

LESSON PLAN

Informational Text Features: OTC Medicine Safety



Objectives:

- ▶ Identify the central idea and key details of an informational text
- ▶ Create text features to enhance an informational text

Time: One 45-minute class period

Materials:

- ▶ Student Article and Worksheet (see pages 2 and 3)
- ▶ Poster: [Over-the-Counter Medicine Safety \(PDF\)](#)
- ▶ Whiteboard Image: [Chart of Text Features](#)
- ▶ Reproducible Image: [Text Features Options](#)
- ▶ Pen or pencil per student
- ▶ If available: Whiteboard/projector

Visit scholastic.com/OTCmedsafety for additional lesson plans and a variety of resources to support these discussions both inside the classroom and at home.

Lesson Steps:

1. Tell students that they will be reading an article about medicine safety. Ask them what they already know about the topic of medicine—purposes of medicines, types of medicines, medicine safety, etc. Create a word splash on the board to record students' ideas.
2. After students brainstorm their ideas, be sure to inform students that they should only take medicine with the supervision of a parent or trusted adult.
3. Explain that students are going to read an article that includes a lot of information about medicine safety, but that the article is missing many text features that would help the reader understand the text.
4. Review the relevant text features (title, section heading, pull-out quote, diagram, and glossary). Refer to the [Over-the-Counter Medicine Safety poster \(PDF\)](#) to review some of the text features while also previewing the content of the article. Alternatively, refer to an informational article the class has read recently, or a free sample issue from junior.scholastic.com.

If needed, the following chart can be used to review

the relevant text features. Encourage students to share their ideas about the uses for each text feature before revealing each row. [\[Download image for whiteboard\]](#)

5. Distribute the informational article about OTC medicine safety with blank gaps in place of text features. Students should imagine that they are editors who are preparing the article to be published, and they want to make sure that all of the text features will help readers understand the key ideas in the article.
6. If necessary, provide students who need more support with options for the text features. [\[Download image of chart to distribute\]](#)
7. After students have finished reading the article and adding their text features, ask them to complete the accompanying worksheet. They will need to explain their choices for the text features they filled in, as well as answer a series of critical-thinking questions on the content of the article.

Extension: PSA/Poster Activity

Explain to students that they will now have a chance to create a public service announcement (PSA) or poster to share the key information from the article and worksheet with the rest of the school community.

If desired, provide examples and templates from the “Spread the Word” section at scholastic.com/OTCmedsafety/community.

Explain that some PSAs or posters will be selected to hang in the nurse’s office, main office, or hallway. For students who find competition invigorating, this activity could culminate in a class vote for the top entry, or top five entries, to be showcased (especially if wall space is at a premium). Alternately, a new group of posters could be showcased each week until all entries have had a chance to be in the spotlight.

Family Connection: Visit scholastic.com/otcmedsafety/families for take-home options.

Related Resources: View other [lesson plans](#), a [classroom poster](#), and more on the [OTC Medicine Safety teacher page](#).



Directions: You are an editor preparing this article for publishing. Read the article, and help future readers understand the key ideas by using your critical-thinking skills to fill in the blank text features.



OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINE SAFETY

(add title)

What you need to know to make sure that medicines help instead of hurt

Did you know that 10,000 children end up in emergency rooms each year because of medicine errors? Luckily, most of these errors can be prevented. Learn how you can help keep yourself and your family members safe!

Know the Facts: Over-the-Counter vs. Prescription Medicines

Medicines fall into two major categories: *Over-the-counter (OTC) medicine* is bought in a drugstore or supermarket without the need for a doctor's prescription. *Prescription medicine*, on the other hand, is specially ordered by a doctor or nurse practitioner and is available only from a pharmacist. Only the person whose name is on the prescription should take that medicine.

Despite these differences, there are important safety guidelines that OTC and prescription medicines share. First, children should use these medicines only with the permission of a parent or trusted adult. Also, it is always important to read the medicine label before each use. It is dangerous to misuse or abuse *any* type of medicine.

