

Understanding Cancer
Teacher's Guide

This guide accompanies “Student Activities: Understanding Cancer.”

- John Rice, author “Understanding Cancer”

Understanding Cancer Teacher's Guide © Ningwakwe Learning Press, 2010.

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introduction

You probably know someone, a neighbour, co-worker or friend, who is facing or has faced a cancer diagnosis. When cancer touches our lives, things can change for everyone. Many people are uncomfortable discussing personal health issues especially one that can be as deeply affecting as cancer. As part of Ningwakwe's 'Healthy Life Series', it is the hope of Ningwakwe Learning Press that this book, Understanding Cancer, and its supplementary material will help to begin a discussion that will lead to a greater understanding and awareness of this difficult subject.

plot summary

Understanding Cancer is the story of a grandfather's conversation about cancer with his eleven-year-old niece, Waubuno. Waubuno's aunt has recently died of cancer and, as well, a little girl in Waubuno's brother's class at school has been diagnosed with leukemia. Waubuno doesn't understand why this is happening and turns to her grandfather, Mishoo, for answers. Together they discuss the truths about cancer; how one gets it, what the treatments are, and some healthy alternatives that may help prevent cancer in the future. In the end, both Waubuno and her grandfather come to a deeper understanding of the role of cancer in their lives and how it affects them.

rubrics

The Rubrics (except the last one) are designed for student self-assessment. After the student has finished the first Rubric in Part 1, check their work and their assessment of their work. This will give you a chance to see if the student understands and is comfortable with the level of the material being presented. This will also present a chance to decide how you would like to have the student proceed with the written sections.

BEFORE READING

Review the 'Go Further' section to familiarize yourself with the activities that are suggested. Before beginning this lesson, make sure you are comfortable with the content and that you have thought about how you may handle any emotional crises that may arise. Do not feel that you have to do this by yourself. Familiarize yourself with your local community mental health resources, to refer students if necessary.

Cancer Help Resources

"Our Journey: First Nations Experience in Navigating Cancer Care" Full document available online - <http://www.cancercare.ns.ca/site-cc/media/cancercare/FirstNationsExperienceinNavigatingCancerCare.pdf>

First Nations, Inuit and Métis page on cancer control. https://www.cancerview.ca/portal/server.pt/community/first_nations,_inuit___m%C3%A9tis/484/first_nations,_inuit___m%C3%A9tis_overview/4189

Native American Cancer Reserach website <http://natamcancer.org/community.html>

National Aboriginal Health Organization - webpage on cancer links http://www.naho.ca/english/hpEvent_cancer.php

Life with Cancer website <http://www.lifewithcancer.org/resources.php>

Aboriginal Cancer Care strategy <http://www.cancercare.on.ca/cms/one.aspx?pageId=9315>

REVISITING THE STORY AND SELF REFLECTION

These sections are to be completed in full sentence format by the student, marked and corrected for grammar as indicated in the Rubrics. They will be used as an introduction to the five-paragraph essay format.

Note: If the student is having a lot of trouble with the grammar and sentence structure but has no trouble with the comprehension, feel free to create separate lessons for the student and not worry so much about the grammar and structure aspect of their writing as they work through the book.

AFTER READING

ANSWERS

Part 1

A. Comprehension Check

A. 1) 1 2) 3 3) 2 4) 2

B. Revisit the Story

Mishoo wonders if he should tell his eleven-year-old granddaughter about cancer and how it kills people. Do you think he did the right thing by telling Waubuno the truth?

any opinion on whether the student thinks Mishoo should tell his granddaughter is correct here as long as the student provides reasons for their choice

C. Self-Reflection

We have all had to tell people things that were difficult. What was a situation that you had trouble telling somebody something? This could be a time you put a dent in your family's car or maybe when you broke up with a girlfriend/boyfriend. What made the situation so difficult?

Whatever situation the student chooses is fine as long as they show reasons and examples that made the situation difficult to tell

First Rubric

Use the first Rubric as a quick assessment of the student's comfort level with the material.

Part 2

A. Comprehension Check

A. 1) 2 2) 3 3) 1 4) 1

B. Revisit the Story

Why do you think the author made a point of saying that cancer does not discriminate, regardless of race, creed or colour?

