Teaching News Is Elementary
April 7, 2017

Each week, this lesson will share some classroom activity ideas that use the newspaper or other NIE resources. You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some classrooms may be able to use this as a worksheet and others might need to ask and answer the questions in a class discussion.

Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for all of your students.

Materials you will need for this lesson: The Seattle Times print replica, computer or smart board, pencils or pens, paper

Article: Merchants protest city plan for tax on sodas
Section: NW Wednesday, B1
Print Replica Date: Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1
Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Objectives:
Students will read an article, and search for personal connections they see in their own lives.

Pre- Reading Discussion:

- Do you drink sodas, energy drinks, sports drinks, sweetened teas and bottled coffees in your home? Why or why not?
- Do you drink it at school or out with your friends? Why or why not?
- Is soda considered healthy for your body? Why or why not?
- If you or your family drinks soda, would they pay $1.00-$1.50 more per 2-liter? Why or why not?
- Should the government tax products at a higher level that are unhealthy for our bodies? Why or why not?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using *context clues*? A *context clue* is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources

of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the identities and meanings of unknown words.

Write your guess and then look up the definition and write it below your guess. How close did you come to the correct definition?

"In attacking Murray's plan, opponents are slamming the tax as ***regressive***, saying poor people spend a greater proportion of their money on drinks than wealthy people."

Regressive **Guess:**

Regressive **Definition:**

Reading Comprehension:

1. More than 150 small-business owners are calling on Seattle Mayor Ed Murray to reconsider his plan for what?
2. Under the plan, what would distributors have to pay?
3. Who are the majority of opponents? Who do they think the additional tax would be a burden on?
4. They say the tax on distributors would be passed along to customers, and hurt sales. A two-liter bottle of soda would cost an additional $_____, they say.
5. What other drinks will be included in this tax?
6. How much money could they raid with this tax and what programs would the money help fund?
7. In attacking Murray's plan, opponents are slamming the tax as regressive, saying what?

Classroom Discussions or Journal Writing Prompts:

"The negative health impacts of sugar-sweetened beverages are beyond debate," Danielson said in a news release.

"And we know from studies analyzing cities that have already adopted this funding source that we can reduce consumption of these products while simultaneously increasing resources for early childhood education and public health programs designed to confront obesity, diabetes and other conditions among our city's most vulnerable populations."

Ortega added, "By using a new funding source that will support healthy kids while also increasing resources for proven programs that ensure our kids are well-prepared for school makes this campaign a no-brainer."

- Do you think the "soda tax" should happen in Seattle? Why or why not?
- Do you think it will lead to consumers choosing healthier beverages or water? Why or why not?

In attacking Murray's plan, opponents are slamming the tax as regressive, saying poor people spend a greater proportion of their money on drinks than wealthy people.

- Do you think this is true? Why or why not?
- Do you think poor people spend more on sugary drinks than wealthier people? Why or why not?

Over a third of American adults are obese, and Thomas Frieden, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has said soda taxes are "the single most effective measure to reverse the obesity epidemic," the group's news release said.

- Do you agree that a soda tax would be "the single most effective measure in reversing the obesity epidemic?" Why or why not?
- What other factors would you consider in reducing obesity?

Murray's tax wouldn't apply to diet soda and other drinks with artificial sweeteners. Some have suggested that's unfair because affluent white people tend to drink more diet drinks. But the research on artificial sweeteners harming health is less robust.

- Do you believe not taxing drinks with no sugar or artificial sweeteners is fair? Why or why not?