

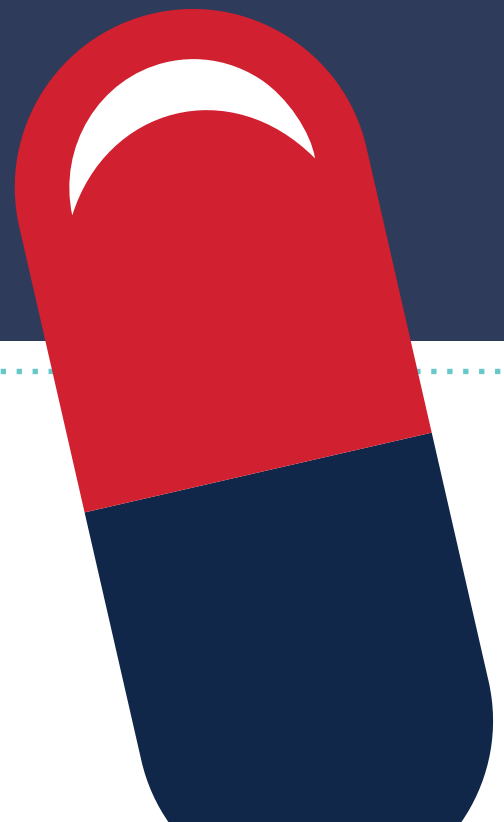
ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL

# INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITY

Sarah's Sister



Discovery  
EDUCATION



# SESSION 4 OVERVIEW



Students will explore the importance of storing medication safely. They will analyze a scenario and make a recommendation for how a teen girl should respond when her younger sister has taken medication that was not properly stored. After learning more about how to respond to a medical emergency, students will revise their recommendations, if appropriate. As an extension, students will conduct research and develop a safety plan for the teenager's household.

## Sarah's Sister

### Content Areas

Health, English Language Arts

### Activity Duration

60 minutes

### Grade Level

Grades 3-5

### Objectives

- Explain the risks of improperly storing medication.
- Identify the steps to take when someone misuses/overdoses on medication.
- Communicate ways to properly store medication.

### Materials

- ["Journal-What Do You Notice?" Student Handout](#), one per student
- [Teacher Resource: Medication Images 1-4](#)
- ["Script: Sarah's Sister" Student Handout](#), one per student
- [Help Sarah Decide Student Handout](#), one per student
- Blue and yellow highlighters, one per student
- Internet access

### Definitions:

- **Medication** – A drug or other form of medicine that is used to treat or prevent disease. Some medications require a prescription to purchase and some medications can be purchased over the counter by an adult.

# HEALTH STANDARDS

## National Health Standards

Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.

1.5.5 Describe when it is important to seek health care.

Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information, products, and services to enhance health.

3.5.1 Locate resources from home, school, and community that provide valid health information.

Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.

5.5.2 Analyze when assistance is needed in making a health-related decision.

## Common Core English Language Arts

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.3.B

Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.

# BACKGROUND INFO

Modeling safe storage and use can guide children to make more informed choices when they are old enough to take medications on their own. Knowing exactly how medications affect the body – and how our body reacts to medications – can help explain how important it is to make responsible decisions when introducing any type of medication into the body.

Every year, many children are seen in the emergency room after consuming medications that are improperly stored. It is important to know what steps to take when a child unexpectedly locates or consumes medication not prescribed to them. When a child has misused medication, it is important to contact the appropriate experts (i.e. Poison Control Center or 9-1-1) and communicate key details (e.g. description of the child's condition, the child's age and weight, the name and approximate amount of the medication consumed, and when the medication was consumed). To keep children safe, medication must be stored properly.

# ENGAGE



**Distribute** a [“Journal- What Do You Notice?” Student Handout](#) to each student. Display the [Teacher Resource: Medication Images 1-4](#) that show improperly- stored medications (e.g. on a nightstand, in a purse on the floor, in an unlocked medicine cabinet, on the kitchen counter) one at a time.

Each time you post a picture ask, “What do you see happening?” Have students record their ideas in their journals.

Allow students to share their ideas with the class. After the class discussion, repost images one at a time, making sure to point out the improperly stored medications.

Take time to prepare your class for the next part of the activity by explaining to them that you are going to be doing a cooperative learning activity called “role play.” Explain to the students that “role play” is a way to act out a scenario to practice different ways to react in a situation or explore potential ways to solve a problem. “Role play” gives us a chance to think about situations that might be stressful and consider the consequences of our decisions while we are calm. “Role play” can help us to make good decisions.

### **Key Talking Points:**

- It is important to role play or practice situations to help us to understand how to make good decisions.
- When you practice or role play a situation, it gives you a chance to think about how you would handle the situation if it happened to you.

Each student will have a copy of a script. Use the chart on the following page as reference when explaining and discussing the different elements of a script. Ask your class what is important to think about when watching a role play.

