



Heidi Schaeffer
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Japan

Science 5
33 students

Student Learning Result
“The first step in being healthy is to have a good relationship with God. I will put God first and trust Him that He can help me with my health.”

Tip
Get students to frequently connect the Bible and what they study. Be intentional about this.

Unit
Health, 5 weeks

Essential Question
How can I make healthy choices?

Content
Respiratory system, habits of health, nutrition, growing and changing, body as the temple of the Holy Spirit

Skills
Connecting, writing, critical thinking

Assessment
Essay

Instructional Strategies
Discussion, role play, note taking

Resources
Bible, *Healthy Living* (CSI), *News Current*, library books

What are you excited about?

Heidi: I'm excited that my 5th grade science students can connect course content to Biblical teaching, resulting in them making healthy choices. In an essay at the end of a recent health unit, students wrote things like:

- “I learned that...if you're not spiritually healthy, it will affect your physical health.”
- “I have learned that you need to be with God. God will help you make decisions. If the answer doesn't come right away, you have to wait. He will help me.”
- “The first step in being healthy is to have a good relationship with God. I will put God first and trust Him that He can help me with my health.”

What were your students studying?

Heidi: They studied human growth and change in terms of 4 aspects of health: physical, mental, social, and spiritual. For physical health, students learned about family life, the respiratory system, and nutrition. For mental health, they studied about expressing their feelings appropriately. For social health, we learned about wise ways to respond to others. And for spiritual health, students studied how our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit and, consequently, how spiritual health is the foundation of all health.

What was the essay prompt?

Heidi: In a 4-paragraph essay, respond to the following question: How can I make healthy choices? Be sure to address each of the 4 aspects of health.

How did you prepare your students for writing the essay?

Heidi: After studying an aspect of health, we talked about good choices and bad choices. For example, for physical and spiritual health, we discussed how to have a healthy respiratory system and a healthy spiritual life. During the discussion, students referred to information from the text, including Biblical teaching on taking care of our bodies. They also looked up verses on being the temple of the Holy Spirit, like I Corinthians 3:16-17 and 6:19-20. Students then used being the temple of the Holy Spirit as the basis of decision-making.

For social health, students read about and discussed 3 ways they could handle emotions and respond to others. Then, they studied verses from Proverbs (11:13, 15:9, 17:9, 17:17, 21:33) regarding how to respond to others in specific situations—when others gossip, for example.

To further prepare to write the essay, my students reviewed each aspect of health, the impact it has on growth and change, and what types of choices they should make, given that they are the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Then, I introduced the essay prompt. To get started on writing an organized essay, my students brainstormed content for each of the paragraphs—what they learned about a given aspect of health and how to connect the content to making a healthy choice. Students used their brainstorming to write their 4-paragraph essays.

What did you learn from teaching your unit on health?

Heidi: I learned that because my students are growing and changing, their views on health are also growing and changing. They are taking responsibility for themselves and their choices. I learned that students can connect course content and Biblical teaching, provided they are given frequent opportunities and time to make the connection. My students are familiar with Bible content, and giving them opportunities to connect it to a choice helps them deepen their understanding of how God wants them to live.

What modifications will you make to your unit?

Heidi: My students have different levels of Bible knowledge. Some are new to the Bible and making connections; some understand the Bible and readily make connections. Having these types of students work together, especially when brainstorming for the essay, would help.