He was trying to make the point that cancer can effect anybody and everybody.

C. Self-Reflection

Cancer touches everybody in some way, whether it is personally or through someone you know. It takes an adjustment to learn to live with this new change in life. What are some things someone or their family can do to help deal with this. Your instructor can guide you to some great websites.

Part 3

A. Comprehension Check

A. 1) 4 2) 1 3) 4 4) false

B. Revisit the Story

Mishoo's daughter worked in an asbestos factory and in a diner with second hand smoke. What are some of the changes that have been made in society since the dangers of asbestos and smoke have become known?

protective equipment is now mandatory in asbestos mines / smoking is banned and/or against the law in most public places and vehicles

C. Self-Reflection

Carcinogens are substances that can cause cancer. Were any of the known carcinogens on page 10 of Understanding Cancer surprising to you? Which ones surprised you? Find five items in the Appendix on Page 22 that you didn't know had carcinogens in them. Your instructor will have a handout.

get the student to find not just base carcinogen (ie. arsenic) but a particular product that contains the carcinogen. (ie. animal dips, herbicides, etc...)

Part 4

A. Comprehension Check

A 1) 1 2) 1 3) 1 4) 3

B. Revisit the Story

Many times we do not know what caused the cancer and there are many different reasons that could be the cause. This can cause a feeling of powerlessness. What are some things someone could do to take control of their life? Create a list of five things and choose two that you could apply to yourself right now.

C. Self-Reflection

Known causes of cancer, like: smoking, or eating unhealthy foods, doesn't stop a lot of people from doing exactly those things. Create a mind map of bad habits people could change their life to make them healthier and the positive end product of making those changes.

Example: Stop smoking----- healthier lungs-----walking easier / more energy

Part 5

A. Comprehension Check

1) 3 2) 1

3. What are the three main ways to treat cancer?

surgery / chemotherapy / radiation

4. What did Auntie call her chemotherapy treatments?

"Kimo Sabe"

5. What did Auntie wear to hockey games to cheer up her nieces and nephews?

a rainbow wig

B. Revisit the Story

The author states that Mishoo had felt powerless to help his daughter when he found out she had cancer. What are some of the things he might have done to help her deal with her feelings at the beginning of her illness? Check online for help or ask someone you know who has dealt with cancer in his or her life.

Website: Download link to [PDF about helping people with cancer](http://bit.ly/9BdliA) <http://bit.ly/9BdliA>

C. Self –Reflection

What are the five stages of grief that one goes through when dealing with severe grief or tragedy? Research your answers online and discuss in a group whether you agree with the stages listed.

If the student is working alone have them write down their opinion of whether they agree or disagree with the stages listed. (The Kübler-Ross model)

5 stages of Grief:

1. Denial – “I feel fine.” “This can’t be happening, not to me.” Denial is usually only a temporary defense for the individual. This feeling is generally replaced with heightened awareness of situations and individuals that will be left behind after death.
2. Anger – “Why me? It’s not fair!” “How can this happen to me?” “Who is to blame?” Once in the second stage, the individual recognizes that denial cannot continue. Because of anger, the person is very difficult to care for due to misplaced feelings of rage and envy. Any individual that symbolizes life or energy is subject to projected resentment and jealousy.
3. Bargaining – “Just let me live to see my children graduate.” “I’ll do anything for a few more years.” “I will give my life savings if...” The third stage involves the hope that the individual can somehow postpone or delay death. Usually, the negotiation for an extended life is made with a higher power in exchange for a reformed lifestyle. Psychologically, the individual is saying, “I understand I will die, but if I could just have more time...”
4. Depression – “I’m so sad, why bother with anything?” “I’m going to die... What’s the point?” “I miss my loved one, why go on?” During the fourth stage, the dying person begins to understand the certainty of death. Because of this, the individual may become silent, refuse visitors and spend much of the time crying and grieving. This process allows the dying person to disconnect oneself from things of love and affection. It is not recommended to attempt to cheer up an individual who is in this stage. It is an important time for grieving that must be processed.
5. Acceptance – “It’s going to be okay.” “I can’t fight it, I may as well prepare for it.” This final stage comes with peace and understanding of the death that is approaching. Generally, the person in the fifth stage will want to be left alone.

