

## **Building Language Skills**

Date: **June 8, 2017**

Article: **Seattle council votes to tax soda, other sugary drinks**

Print Replica: **Tuesday, June 6, 2017**

Section: **MAIN, A1**

Each week, this lesson will share some classroom activity ideas that use the newspaper or other NIE resources. You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some classrooms may be able to use this as a worksheet and others might need to ask and answer the questions in a class discussion.

*Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for all of your students.*

**Materials you will need for this lesson:** The Seattle Times print replica, computer or smart board, pencils or pens, paper

### **Standards:**

#### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1**

Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

#### **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2**

Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

### **Objectives:**

Students will read an article, and develop their stance on taxing sugary drinks in order to hopefully lower consumption and reduce health problems.

### **Pre- Reading Discussion:**



- What do you see in the picture? Where do you think they are?
- What do you think the girl is talking about?
- Do you like speaking in front of large groups? Why or why not?
- What do you think the article will be about? Are there any clues in the picture?

### **Vocabulary Building:**

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using *context clues*? A *context clue* is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the identities and meanings of unknown words.

Write your guess and then look up the definition and write it below your guess. How close did you come to the correct definition?

“It’s not a ***panacea*** for the problem of childhood obesity, but it’s a huge marker to take this step. Consumption drops will happen, and we’re going to see stronger health in the communities that need this the most.”

***Panacea* Guess:**

***Panacea* Definition:**

### **Reading Comprehension:**

1. The council ultimately settled on a rate of 1.75 cents per ounce, which means the tax would be about \$\_\_\_\_\_ for a 2-liter bottle of soda.
2. Diet soda won’t be taxed, and the council also chose to exempt what products?
3. What other drinks will be taxed, along with syrups used in soda-fountain pop?
4. There were mixed messages about the reason for the tax. What were they?
5. The tax is expected to raise about \$15 million per year. Where will the majority of the money raised go?
6. What groups support the tax?
7. What groups oppose the tax?

### **Group Discussion Questions/Journal Prompts:**

- ***How often do you drink soda/sugary drinks?***
- ***Do your parents consume soda?***
- ***Should the city also tax sugary syrups put in coffees? Why or why not?***

- ***Do you think the additional tax will stop people from drinking sugary drinks? Why or why not?***
- ***At what price point do you think people would stop buying sugary coffee drinks and sodas?***
- ***Why do you think diet drinks will not be taxed?***

***Proponents said the tax would reduce consumption of unhealthful beverages and help the city provide better access to nutritious foods in low-income neighborhoods and communities of color.***

***They said soda companies market heavily to children in those communities, where more people struggle with sugar-linked health problems such as obesity.***

- Do you think the taxes will reduce consumption of soda and other sugary drinks? Why or why not?
- Do you think unhealthy foods are marketed to those in low-income neighborhoods? Why or why not?
- Why would people in lower-income neighborhoods eat differently?

***“It’s not a panacea for the problem of childhood obesity, but it’s a huge marker to take this step. Consumption drops will happen, and we’re going to see stronger health in the communities that need this the most.”***

- Do you think we’ll see healthier communities? Why or why not?

***A 10-year-old, Sophia Harrison, offered another view during the council’s public-comment period Monday.***

***“It is a great idea to fund programs to help kids be more prepared and to help families eat more healthy food,” she said, reading from handwritten remarks.***

***“I can’t think of a better way to raise that money than a tax on something that has absolutely no nutritional value.”***

- Do you agree with Sophia? Why or why not?
- What other products do you think are unhealthy and should have extra taxes?