(add section heading)

How can you be sure you're taking an OTC medicine safely? Every OTC medicine, includes a *Drug Facts* label, which is required by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The *Drug Facts* label helps you understand the medicine, who should take it, and how to take it safely. These sections are on each *Drug Facts* label:

- ▶ **ACTIVE INGREDIENTS:** Lists the ingredients in the medicine that make it work.
- ▶ **USES:** Describes the symptoms that the medicine treats.
- ▶ **WARNINGS:** Lists safety information including side effects, questions you may need to ask a doctor before use, and which medicines to avoid taking at the same time.
- ▶ **DIRECTIONS:** Indicates the amount or dose of medicine to take, how often to take it, and how much you can take in one day.
- ▶ **OTHER INFORMATION:** Explains how to store it.
- ▶ **INACTIVE INGREDIENTS:** Lists ingredients not intended to treat symptoms (e.g., preservatives). These can be important in the case of an allergy.
- ▶ **QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?:** Provides the phone number for the company if you have questions.

(add illustration or diagram)

(add section heading)

Remember the story of Goldilocks and the three bears? She needed the porridge to be "just right." Like Goldilocks, you need the "just right" dose of a medicine. Too little medicine may not be effective; too much medicine can cause you harm. Luckily, researchers have already figured out the appropriate dose that each person needs based on age, weight, and other factors. You can find this information in the "Directions" section of the *Drug Facts* label.

To take the correct dose of a medicine, always use the dosing device that is provided (often a small cup for a liquid). Dosing devices are customized to each medicine—you should never substitute a dosing device with kitchen spoons or any other household measuring device.

(add pull-out quote)



OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINE SAFETY

(add section heading)

Some people might think that because a medicine is available over the counter, it cannot cause any harm. However, misusing any medicine by not reading and following the medicine label carefully can lead to serious consequences. For example, certain ingredients may cause allergic reactions. Also, certain medicines can interact with other medicines and may cause side effects or harm when mixed. **Many medicines contain the same kind of active ingredients, so it's important to not take them at the same time.** Furthermore, medicines will not work properly if not taken at the proper dose!

What should you do if you think that you or someone else has taken the wrong dose or wrong medicine, or if you just have questions about a medicine? Call the free and confidential **Poison Help number, 1-800-222-1222**. Experts answer the phone year-round 24/7. Unlike 911, it doesn't have to be an emergency to call.

Safe Storage and Safe Disposal

If you have any younger siblings or small children in your life, you know that kids are naturally curious. That is why it is so important to make sure that all medicines are stored up, away, and out of sight.

When your family cleans out the medicine cabinet, be

sure to follow the FDA's guidelines for safe disposal of medicines. Mix OTCs with a substance people wouldn't want to eat (e.g., kitty litter) and then place the mix in a closed container (e.g., sealed baggie) in the trash.

Be Part of the Solution

In 2015, poison centers reported more than 80,000 cases involving medicine-dosing errors in children 12 and younger. Help eliminate this danger! Educate your family and community about medicine safety—and remember to always take medicine with the supervision of a parent or trusted adult.

Glossary

_____ : _____

_____ : _____

_____ : _____

Think It Through *Record your responses on a separate sheet of paper.*

Part I **Text Features: Explain Your Reasoning**

While you read this article, you were thinking as both a reader and a writer. Explain the text features you chose to add, being sure to support your ideas with evidence from the text.

1. Why did you select the words you included in the **glossary**?
2. Choose one of your **section headings**. Explain why it fits the central idea of the section.
3. Describe the **diagram** or **illustration** you chose to include. How would this diagram help the reader understand the text?
4. Why is the **pull-out quote** that you chose so important to the central idea of the article?

Part II **Critical-Thinking Questions**

Evaluate the following statements, using evidence from the text to explain your thinking.

1. Your sibling says, "It's not safe to measure cough syrup with a kitchen spoon, but this measuring spoon for baking is okay because it's made for measuring." Is your sibling right? How do you know?
2. Your younger sibling took some OTC medicine because she thought it looked like candy. You suggest calling the Poison Help number. Your babysitter says, "She doesn't look sick from it, so we should just wait and see if it's a real emergency." Is your babysitter right? How do you know?
3. Your friend has a headache, and his parent gives him a dose of an OTC pain medicine. Later, he says, "It's been 30 minutes and I don't feel any better. My mom must not have given me enough medicine—I should probably take another dose." Is your friend right? How do you know?