Possible student responses:

- What people say
- What people do
- What choices the actors make
- What other choices the actors could have made
- What did the actors do that was good
- What could the actors have done differently

## ENGAGE CONT.



The next part of the activity has been set up assuming the students will act out the situation in small groups. An alternative setup would be to have one group of selected students role play the situation in front of the class and ask other students to be the observers. If you choose this option, tell the remaining students that their job will be to observe the role play and provide their ideas and insights with the class when the role play is finished. Suggested discussion questions include:

- What did you observe in the scenario?
- How did Sarah handle the situation? How would you have felt if you were Sarah?
- What would you have done differently?
- What were the key things you learned from the role play?

# EXPLORE

Tell students they are going to perform scenes to explore a scenario describing how siblings approached a potential health emergency.

## Summary of Scenario:

- Sarah is babysitting her younger siblings. When she notices her sister Shelly is missing, she looks for her. Eventually, she finds her standing in her parent's bedroom holding an open prescription bottle with pills scattered around her on the floor.

Put students in groups of four and distribute a [Script: Sarah's Sister Student Handout](#) to each student. Assign each student a role in the script: Sarah, Nelsey, Steven/Narrator, and Scott/Scene. Students should highlight their role in the script. If needed, review the elements of a script with the students (see table below) and allow time for students to ask questions.

Invite students to work in their small groups to perform the scenes according to their roles.

Script Element	Example from Sarah's Sister Script	Description
<b>Slugline</b>	INT.-NIGHT-LIVING ROOM	Describes the setting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Interior/Exterior</li> <li>○ Time</li> <li>○ Place</li> </ul>
<b>Action</b>	SARAH is on the couch watching television with her younger brothers STEVEN and SCOTT. Her cell phone rings. It is her friend NELSEY. She answers the call. While talking on the phone she notices her little sister Shelly has wandered off.	Describes what is happening in the scene
<b>Character's Name</b>	NELSEY	Appears centered in all CAPS each time a new character delivers dialogue
<b>Parentheticals</b>	(Sighs)	Describes what is happening when a character is delivering dialogue
<b>Dialogue</b>	What's up girly? Want to come over?	States what the character says
<p>O.S. indicates that the character is off screen when talking (e.g. phone call)            The first time a character is introduced the name is in all CAPS</p>		

# EVALUATION PART 1



**Pre-assessment** - Distribute a [Help Sarah Decide Student Handout](#) and yellow highlighter to each student. Direct students to work individually to highlight in yellow the immediate steps that Sarah might take to help her sister Shelly. Instruct students to keep this handout to revisit later in the lesson.

## **Explain:**

Tell students that they are going to classify a group of actions into two categories. Category 1 includes the immediate actions Sarah should take to help her sister. Category 2 will include actions Sarah should take after she helps her sister. The list of actions in each category does not need to be in any particular order at this time.

Read aloud the first two actions listed (“Call the poison control center or 911” and “call her neighbor”) and model your thinking out loud as to how you would sort them.

- For example, **“Call the poison control center or 911”** should be placed in Category 1. Clarify that Sarah should call 911 immediately to get her sister the help she needs right away. The operator will send help as well as give Sarah instructions on what to do next. **“Call her neighbor”** should be under Category 2. Later, she can call her neighbor to help her with her other siblings if needed.
- Present a third action (**“Read the prescription label...”**) and ask for student volunteers to categorize the action and explain their thinking. Repeat this with all the actions listed. Do not validate student ideas as the categories are created. Accept all student responses and allow students to revisit and re-categorize actions as new ideas are shared.

Once the two categories are completed, ask, “Do we need to add or eliminate any actions?” Make any edits to the lists based on the class discussion. Anticipated answers are included in the table below.

# EVALUATION PART 1: ANSWERS

## Action Categories (Answers)

Category 1	Category 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Read the prescription label.</li><li>○ Call the local Poison Control Center or 911.</li><li>○ Ask Shelly if she has taken any of the pills, and count the pills on the floor.</li><li>○ Determine the name and quantity of the medication.</li><li>○ Think about how much time has passed since she last saw Shelly.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Go get her other siblings</li><li>○ Call her neighbor.</li><li>○ Try to make Shelly throw up the medication.</li></ul>

Once the class has determined the immediate actions Sarah should take listed in Category 1 ask them, "What do you think Sarah should do first?" Use the information provided below to work with students to clarify a logical sequence of immediate actions.

## Example of Logical Sequence of Immediate Actions Sarah Should Take

Action	Explanation
Call the local Poison Control Center.	Sarah should call the Poison Control Center first so they can guide her to help Shelly.
Read the prescription label.	Sarah needs to let the Poison Control Center staff know the name of the medication because the type of medication Shelly has taken could impact what Sarah does next.
Determine the name and prescribed quantity of the medication.	It is important for Sarah to read what is on the prescription label. The prescription label will let her know how much medication was in the container. This helps the Poison Control Center staff determine the worst-case scenario.
Ask Shelly if she has taken any of the pills and count the pills on the floor.	This will help Sarah estimate how much of the medication Shelly has taken, if any.
Think about how much time has passed since she last saw Shelly.	If Sarah provides this information, the Poison Control Center staff can estimate how long the medication has been in Shelly's body.

