Building Language Skills with The Seattle Times

June 2, 2016

Article

- **"Perceptions and the truth"** Sunday, May 29, 2016 in the e-Edition of The Seattle Times, NIE Special Section, page J5
- **"Who uses marijuana and e-cigarettes and why"** Sunday, May 29, 2016 in the e-Edition of The Seattle Times, NIE Special Section, page J7

Pre-Reading:

Define the word 'perception'. Now define the word 'truth'. How are these two words related? What is the relationship between truth and perception?

Vocabulary

As you read, look for the following vocabulary words that appear in today's article. Write down what you think the words mean based on the "context," or how the words are used in the sentence in which they appear. Next, look up the definitions in a dictionary and see how close your guess was for each word.

advantage

aggravate

agitation

dependence

destructive

disorder

distorting

high-risk

media

misperception

orientation

routinely

techniques

tolerance

withdrawal

Comprehension:

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1. Observe the graphs on this page:
   a. What percent of 12th grade students in Washington have smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days?
   b. What percent of 12th grade students in Washington have drank alcohol in the past 30 days?
   c. What percent of 12th grade students in Washington have smoked marijuana in the past 30 days?
   d. What percent of 12th grade students in Washington have used pain killers to get high in the past 30 days?
2. How much more likely to use tobacco were students who routinely saw online ads?
3. What are advergames? Why are they effective for advertisers?
4. According to the 2014 Washington State Healthy Youth Survey, about how many high school seniors do not use marijuana?

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5. What are some symptoms of marijuana withdrawal?
6. What are some typical signs of substance dependence?
7. What percentage of American adults report being in recovery from abuse or addiction?
8. Observe the graphs on this page:
   i. Which group has the highest marijuana use?
   ii. Which group has the lowest marijuana use?
   iii. Which group has the highest e-cigarette use?
   iv. Which group has the lowest e-cigarette use?

Post-Reading:

1. Have you ever seen an e-cigarette or marijuana ad? How do you think it was trying to make you feel?
2. How are the numbers of student who use substances different than what you might expect?
3. What factors do you think are most important in determining who uses marijuana? E-cigarettes? Other drugs? Are these factors fair?
4. Why do you think some groups have a higher risk of using?
5. What factors are not mentioned in the articles that you think play a large factor in your decision to use/not use these substances?

Building Language Skills: Risk vs. Protective Factors

1. Brainstorm a list of sources that influence perception and drug use. See if you can sort them into the following categories:
    a. **Risk factors**: things that might make someone more likely to use (i.e. parents who use drugs or alcohol, racism, or mental illness)
    b. **Protective factors**: things that might make someone less likely to use (i.e. strong family relationships, school involvement, or policies limiting availability of substances)
2. Compile a class list of risk factors and protective factors. Encourage students to reflect on what has the most influence for them personally. What role does perception play? How can perception function as both a risk and a protective factor? Brainstorm ways an individual can strengthen protective factors or limit risk factors (note: it is important to acknowledge that some of these may, unfortunately, be out of individual control), such as starting a substance abuse prevention club like the one at Mercer Island High School (page 5).

Comprehension Question Answers:

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1.
    a. 13%
    b. 33%
    c. 27%
    d. 6%
2. 71 percent more likely
3. Advergames are a technique used by marketers to blur the advertisement and content. They are effective because often consumers do not recognize that they are viewing an ad, which makes them more vulnerable to the persuasive arguments.
4. About 3 out of every 4 high school seniors do not use marijuana.

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5. Symptoms of marijuana withdrawal include restlessness, irritability, mild agitation, insomnia, sleep (EEG) disturbance, nausea, sweating, runny nose and cramping.
6. Typical signs of substance dependence include an increase in tolerance, losing control of usage, or being unable to stop use.
7. More than 10 percent of American adults report being in recovery from abuse or addiction.
8.
    i. 10th graders that identify as AIAN (American Indian/Alaska Native) had the highest marijuana use.
    ii. 10th graders that identify as Asian had the lowest marijuana use.
    iii. 10th graders that identify as black had the highest e-cigarette use.
    iv. 10th graders that identify as Asian had the lowest e-cigarette use.