

Topics: Health by Adrian Tennant

LEVEL: Intermediate +
AGE: Teenagers / Adults
TIME NEEDED: 90 minutes + project
LANGUAGE FOCUS: Adverbs,
 understanding vocabulary in context,
 topic words

LEAD-IN

Ask students to look at the pictures and elicit ideas from them. Write some of the ideas on the board.

Key a _____
 1. a doctor; 2. a thermometer; 3. pills; 4. an ill child being given medicine

Next, put students in pairs and ask them to tick the words that they can see in the pictures. Some are relatively easy, especially after the first task, but others might prove slightly harder. Check the answers as a class. At this stage you might want to see if the students know the meaning of the other words.

Key b _____
 words to be ticked: pills; thermometer; medicine; stethoscope

READING: LETTERS

Ask students to read through the four letters and decide what the health issues are and what advice they think the doctor will give in each case. Put the students in pairs and get them to discuss their ideas together. Then elicit a few ideas but only confirm the health issues at this stage.

Key a _____
 A. a breathing problem, probably asthma; B. spots;
 C. a rash; D. fear of needles / needs injections

Ask students to read the questions that follow. Again, get pairs to check their answers together. If you feel it's necessary, you could say that there are two questions for each of the letters. Finally, check as a class.

Key b _____
 1. C; 2. B; 3. A; 4. A; 5. B; 6. D; 7. C; 8. D

Next, get students to read the three replies and match each one to the correct letter. Again, encourage the students to discuss their ideas with a partner. Check if the advice suggested by the students matched that given by Dr Amy before checking the answers as a class.

Key c _____
 1. C; 2. A; 3. B

WORKING WITH THE LANGUAGE

Focus 1: Understanding meaning

Do the first question as a whole class. Get students to read the question and try to work out the answer. Then tell the students the correct answer. Check that they understand why and explain if necessary. Put students in pairs and ask them to help each other to answer the other four questions, then check the answers as a class.

Key _____
 1. because the mother is writing for both herself and her daughter; 2. the spots; 3. needles; 4. the rash; 5. the creams that are on the market for spots

Focus 2: Language use

Ask students to look at the five examples taken from the letters and responses and decide what type of words have been underlined.

Key a _____
 adverbs

Next, ask students to complete the sentences with the missing words. Point out that they should use the five underlined words from the examples once each. Check the answers as a class.

Key b _____
 1. really; 2. too; 3. just; 4. any; 5. quite

WORKING WITH VOCABULARY

Focus 1: Meaning

Tell the students to look back at the letters and replies and find words that match the definitions. Encourage them to work in pairs and discuss their ideas as they look at the texts. You might want to point out that the words appear in order and that there are two words in each letter and one in each of the replies. Check the answers as a class.

Key _____
 1. wheeze; 2. concerned; 3. lotion; 4. loads (of); 5. inflamed;
 6. fuss; 7. scare; 8. prod; 9. reaction; 10. inconvenience;
 11. recommend

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Focus 2: Word-building

Ask students to look at the word-building text. Look at the first sentence together and elicit ideas to write up on the board before giving the students the correct answer. Then, ask them to complete the gap-fill text. Get students to check their answers in pairs before checking as a class.

Key _____
1. depression; 2. illness; 3. medical; 4. behaving; 5. treated;
6. broken; 7. situations; 8. recommended

LISTENING

Ask students to listen to a short extract from a radio show and decide which of the four letters from the Reading: Letters exercise it is most closely related to.

Transcript:

Host: Good afternoon and welcome to today's show. We start, as usual, with our weekly 'Call the doctor' slot and we are joined by our very own Dr Amy.

Dr Amy: Thank you, Giles.

Host: Right, let's go to our first caller, who is Leo.

Leo: Hello!

Host: Hi Leo. So, what is your question for Dr Amy?

Leo: Well, a few days ago, I had the plaster taken off my leg, which I broke after falling down the stairs. The problem was that the skin was so white and it looked terrible compared to my tan ...

Host: Your tan?

Leo: Yes, I go to the salon every week and spend thirty minutes on the sunbed ... Well, I went two days ago and instead of turning brown my leg has just gone bright pink!

Dr Amy: The first thing to say is that your leg was white because it had been covered up for a while and had no exposure to the air. The second thing is that you really shouldn't use sunbeds; they are very harmful to your skin. Have you thought about cancer?

Leo: You think I might have cancer?!

Dr Amy: No, no! What I'm trying to tell you is that using sunbeds can be very bad for your health in the long term. Your leg is burnt but if you apply after-sun lotion, keep it out of the sun and *stay away from sunbeds* you will be fine.

Leo: Oh, that's a relief. Thank you.
Host: No problem, Leo. Right, on to our next caller who ...

Key _____
letter C

Ask students to read letter C and circle any differences between the letter and the radio show. Put students in pairs and ask them to discuss their answers together. Play the recording again, if necessary. Check the answers as a class.

Key _____
leg / arm; fell down the stairs / had ice-skating accident; skin is pink from using a sunbed / has a (red) rash; the doctor thinks the patient will be fine if he stays away from sunbeds / the patient thinks she'll be wasting the time of the people at the hospital

SPEAKING

Put students in small groups and ask them to discuss the questions together. Afterwards, ask a few groups to report back on their discussion. You might want to open this out to the whole class.

WRITING

Ask students to write a reply to Samantha (letter D) in the style of Dr Amy. Give them around 15 minutes to do this and monitor and help if necessary. You could display the letters on the classroom walls and then vote for the best one.

PROJECT

Encourage students to research their chosen medical condition on the internet or at their local library to complete the project for homework.

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LEAD-IN

a. Look at these photos. What does each one show?

1.



4.



2.



b. Now tick the words you can see in the pictures.

- pills
- crutch
- thermometer
- medicine
- plaster
- inhaler
- stethoscope
- needle

3.



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READING: LETTERS

- a. Read the letters sent to a doctor with a magazine advice column. What are the health issues specified in each one? What advice do you think the doctor will give?

A.

Dear Dr Amy,

I'm very worried about my ten-year-old daughter. I've recently noticed that she is out of breath a lot and sometimes even wheezes, especially after she's been playing in the garden. She's always been very healthy and loves playing sports, so I'm concerned that this will affect her quite badly. Do you think it's serious and can you give us some advice?

Mrs M Dawson

B.

Dear Dr Amy,

I know most teenagers suffer from spots, but mine seem to be worse than any of my friends! I've used lots of creams and lotions, I wash my face regularly and have visited the doctor loads of times, but nothing seems to work. They are just getting worse! My mum says I shouldn't worry, as it'll get better as I get older, but it's making me feel depressed. What can I do?

J, 15

Dear Dr Amy



C. *Dear Dr Amy,*

I broke my arm in an ice-skating accident and had the plaster removed a couple of days ago. Now there's quite a bad rash. The hospital told me to expect 'a bit of a rash' and gave me some cream for it, but it isn't helping and my skin is really red and inflamed. I don't want to go back to the hospital unnecessarily – they'll think I'm just making a fuss and wasting their time, but I am a bit concerned about it? Do you have any advice?

Frances DeWitt

D. *Dear Dr Amy,*

My husband has just got a new job working overseas, so we're moving in a few weeks' time. The problem is that I need lots of inoculations and injections, but I'm scared of needles. I've been terrified of them ever since I was a child and, even though I'm now grown up, my fear has never disappeared. Is there any alternative to being prodded and poked?

Samantha

- b. Read the letters to Dr Amy again and circle the correct letter (A-D) for each question. Be careful! There could be more than one correct answer.

- Who has already been to the hospital?
A / B / C / D
- Whose problem is causing them to feel very upset?
A / B / C / D
- Who is worried that the illness or problem may cause upset in the future?
A / B / C / D
- Who is writing about a problem that someone else is having?
A / B / C / D
- Who thinks their problem is more serious than usual?
A / B / C / D
- Who wants to find a different solution than the one they are facing?
A / B / C / D
- Whose problem is the result of another accident or illness?
A / B / C / D
- Whose question is not about an illness?
A / B / C / D

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c. Now read Dr Amy's replies and match each one to the correct letter. Be careful! There are four letters but only three replies.

1.