Clarify with students that, if Shelly was experiencing issues that prevented her from communicating with Sarah, (e.g. difficulty breathing, not able to talk or move properly, won't wake up) her first action would be to call 9-1-1 and not the Poison Control Center. Also, explain that inducing vomiting to remove medication from the stomach before it absorbs is no longer the standard recommendation. Inducing vomiting is rarely recommended because it has not proven to be more effective than alternative treatments.



# EVALUATION PART 2



**Post assessment** – Distribute a blue highlighter to each student, and invite students to take back out their [Help Sarah Decide Student Handout](#). Have students use information from the classification activity to revise their proposed actions to Sarah, using the blue highlighter.

**Extension:**

Explain to students that, every year, many children under five (mostly two-year-olds) are seen in the emergency room after consuming medications that are improperly stored. Show the Safe Kids Worldwide: Simple Steps to Safe Medicine storage video (1:06) at <https://www.safekids.org/video/simple-steps-safe-medicine-storage> to reinforce that these accidents could be prevented by properly storing medications.

Invite students to conduct online research to identify ways to safely store medications. They should focus on major steps parents should take to prevent children from accessing and misusing medication. Allow them to communicate their understanding by developing one of the following:

- A medication safety tips presentation for Sarah's parents.
- A poster for younger siblings about the dangers of using medication without adult supervision.
- A brochure or social media campaign to communicate medication safety to their peers.

**Sample of safety tips:**

- Confirm prescription medication is stored properly in your household. Somewhere that is too high for young children to reach or see is ideal.
- Re-lock the safety cap of medicine bottles each time they are opened.
- Dispose of unused prescription medication to prevent misuse.
- Follow the instructions, and don't take more than what is prescribed.
- Don't mix medications.
- Don't give prescription medication to someone else, and don't take other people's medications.

# SUMMARY/WRAP-UP



## Key Talking Points:

- Always store medication where young children cannot reach it.
- It's very important to keep a close eye on younger siblings if you are watching them.
- Know the steps to take if someone accidentally takes medication they aren't supposed to.
- Keep the poison control center's number accessible in your house and know where to find it.
- We can make good decisions, if we know how to use and store medication safely.

# MEDICATION IMAGES 1-4

**Engage Image #1**



**Engage Image #2**



**Engage Image #3**



**Engage Image #4**





# SCRIPT – SARAH’S SISTER

**Directions:** Work with your group to perform the scenes below.

FADE IN:

Scene: INT.-NIGHT-LIVING ROOM

Narrator: SARAH is on the couch watching television with her younger brothers STEVEN and SCOTT. Her cell phone rings. It is her friend NELSEY. She answers the call. While talking on the phone she notices her little sister Shelly has wandered off.

SARAH  
(ring, ring)

Hello.

NELSEY (O.S.)  
What's up girlie? Want to come over?

SARAH  
(Sighs)  
I can't I am babysitting for my parents. What are you doing?

NELSEY  
I just got finished painting my nails. I am about to ask my mom if I can have some ice cream.

SARAH  
That sounds so good. We are just watching a movie.  
Wait. SHELLY? SHELLY! Nelsey, let me call you back.  
I need to go find Shelly. She wandered off when I wasn't looking.

Scene: INT.-NIGHT-KITCHEN

Narrator: Clutching her phone, Sarah hops off of the couch and walks to the kitchen to look for her little sister Shelly.

SARAH  
Shelly. Are you in here?

Scene: INT.-NIGHT-HALLWAY

Narrator: Sarah walks up and down the hallway.

SARAH  
Shelly! SHELLY! Where are you?

Scene: INT-NIGHT-BATHROOM

Narrator: Sarah starts to get nervous. She turns on the bathroom light and pulls back the shower curtain.

SARAH  
Shelly? Are you hiding from me? SHELLY!  
This is not funny. Please come out.

Scene: INT-NIGHT-PARENT'S BEDROOM

Narrator: Sarah runs into the room and finds her sister holding an empty prescription bottle. Pills are scattered on the floor around Shelly.

SARAH  
(grabs pill bottle)  
Shelly! Where did you get this? Did you eat any of these pills?

FADE OUT:

# HELP SARAH DECIDE

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 1:** Use your yellow highlighter to indicate the immediate steps you think Sarah should take to help her sister.

## SCENARIO

Sarah finds her sister standing with an empty prescription bottle.  
There are pills scattered on the floor.



Call the Poison Control Center or 911  
OR  
Call her neighbor



Read the prescription label to determine the name  
and prescribed amount of the medication  
OR  
Search the house for other improperly stored medications



Try to make Shelly throw up the medication  
OR  
Try to determine how much time has passed since she last saw Shelly

**Step 2:** If needed, use your blue highlighter to modify your initial recommendations to Sarah.