



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute

1999 Volume VI: Human-Environment Relations: International Perspectives from History, Science, Politics, and Ethics

Asthma and the Environment

Guide for Curriculum Unit 99.06.02

by Richard R. Macmahon

This unit is designed to acquaint the student with the causes, symptoms, treatment and environmental relationship of asthma; and to help the student to better understand how to deal with this problem at school and at home as a day-to-day phenomenon. The students will learn what causes asthma, how asthma may affect growth and development, why asthma has such a negative affect on school work, and how their environment is the most significant factor in this disease. The students will also learn what may be done at home to limit the environmental components which cause this disease.

The unit has sections which discuss why asthma is increasing at the present time, what are the basics one needs to know about this disease, what the actual immune system mechanism is, the effects of asthma on the psychology of the adolescent , the effects on academic performance, a classification of the stages of the disease, the results of a survey of one school, the relationship to the environment including asthma triggers, treatments in brief, and home solutions to the problems of environmental triggers. The emphasis is on understanding asthma and knowing what each person may do on their own to limit environmental triggering of an asthma attack. There are laboratory exercises included to explore some aspects of air-borne asthmatic triggers.

(Recommended for all Biology and Health courses, grades 9-12.)

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