

Grade 5

Health Objective 2.06

Evaluate the reliability of health information sources.

Language Arts 3.04

Make informed judgments about television, radio, video/film productions, other electronic mediums and/or print formats.

Language Arts 3.07

Make informed judgments about:
bias.
propaganda.
stereotyping.
media techniques.

Materials Needed:

Computers and access to the internet

LCD projector

Truth Be Told: PowerPoint presentation or transparencies created from PowerPoint

Appendix 1 - Fact Finding Mission: Is It Too Good to Be True? copies for each student

Focus:

Introduce the topic of health information and ask these questions:

- *If you have a question about your health, whom do you ask?*
- *If you are assigned a report on a health topic, what sources do you use?*
- *Do you believe what is told to you about a health product in magazines? In television advertising?*

We know all information is not true. As consumers of health products and services, we must be able to decide when health information is true or false. We can usually trust information which comes from a government agency such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Several of the websites for those organizations have a section devoted to helping young people find accurate information. Such a site is BAM! which stands for Body and Mind on www.cdc.gov. The direct link is www.bam.gov.

Either assign students to go to the site (if enough computers are available) or project the site with an LCD projector. Select several items from the following menu buttons: “I Heard Hurdle Race” under Physical Activity and “Dining Decisions” from Food and Nutrition. These quizzes dispel false information the students may believe to be true and also validate true information they need to know. Re-emphasize the facts we receive from the federal government are pretty reliable.

Teacher Input:

Show the PowerPoint presentation Truth Be Told: How to Evaluate the Reliability of Health Information (or show transparencies created from the PowerPoint). Ask students what they think is meant by the quotation from Josh Billings, “The problem with people is not what they don't know, but that they know so much that ain't so.”

Practice & Assessment:

Share a copy of Appendix 1 with each student. Explain this is a homework assignment they are to complete with their parents. With parent or guardian's assistance, they are to evaluate three advertisements for health products or services. Another option is to evaluate an infomercial for a health product or service.

Give students several evenings or over the weekend to complete the assignment with adult supervision. On the day the assignment is due, ask students to report on how reliable the advertisement was. Draw the conclusion that not all we see and hear is factual. *We have to be educated about ways to determine if health information is valid.*



Fact Finding Mission: Is It Too Good to Be True?

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child is learning about the reliability of health information. He/she needs your assistance with this assignment. Please watch a television show together (or an infomercial about a health product or service). Help your child determine if the health claims in three commercials for health products - or one, if a half-hour infomercial - are true.

Your child is encouraged to consult the health textbook or .gov websites to determine if the information is reliable. The products or services can be any of the following:

- Food or beverage
- Medicine
- First aid supplies
- Exercise equipment
- Health care

Thank you for assisting with this assignment.

_____ (teacher's signature)

What product(s) were promoted?

We believe the information was:

True _____

False _____

Biased _____

Exaggerated _____

What messages in the advertisements made you believe or disbelieve in the product?

What resources did you consult to determine if the advertising of the product was truthful?

_____ (child's signature)

_____ (parent's or guardian's signature)