learners, learning English as an additional language
- students who have an intellectual disability
- students who have a learning disability
- students with a physical disability
- students who have struggled with their reading and writing throughout their schooling.

Teaching situations for teenagers vary, although most attend mainstream secondary schools. Some students attend alternative settings, such as TAFE programs, community centre programs, specific ESL or ELL programs, or special schools. Some students attend a mainstream setting with additional support, for example with part or full time integration aide support in the classroom.

It is important to consider that students with low literacy skills may suffer additional difficulties associated with their poor reading and writing. They may present with:

- dual or multiple disabilities which can make learning a challenge
- a low self esteem
- high rates of absenteeism
- a reluctance to take risks and attempt new challenges
- a preconceived belief that they will fail at reading related tasks
- strengths in other areas, such as drawing, sport or music, which may be quite highly developed.

Of course, this will not be the case for all students with low literacy levels. However, it is useful as a teacher to think about the needs of the whole student, and to avoid working just with literacy problems in isolation. Work with strengths and develop strategies for managing weaknesses.

In this book

This is the second in the '*Everyday Literacy*' series of books. It provides skill building activities for young people who have begun to learn some general literacy skills, and have some ability to:

- read a basic sight vocabulary
- decode words
- comprehend factual information from text
- apply their own decoding strategies to their reading
- direct their own learning

Unit 1

Healthy Living



Teacher 'Grab and Go'

Grab a quick activity idea related to a literacy skills area relevant to your students and their current learning needs. These activities are all designed to be quick to organise and implement, with little or minimal equipment and resources. They have been arranged under skills areas to make them easy to locate and adapt to your own teaching purposes and situation.

Read

- Practise practical reading tasks such as reading the labels on medicines (prescription and non prescription). Ensure all bottles and packets are completely empty before making them available to students. Ask at your local chemist for empty sample boxes, or make up your own large scale examples by pasting paper labels onto soft drink bottles.
- Information brochures and fact sheets (available from most large chemists) about a range of health related issues relevant to teenagers and young adults.
- Reputable websites such as Child and Youth Health (South Australia, www.cyh.com), the Better Health Channel (Victoria, www.betterhealthchannel.vic.gov.au) or Family Planning (Victoria www.fpv.org.au; NSW, www.fpahealth.org.au; Queensland, www.fpq.com.au) .
- Visit multicultural websites such as the Multicultural Communication Health Service (NSW) and help English language learners access information in their first language on a range of relevant health topics.
- Examples of scam and spam health related emails (a quick visit to your own spam box should provide an ample supply!). Discuss warning signs that an email is not

from a reputable source, and ask students to highlight these signs on copies of the emails. Check content of spam emails fully before making them available to students.

- Newspaper, magazine stories or web pages about young people who have faced health difficulties and dealt with them successfully. Consider both the role of young people as central characters in a health related story, as well as young people taking the role of carer for another family member. Try some of the state based Young Carer's websites such as www.youngcarersnsw.asn.au, www.carerswa.asn.au or www.carers-sa.asn.au for sample stories, discussion boards and tips written by young people who are caring for a family member.
- Read fiction stories and non fiction material as a class which focus on people with a wide range of abilities, strengths, weaknesses and characteristics. For example:
 - Blackstone, M and Guest, E.H (2000) *Girl Stuff: A survival guide to growing up*. Harcourt, FL. (Wide ranging information about adolescence)
 - Cooke, K (2007) *Girl Stuff – your full on guide to the teen years*, Australia Penguin Viking (teen health, lifestyle, hygiene, sexuality information) Note – may be in the 'adult non fiction' section of the library – check content suitability for younger teen readers.
 - Levithan, D (2003) *Boy Meets Boy* New York, Alfred A Knopf. (Same sex relationships)
 - Myers, A (2000) *Ethan Between Us*. New York, Walker. (schizophrenia, friendship)
 - Trueman, T (2004) *Cruise Control*. New York, Harper Tempest. (family relationships, parental abandonment, disability)
 - Earls, N (2002) *Making Laws for Clouds*. Australia, Penguin. (relationships, sex, family)
 - McCarthy, M (2002) *When You Wake and Find Me Gone*. Australia, Penguin. (growing up, family breakdown, dealing with trauma, rebuilding relationships)
 - Jones, V.M (2003) *Juggling with Mandarins*, New Zealand, Harper Collins. (healthy and fractured father-son relationships, rock climbing)
- Read pages from the website 'Girl' (www.girl.com.au) and encourage students to work in pairs to solve words they cannot read, or to use a text reading program such as Browsealoud or Texthelp to read the text for them.

