Name of Lesson: 2. Humor does a body good....

Topic: Humor

Gifted Standard and element(s):
G1-Critical Thinking- Students will utilize higher order reasoning and reflect upon their thinking.
G2-Convergent Thinking-Students will reason logically using induction and deduction.
G4-Divergent Thinking-Students will think creatively to generate innovative ideas, products, or solutions to problems.
G5-Evaluative Thinking-Students will evaluate and solve a variety of authentic problems.
G6-Relationships & Connections-Students will make relationships and connections among various topics and disciplines.

Supporting Georgia Performance Standard(s) and element(s):

Essential Question(s): How are Critical Thinking, Convergent Thinking, Divergent Thinking, Evaluative Thinking and Relationships and Connections used to help me understand how humor is beneficial to a person’s mind and body (attitude and health)?

Lesson Questions: Why is humor good for you? What are the physical and emotional responses of the body to humorous events/situations?

Lesson Summary: Students will explore Gifted Standards G1, G2, G4, G5, and G6 as they relate to information on Humor. Students will complete work stations and assessments for each of the standards.

Assessment Description/Performance Task:
- Constructed response
- Informal assessment
- Performance task
- Selected response

Brief Description of Assessment: Students will complete work stations that focus on each of the standards. Each work station has its own assessment. To keep track of completed stations, students will fill in the corresponding section on their copy of "Torrie the Tortoise's" shell. Assessments range from analysis and interpretation of data, to creating and completing rubrics, to solving logic puzzles, and to completing and rating performance tasks. Students will self-assess as well as peer-assess. Students will also keep a reflective journal to record how standards were demonstrated in each work station. The journal can be a file folder, 3 prong pocket folder or notebook.

Instructional Methods:
- Hook/Activator:
  OPENING: Share a funny story segment from an Amelia Bedelia, Junie B. Jones, or Judy Moody book. When students respond with laughter, ask them to describe what they felt when they were laughing or shortly after they stopped laughing. Add these words or phrases to anchor chart that was created during the last class meeting. Using the information from "Physical Aspects of Humor” article as a guide the teacher will discuss, why and how people laugh and what physically occurs in the body as we laugh. This article can be found with the Evaluative Thinking center information. Compare information from the article with the words or phrases students came up with in initial discussion ~do they match? What can we add now?
- Teaching Strategy:
  Students will work in small groups to complete standards based projects. These will demonstrate students understanding of each of the standards. Each "work station"will address one of the gifted
standards in relation to the Lesson Questions. One work station will be teacher led; students will work independently at the remaining work stations.

1. