



HEALTH

ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Accessing Medical Care Activity

Orientation Activity

- **Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is for students to develop an appreciation for the medical care they have access to in their country as they learn about medical care issues around the world through a mapping scenario.
- **Instructional method(s):** class discussion, independent activity
- **Differentiated instruction:**
 - Simplified: Create one map as a class.
 - Advanced: Use a geographical map of the neighbourhood and have students measure the distance of their route and calculate accurate times for their different means of travel.
- **Curriculum connections:** Grades 5 – 8, The Arts, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Technology and Social Studies.
- **Estimated time:** 1 hour
- **Steps:**
 1. Distribute blank pieces of paper and drawing utensils to each student.
 2. Ask students to imagine that they are at home and they have fallen ill with a very high fever and need to visit the doctor. Ask students to outline the way they would get from their house to the hospital, what they would need and who would help them.
 3. When this is complete, ask students to draw this route on their blank piece of paper. Ask them to make their map as realistic as possible and include the following items: their house, the nearest hospital and obstacles along the route (e.g.: houses, traffic lights, shopping malls etc.). Students must also include items they would need along this route (e.g.: car, medication etc.).
 4. After students have drawn in all of these items they must take a coloured marker and draw their route from their house to the hospital.
 5. When their route is complete, ask students to indicate what type of transportation they will use to get there, who will help them get there and how much time all of this will take. Ask students to record this information on a legend in their map.
 6. Ask students to share their maps in groups of four and compare their estimated travel time.
 7. When students have finished comparing, ask them to again look at their maps and take the following items out of their route:
 - Their vehicle
 - Public transit
 - Their parent or guardian who is helping them
 - MoneyAfter they do so, they must re-evaluate the time it will take to get to the hospital, without the above resources and add this information to their legend.
 8. Now ask students to imagine that their hospital has been moved to the next city and they still do not have the above resources. Prompt a discussion using the following suggested questions:
 - How would you get to the hospital?



- How long would this take you?
 - Being sick, do you think you would be able to make this journey?
 - Without money, how would you access the proper medication needed to alleviate your sickness?
 - If you were unable to make it to the hospital for medical treatment, what could happen to you?
9. Tell students that the purpose of this map activity was to allow them to experience what it feels like and looks like to not be able to easily access medical care in their own community. Explain to students that around the world there are people who experience these types of problems. There are many people who do not receive necessary medical treatment because they do not have access to a doctor or cannot afford health care.
10. Read the following statistics to the students:
- Each year, approximately 9.2 million children under the age of five die from often preventable diseases.
 - 12.2 million children in sub-Saharan Africa have lost one or both parents to AIDS.
 - In India, lack of health care has brought the average life expectancy down to just 53.2 years.
 - A child born in a developing country is over 13 times more likely to die by the age of five than a child born in an industrialized country.
11. After hearing these facts ask students the following suggested questions:
- How did these statistics make you feel?
 - Why was this activity important? What did it teach you about medical care?
12. Before concluding this activity, ensure students are aware there are people around the world who do not have access to medical care and that this is detrimental to their life. Encourage them to develop an appreciation for the medical care in their country and an understanding of how fortunate they are to have access to doctors, medical centres and hospitals.

Participate in Free The Children's Five Days for Freedom campaign as an engaging outlet for youth action. Check out www.weday.com/takeaction to learn more.