Part 6

A. Comprehension Check

A. 1) 4

2. Why is Mishoo glad when Pitchi appears coming down the hill?
..because he will feel like he was part of taking the fish out of the lake
3. What does Pitchi say when he is told he has to clean all the fish?... *he says that it is the least he can do*
4. What else does Mishoo want to do with the fish besides cook it over the fire?
... he wants to pickle some fish as well

B. Revisit the Story

How do you think Waubuno is feeling having to deal with such major issues at such a young age? What are some of the fears she may be experiencing?

Confused, afraid, guilty, may all be feelings that Waubuno is experiencing

C. Self-Reflection

2. What is the best or the worst advice you have ever received? This can be about anything you want. What happened? Did you take the advice or did you wish you had or hadn't?

Make sure the student substantiates their worst/best advice with some examples.

Part 7

A. Comprehension Check

A. 1) 1 2) 1

3. What does Mishoo remember being planted in the garden when he was younger?

lots of corn and different vegetables

4. What time did people go to bed and get up in the morning in Mishoo's childhood?

They were awake at daybreak and sleeping by sundown.

5. Use the following "Occupational Carcinogens Chart" as a guide. Match the following carcinogen with the occupational use or source.

Carcinogen

Occupational uses or source

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Benzene | floor tiles / fire-resistant textiles |
| 2. Nickel | ripening agent for fruits and nuts / rocket propellant |
| 3. Arsenic and its compounds | light fuel oil / former use as solvent / printing |
| 4. Ethylene oxide | yellow pigments / phosphors / solders |
| 5. Asbestos | nickel plating / ceramics / stainless steel welding |
| 6. vinyl chloride | alloys / herbicides / animal dips |
| 7. Cadmium and its compound | refrigerant / vinyl polymers / adhesive for plastics |

B. Revisit the Story

Order the events in which they happen in the story: 4, 6, 2, 5, 3, 1

Culminating Activity

The final essay can be a 1, 3, 5 paragraph essay.

Use final essay Rubric for this essay.

- A. Descriptive essay: In this essay, you have to simply describe any event or procedure or any topic of your choice. It is the easiest type of essay that you could write about because you don't really have to research a lot for this essay.
- B. Write a short creative paragraph of Mishoo's daughter (choose a name: add a link to baby names from the internet and have student choose) as she looks out her window at the morning sun on the first day after she discovered she has cancer.

GO FURTHER

Group Activities:

Group Talk:

- Have a cancer survivor come in and discuss the process that they went through
- Students take notes and ask questions / have students prep ahead of the time the speaker delivers talk
- Break into small groups (2-3) have students prepare a 3-5 minute presentation on what they have learned (write an essay if individual)

Hollywood:

- Film a two minute commercial about the importance of regular check-ups / the importance of seeing your doctor once a year / living a healthy lifestyle
 - Have students develop a short (thirty seconds / one minute) commercial with a script
 - Film short commercial and upload it as a YouTube video
- Put together in a book format or video a fish cleaning manual

Radio

- Write and record a one minute radio commercial about the dangers of smoking / unhealthy eating
 - Have students write out a one-minute radio ad (roughly 150 words) with dialogue and sound effects about the dangers of smoking
 - Record and play the commercials in class / which were the most effective

Self-Directed Activities:

Hemingway

- Have the student write an opinion news article about the damage of smoking / unhealthy eating, has on our health care
 - Use the idea map to outline ideas / Anecdotal stories are fine as well
 - 500 words or less for the article

Shakespeare

- Have the students write a haiku. This can be about anything they want. A haiku is written in three verses with 5 syllables in the first line, 7 in the second and 5 in the third. Some topics could be health related but could also include:
 - Your best friend
 - A favourite pet
 - A favourite place to visit

Example:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. An old pond | 2. The first cold shower; |
| When the frogs jump in | Even the monkey seems to want |
| The sound of water | A little coat of straw. |

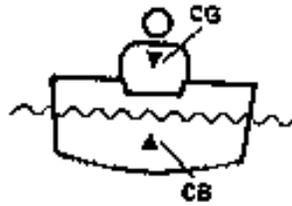
Picasso

- Design a short series of pictures showing how to clean fish.
 - This can be as simple or complicated as the student wants to make it
 - Go online to get the steps of how to clean a fish then make your own drawings to go along with the instructions
 - Good online source for the fish cleaning steps: http://www.ehow.com/how_2080_clean-fish.html

Avoiding Capsize

Follow these three simple steps to avoid capsizing.