Dear _____
Oh dear! That does sound bad, but try not to worry. As they said, there often is some reaction, usually because the area has been covered and was unable to breathe properly. However, if it doesn't get better in a couple of days, I would go back and get them to check it out for you.

2.

Dear _____
Don't worry too much, it sounds as though she has asthma. Many children develop it as they get older and it usually causes nothing more than a minor inconvenience. The doctor will give her an inhaler to use and this should make a big difference. She can certainly continue to play sports as long as the asthma is not too severe.

3.

Dear _____
Your mother is right, but I know that doesn't make you feel any less upset. The problem is basically caused by the changes happening to your body as you grow up, especially to your hormones. There's not much more you can do other than carry on keeping your skin clean and dry. I would suggest that you ask your doctor to recommend the best cream. There are lots on the market but quite a few are simply a waste of money.

WORKING WITH THE LANGUAGE

Focus 1: Understanding meaning

Answer these questions.

1. In letter A, why does the mother write *Can you give us some advice?* rather than *Can you give me some advice?*
2. In letter B, what does the word *They* refer to in the line *They are just getting worse?*
3. In letter D, what does the word *them* refer to in the line *... I've been terrified of them ever since I was a child ...?*
4. In reply 1, what does the word *it* refer to in the line *... if it doesn't get better ...?*
5. In reply 3, what is Dr Amy talking about when she writes *... quite a few are simply a waste of money?*

Focus 2: Language use

a. Look at these sentences adapted from the letters and replies. Are the underlined words adverbs, determiners or pronouns?

... this will affect her quite badly.

... nothing seems to work and they are just getting worse.

... it isn't helping and it's really red ...

Don't worry too much.

... I know that it doesn't make you feel any less upset.

b. Now complete these sentences using the underlined words from above.

1. If it's _____ sore then try running cold water onto it as that might help.
2. To be honest, it doesn't look _____ bad. I've seen a lot worse.
3. That looks bad! It _____ doesn't seem _____ to be responding to treatment.
4. If I give you _____ more pills, you'll start to rattle!
5. It's _____ difficult to know what to do next. It's getting better but not as fast as I'd expected.

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WORKING WITH VOCABULARY

Focus 1: Meaning

Find words or phrases in the text that match the definitions below.

1. to breathe in a noisy way that is uncomfortable for you, usually because you are ill
2. worried about something or caring about what happens to someone
3. a thick liquid that you put on your skin in order to clean it or make it feel softer and less dry
4. a lot of something
5. swollen and painful because of an infection
6. a lot of unnecessary worry or excitement about something
7. to make someone feel frightened or worried
8. to push something or somebody quickly with your finger, or with an object that has a long thin end
9. a bad effect on your body caused by food, medicine or some other substance
10. an annoying problem or situation
11. to advise someone that they should have something or do something

Focus 2: Word-building

Use the correct form of the words in bold to complete the text.

The number of teenagers now suffering from (1) _____ [DEPRESS] is at a worrying level. In the past it was not regarded as an (2) _____ [ILLNESS] but the (3) _____ [MEDICINE] profession now regard it as one of the most serious. The problem is that it is often difficult to diagnose, as there are no real outside signs other than the way the person is (4) _____ [BEHAVE].

Whereas something like asthma can be (5) _____ [TREAT] with an inhaler, or a (6) _____ [BREAK] leg can be put in plaster, there are no set cures for this. In some (7) _____ [SITUATE], pills can be prescribed, however it is (8) _____ [RECOMMEND] that teenagers first seek counselling either at school or at a registered charity.

LISTENING

Listen to the radio show and answer the questions below.

1. Which letter is the radio show most closely related to?
2. What are the differences between the letter and the radio show?

SPEAKING

Discuss these questions in groups.

1. What advice would you give to Samantha (letter D)?
2. Are you scared of needles? If yes, why? If no, can you understand why somebody would be?
3. What alternatives might there be to having lots of injections?
4. Have you ever needed inoculations? If so, what for?

WRITING

Write a reply to Samantha's letter. Look back at Dr Amy's three replies in the Reading: Letters exercise to help you.

PROJECT

Choose one of the medical conditions from the box below. Find out details about the causes, symptoms and possible cures and design a leaflet providing information about the condition.

asthma hepatitis A acne cold sores