

Assignment Discovery Online Curriculum Body Invaders: Depression

Curriculum Focus

Health

Grade level

9-12

Duration

One or two class periods

Objectives

Students will

- review what they've learned about clinical depression and various treatments; and
- create a poster that highlights one common misconception about depression, and the truth behind that myth.

Materials

- Computer with Internet access
- Print resources about depression
- Poster board, markers

Procedures

1. Begin the lesson by reviewing what students learned about depression in the video. What is depression? What are some different types of depression? What are some causes of depression? Describe different treatments available.
2. Next, have students work in pairs and discuss what facts in the video they found most surprising. Tell students they will choose one fact they'd like to explore further to create a "Myth and Reality" poster about that aspect of depression. Their poster should highlight one misperception and feature the truth. Encourage students to use facts from the video and their own research. They can also include quotes from a variety of sources: the video, their research, or anonymous interviews. Below are some ideas for common misperceptions about depression. You may choose to use them to spark discussion among students.
 - Depression is just a feeling; you can snap out of it if you try hard enough.
 - Only a few "crazy" people really get depressed.
 - Depression only occurs when bad things happen.
 - It's easy to make yourself feel better.
 - There's nothing you can do to treat depression.
 - Medicines like Prozac and Zoloft are "happy pills."
 - Only adults suffer from depression.
 - Therapy's just lying on a couch talking about your childhood.
 - Antidepressants can help anybody with depression.

- There are no outward signs of depression.
 - People dealing with depression never experience extreme highs.
3. Student pairs should use print and online resources in their research. The following Web sites are a good starting point:

Discovery Health: Depression

<http://health.discovery.com/diseasesandcond/encyclopedia/2847.html>

Teen Health: Depression

http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/mental_health/depression.html

National Depressive and Manic-Depressive Association: Stories of Depression

<http://www.ndmda.org/storymenu.html>

4. Once students have completed their posters, have them make presentations to the class. Then, as a class, discuss the steps students should take if they suspect they are suffering from depression themselves. What steps should they take if they think a friend is suffering from depression?
5. Display student posters in a school hallway or other high-traffic location.

Evaluation

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

3 points: Students were highly engaged in class discussions; they created comprehensive and thoughtful posters that included several relevant facts and quotes.

2 points: Students participated in class discussions; they created somewhat comprehensive posters that included some facts and at least one quote.

1 point: Students participated minimally in class discussions; they created simplistic poster with few or no facts or quotes.

Vocabulary:

bipolar disorder (manic depression)

Definition: A type of depression that has either subtle or extreme "high" periods alternating with "low" periods of depression.

Context: Bipolar disorder, or manic depression, is a disorder of the brain.

depression

Definition: A medical condition that leads to intense feelings of sadness or despair; these feelings don't go away on their own, and are not necessarily related to a particular life event.

Context: People of all ages can suffer from depression.

neurotransmitter

Definition: Chemicals in the brain that allow nerve cells to "communicate" with one another

Context: Too few or too many neurotransmitters may be released and cause or contribute to depression.

psychotherapy

Definition: A treatment that tries to eliminate or control mental illness symptoms through talking; the relationship between a therapist and a client is crucial.

Context: Several types of psychotherapy are available: Psychodynamic therapy looks at past traumas, while behavioral psychotherapy tries to change negative patterns of behavior or thought.

Academic Standards

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- Science in Personal and Social Perspectives: Personal health; Risks and benefits

Credit

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