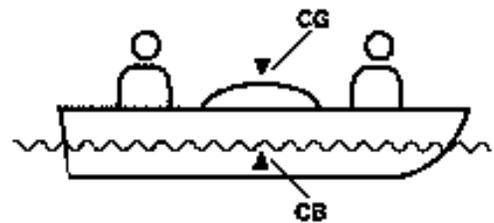
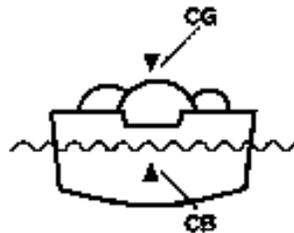
Keep your shoulders inside the gunnels. Center yourself in the boat keeping your center of gravity low in the boat.



Maintain three points of contact. Keep both hands and at least one foot, or both feet and at least one hand, in contact with the boat at all times.



Load the boat properly. Check the load capacity plate and keep within its limits. Keep gear weight centered both from side to side and bow to stern.



How to Clean and Filet a Fresh Fish

- Wash the fish using fresh tap water. Avoid cleaning fish with lake or stream water, as it can sometimes contain contaminants.

- Step 2



Remove scales by scraping the fish with a fish scaler or the dull edge of a knife. Use short strokes from tail to head. If you plan to skin the fish before cooking, this step is not necessary.

- Step 3



Make a cut from the gills to the vent.

- Step 4



Remove the entrails with your fingers. Check the cavity carefully to make sure everything's been removed.

- Step 5

Rinse the cavity well.

- Step 6

If cooking the fish whole, remove the dorsal fin by cutting along each side of it and carefully pulling the fin out with pliers.