Think / reflect

- Organise a journal writing time, or a time of the week when students can sit quietly and draw, think or simply do nothing.
- Ask students to think about how the media and advertising affects their ideas and beliefs about themselves.
- Watch a selection of advertisements on TV, or view advertisements in magazines and ask students to reflect on the images used, why they have been selected, and how they make them feel. Focus on advertisements which demonstrate issues such as body image, dieting, peer group pressure and being part of a group.

- Ask students to consider how they would help a friend to ‘think positive’ about themselves, their body, their achievements and their problems.

Speak and listen

- Organise a ‘talking circle’ where students can discuss health topics such as dieting, body image, alcohol and other drugs, peer pressure and other difficult issues in a supportive situation.
- Encourage students to talk to each of the people on their ‘trusted people’ list (see ‘Collect and Organise’ section) and check they are happy to be contacted if the student ever needs help.
- Ask students to clap the syllables in health related words eg. Medication (med/i/ca/tion), pharmacy (pharm/a/cy) and then tell you how many syllables are in each word. Challenge students to find the word with the most syllables, or to make a set of words with a set number of syllables (can you think of three words that make up ten syllables in total?)

Plan

- Plan a visit as a class to a health service in your local area, such as a Community Health Centre, Family Planning Centre, chemist, doctors’ clinic, or Youth Resource Centre. Ask students to write a list of ‘hot questions’ that they would like answered about health.
- Help students create an individual ‘health action plan’ which could assist them in managing simple and more complex health problems and issues. For example, a numbered list or an acronym such as **HELPER** - Have a problem, Expect there is a solution, Listen to others, Prioritise your ideas, Evaluate what has been suggested, Respond in your own way. Another useful acronym, particularly in relation to empowering students to make healthy decisions, is **THINK** - Trust your instincts, Help is around when you need it, I am important, No is a powerful word, Keep your friends safe.
- Help students plan how they can safely manage complex medical information such as instructions for taking medication, or arranging follow up appointments when they have limited reading skills. Promote strategies such as finding a trusted adult to help, asking the chemist to write down dot points about how to take medication, or using a dossette box filled by a chemist to manage medication.

Collect and organise

- Ask students to collect the names of five people who they can trust for advice, support and information at challenging times in their lives. Encourage them to organise these people into a folder or booklet with their contact details such as phone numbers, email addresses, and home addresses. Students may like to arrange their ‘trusted people’ into a picture or image format, such as drawn onto the fingers of a tracing of their hand.
- Brochures and fact sheets on health topics that can be displayed around a classroom.
- A ‘skinny book’ which contains a collection of resource material brought together under a single topic area (in this case, ‘health’). Students work in groups or pairs to create a book which contains:

- 1 A title page
- 2 A dedication page
- 3 A table of contents
- 4 A glossary
- 5 An index

Write

- A series of 'positive thinker' words - ask students to illustrate a word each, in a colour, style and theme that they believe matches with the word.
- A poem about dealing with a problem or health issue. Remind students that poems do not have to rhyme or be shared with others.
- Make a 'health tip of the day' board, where students can write a few words, a picture or a sentence on a post it note and place it on the board for others to read. This encourages the idea of sharing information, writing for an audience, and using varied techniques for communicating with others. For example, students may draw a picture of a healthy breakfast, write the word 'dance!' or a simple sentence like 'Share a smile with someone today.'
- As a class, write a draft of a 'how to be healthy' book, modelled on the popular 'How to' genre of non fiction books. Break this task up into sections:
 - 1 As a class, look at samples of 'How to' books
 - 2 Brainstorm topics that could be included as chapter headings
 - 3 Draft a table of contents for the book
 - 4 Assign groups of students to find content for a specific chapter – encourage them to use a variety of sources, and to photocopy, summarise and reference information according to their skills and abilities.
 - 5 Bind the book together with a cover and list of 'authors'.

Healthy living Focus Word List

Here are some words you might find useful as you work through the unit on 'healthy living'. Read, practice and learn some of the words. Draw a picture, symbol or cartoon that helps you remember each word. Focus on:

- how to spell the word
- a way to help you recall the word
- how the word is used in a sentence
- how you say each word out loud

Add any new words you learn at the end of the list.

breakfast

fruit

vegetables

standard
drink

exercise

sport

think positive

mental
health

dosage

frequency

caution

warning

prescription

pharmacist

general
practitioner

recall

ingredients

information

My new words:
