# H1N1: Truth or Rumor? Get the Facts!

## Grade Cluster - 6 - 8

## NETS-S- 3 - Research and Information Fluency

## Quick Look:

Students in a middle school class became very concerned about the H1N1 flu virus, its impact on children in their age group, and the media attention to the vaccination being offered at their school.  As a result, they decide to do research on this disease. They share the results of their research through posters placed around the community, at the local hospital, in pediatricians' offices, and through multimedia presentations shared on the Internet.

## Scenario:

During a study of human body systems, students in a middle school science class express a great deal of concern about the H1N1 flu virus and the vaccine being offered at the school.  They have heard a lot of information on the news, read about it in newspapers, and have seen headlines on the Internet.  Jacob mentions a blog that he saw on the Internet that described how dangerous the vaccine is and that doctors had commented on the blog that they would not allow their own children to have the vaccine.  Students want to know how the H1N1 virus would attack their body systems, and they want to know what is true about the disease as well as the vaccine.  How do they know whom to believe?  How can they help prevent the spread of the disease?  What can they do about the decision to have the vaccine? They decide to do research to find answers to their questions.

As an initial activity, students brainstorm what they have heard about H1N1, using a graphic organizer to record everything they have heard, know or think they know about H1N1.  Included in the brainstorming are questions they have, such as "How is the disease spread? What are the symptoms of the disease?", "Has anyone in Vermont died from H1N1?", "How can I avoid getting it?", and "Should I get the vaccine?" Using the graphic organizer, they arrange, revise, and prioritize by topic and focus question.  (3a, 6a, 6b)

Students are given a day or two to think about these focus questions and decide which question they would like to research.  Students work in teams of four to work on one of the focus questions that include:

>    Is the vaccine safe and should I get it?
>    What can I do to prevent acquiring or spreading the disease?
>    What are the differences between H1N1 and other types of seasonal flu?
>    Where did H1N1 come from?
>    Where have H1N1 cases been verified and how/when is it predicted to spread to our area?

After choosing the focus question, but before doing research, students discuss in teams what they think would be good sources of information. They create a list of indicators

that would define a website, online video, or *podcast* as authentic, reliable, and valid. Students discuss the fact that any information they find should be current and from sources that are reliable. Jacob finds the blog he read and the students discuss whether the information should be accepted as valid.  They examine the site, finding no reference to the author's credentials. The blog is also suspect based on its URL.  Discussion about the date of the information is very important to the students because they want the most relevant, current information.  The students design a checklist of their indicators for a good source of information, which they plan to refer to as they do their research.  (3a, 3b, 3c)

Working in their teams, students use a full class *wiki*, so that information is shared among all teams, to brainstorm ideas of where to obtain their information.  They discuss who might be an authority on the disease (the school nurse, local doctors, people at the state health department, the CDC), list this first-person contact information, and match that contact with a particular student who will be responsible for arranging interviews or classroom visits.  They also share links to newspaper articles and news clips. (3a, 3b)

The majority of the research is done online, using written work, videos, and *podcasts,* as well as "live" interviews with physicians or other authorities, using video conferencing such as *Skype* or the *Learning Network of Vermont Video Conferencing System (LNV)*. (6a, 6b)  Teams discuss and decide upon search terms for their topics and look at a variety of search engines and directories together to decide which ones are most appropriate for this type of research. (3a, 3b, 3c) While researching, each student has at least one other person on their team who double-checks their sources for validity and accurate citation. To facilitate this activity, as students choose websites for use in their research, they record them in a social bookmarking tool such as *Delicious,* noting all the information that validates the site using the checklist created earlier. Using *Delicious*, students also share websites that may be of use to their team members.  (3c)

As research progresses, some teams create, edit and finalize a script for a *podcast* or *vodcast,* using a *wiki*.  The students then use *Audacity* to record their *podcasts* or a *Flip* camera to record *vodcasts*, and upload them to *Podomatic*.   Other teams create a draft of text and prepare the layout for a *Glog*, then create their work in *Glogster*. (3c, 3d)

Using *Microsoft Publisher*, each team also creates an informational printed poster, duplicates it, and distributes copies to the schools around their community, as well as at other community-accessed buildings such as libraries, post offices, town offices, pharmacies, and doctors' offices.

One student from each team works on the *Delicious* account to organize it, edit it, manage *tags,* and open it to the public. Other students work on the *wiki* main page to edit it, organize it, and create links to the *Delicious* account as well as all of the teams' final products. A group of students work with the school webmasters to make sure each school in their district has a link to their site from both the school's home page and from the district nurses' web page.  The students also offer the informational link to other appropriate venues such as the Vermont Department of Health.

Finally, each team is also responsible for reporting their findings to a live audience.  (3d) Some teams choose to visit elementary schools to teach younger children tips on how to try to stay healthy, some teams visit parent group organizations such as the PTO to educate parents about their findings, other teams make presentations to the school board about offering the vaccine during school hours, and others visit nearby middle schools to

share their information.  After the project is completed, all students feel comfortable that they know the facts, can take positive steps to avoid contracting the flu, and can have an intelligent discussion with their parents about whether they wish to receive the vaccine.

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**Student Standards –** The following NETS-S are noted in the scenario:
> 3. Research and Information Fluency – A, B, C, D
> 6. Technology Operations and Concepts – A, B

**Teacher Standards –**Teachers who teach this unit address the following NETS-T:
> 1. Facilitate and Inspire Student Learning and Creativity – A, B, C
> 2. Design &bDevelop Digital-Age Learning Experiences/Assessments – A, B, C
> 3. Model Digital-Age Work and Learning – B, C, D
> 4. Promote and Model Digital Citizenship and Responsibility – A

## Content Grade Expectations

The scenario writer has identified the following content grade expectations that s/he felt might be assessed in this scenario.  In most of these scenarios, there may well be opportunities to assess other or additional content grade expectations across a variety of disciplines. If you are interested in developing a unit or lessons based on the following scenario, and you don't see any grade expectations in your content area, we encourage you to capture the ideas presented in the scenario and make it your own by adding components that address the grade expectations you are most interested in assessing.

**HE4: Accessing Information**
Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information and/or resources about health issues, services and products.
- Identify resources that provide valid health information and services for individuals, families, and communities.

**HE7: Decision Making**
Students demonstrate the ability to make decisions that lead to better health.
- Analyze how individuals, families, and community values influence health-related decisions.

**Informational Writing: Reports**
**W8: 8 In reports, students organize information/concepts by…**
- Using an organizational text structure appropriate to focus/controlling idea
- Drawing a conclusion by synthesizing information from the report
- Obtaining information from multiple locations or sources when appropriate
- Listing and citing sources, using accepted format, if appropriate

**W8: 9 In reports, students effectively convey a perspective on a subject by…**
- Stating and maintaining a focus/controlling idea/thesis (purpose)
- Writing with a sense of audience, if appropriate
- Establishing an authoritative stance, when appropriate

**W8: 10 In reports, students demonstrate use of a range of elaboration strategies**
- Including facts and details relevant to focus/controlling idea, and excluding extraneous information
- Including sufficient details or facts for appropriate depth: naming, describing, explaining, comparing, use of visual images