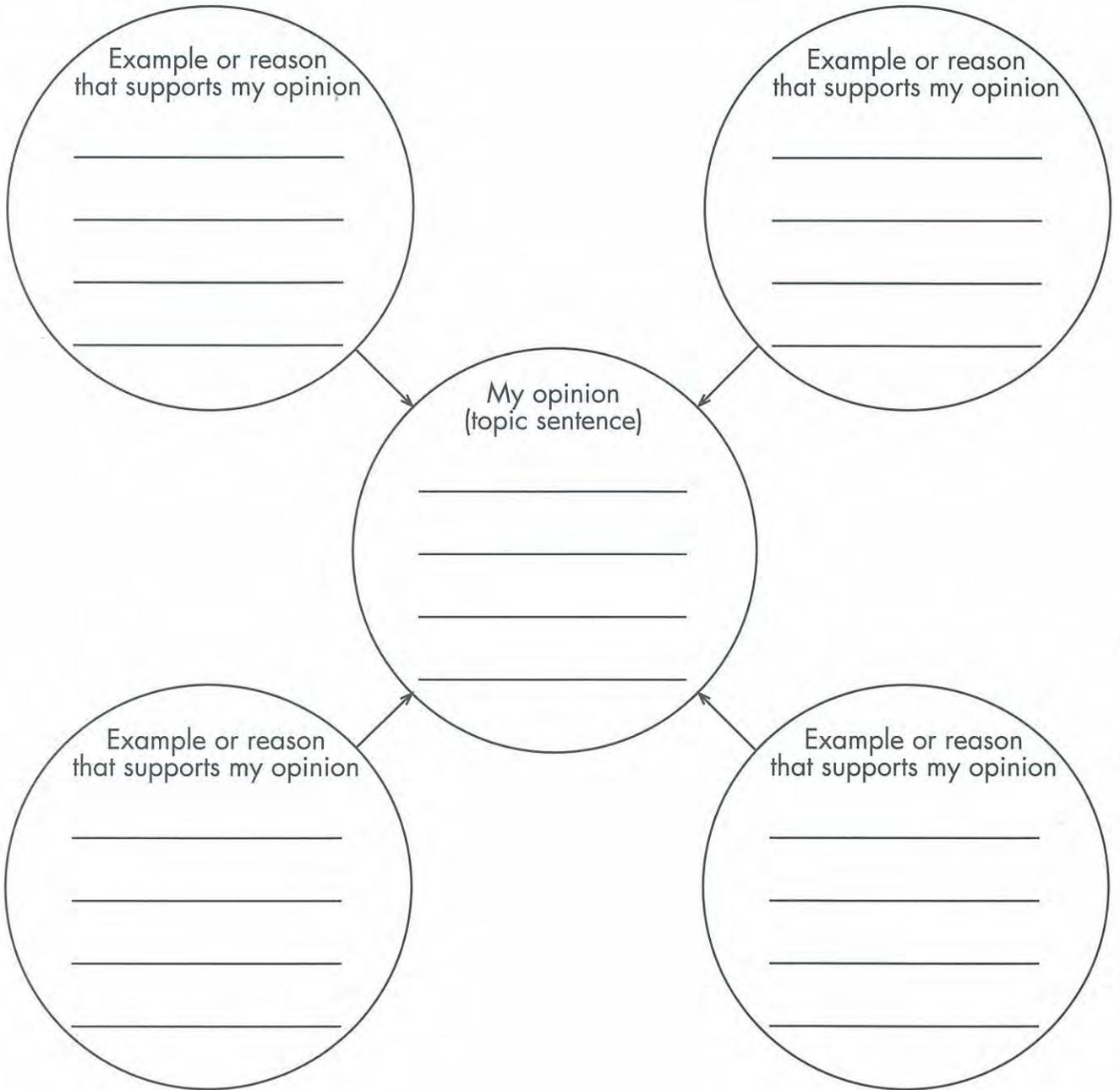
- Step 7

Wash the fish inside and out with cold, fresh water. Store the fish covered with clean ice that can drain from the container as it melts.

Idea Map

Write your topic on the line below. In the center circle, write a topic sentence summarizing your opinion about the topic. In the surrounding circles, list examples or reasons that support your topic sentence. You can add more circles if you'd like.

My Topic _____



Persuasive Essay : Three/Five paragraph Essay

Teacher Name:

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	4 - Excellent	3 - Good	2 - Needs Work	1 - Review	Score
Thesis Statement	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay and outlines the main points to be discussed.	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay.	The thesis statement outlines some or all of the main points to be discussed but does not name the topic.	The thesis statement does not name the topic AND does not preview what will be discussed.	
Organization	Arguments and support are provided in a logical order that makes it easy and interesting to follow the student's train of thought.	Arguments and support are provided in a fairly logical order that makes it reasonably easy to follow the student's train of thought.	A few of the support details or arguments are not in an expected or logical order, distracting the reader and making the essay seem a little confusing.	Many of the support details or arguments are not in an expected or logical order, distracting the reader and making the essay seem very confusing.	
Development and details	Achieves coherent development with specific details and examples.	Has focused but sometimes uneven development. Uses some specific detail.	Has some development but lacks specific detail; may be limited to listing, repetitions; or generalizations.	Demonstrates little or no development; usually lacks details or examples or presents irrelevant information.	
Closing paragraph	The conclusion is strong and leaves the reader solidly understanding the student's position. Effective restatement of the position statement begins the closing paragraph.	The conclusion is recognizable. The student's position is restated within the first two sentences of the closing paragraph.	The student's position is restated within the closing paragraph, but not near the beginning.	There is no conclusion - the paper just ends.	
Sentence Structure	All sentences are well-constructed with varied structure.	Most sentences are well-constructed and there is some varied sentence structure in the essay.	Most sentences are well constructed, but there is no variation in structure.	Most sentences are not well-constructed or varied.	
Grammar & Spelling	Student makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Student makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Student makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Student makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	