**Phineas Gage by John Fleischman**

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002

“**Medicine: Then and Now**” Pre-Reading Activity

**Context**

This pre-reading instructional routine helps students understand how far the field of medicine has come over the past few centuries. This activity would be helpful before starting to read *Phineas Gage*; even the first chapter of the book talks about “bodily humors” and the lack of antibiotics in the mid 1800s. Having some background knowledge of the history of medicine will emphasize to students the unlikelihood of people surviving brain injuries during Phineas’s time.

**Statement of Purpose**

The “Medicine: Then and Now” activity is a pre-reading strategy that provides students with background knowledge to help students understand the significance of health problems during the time of Phineas Gage. This is also a mini-research activity that corresponds with the Common Core Anchor Standards:

- Writing 7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focus questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- Writing 8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

**Directions**

**Main Idea:** The field of medicine has come leaps and bounds over the past few centuries. Gummy vitamins and plastic Band-Aids weren’t a normal part of a cabinet at home. In *Phineas Gage*, the main character suffers from a brain injury without the medicine and technology we have today. To truly understand how much medicine has changed, we are going to do some investigating.

**Materials needed:** computer lab (preferred) or library; PowerPoint; writers notebooks

**Time:** 2 class periods

**Steps for Completion:**

1. Have students free-write for 5–10 minutes in their writer’s notebooks: “Think about what types of medicines (cough drops) or other medical treatment (x-rays) you or your family has used over the past few months. Make a list.” Have students share types of medicines and treatments. Make a list on the board, including ideas of your own (especially if students are struggling with this).

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2. Group students into groups of 4 or 5. Each student in the group will pick a different kind of medicine or medical treatment from the list that the group has generated (make sure they each pick a different kind). (5–10 minutes)

3. Go to the computer lab. Have students briefly research the history of their medicine and create a PowerPoint, using the attached info sheet. Students should email themselves their PowerPoints or put it on a thumb drive. (30 minutes)

4. Next day in class: Return to the computer lab. Have students get into their groups and give each other five-minute presentations (using PowerPoints) on what they have learned. Have them nominate one person from each group to share in front of the class. (25 minutes)

5. Discuss with the class about how far medicine and medical technology has come. Point out that most (if not all) if these medical technologies have been invented in the last couple hundred years. (5–10 minutes)

**Assessment**
One assessment that will take place during the first day is to walk around the computer lab as students are presenting their PowerPoints to each other. During the second day, each student should fill out the attached exit slip—some for group PowerPoints, and some for full class PowerPoints.
Medicine: Then and Now
PowerPoint Research

Slide 1: Name of Medicine or Medical Technology
   Your Name

Slide 2: Date invented or created and name of inventor
   Picture of original or inventor if possible

Slide 3: Previous treatments available

Slide 4: Current uses today
   Picture of Medicine or Medical Technology

**Include hyperlinks of websites used at the bottom of each slide**
**Do not use only Wikipedia. You can use Wikipedia to start off your research, but then you need to follow a link on the bottom to the original source**

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Invented in the 1960s by Stewart Adams

Ibuopron (Advil)

Ms. McBride

http://www.chemistrydept.upb.de/images/keulen/figure11.jpg

Before there was Ibuopron, there was...

From the Compendium of Every Day Wants in 1908:
- Drink hot herb tea while you soak your feet in hot water for 25 minutes. Then, get into bed and cover up so you can sweat for an hour or more.
- Crumble up dry bread into a cup. Add some butter, pepper, salt, and boiling water. Then, drink it.

http://thesixtyeight.com/2011/02/16/old-time-headache-remedies/

Current Uses Today

- Headaches
- Mild to moderate pain
- Fever
- Arthritis

http://www.medicinenet.com/ibuprofen/article.htm

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McBride, BYU, 2012
Name: ___________________________________________  Period: __________

Medicine: Then and Now
Exit Slip

1. Person's name, medicine/medical technology, year invented

________________________________________________________________

2. Person's name, medicine/medical technology, year invented

________________________________________________________________

3. Person's name, medicine/medical technology, year invented

________________________________________________________________

4. Person's name, medicine/medical technology, year invented

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5. Person's name, medicine/medical technology, year invented

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What impact have these improvements in medicine and medical technology made in our world today?

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McBride, BYU, 2012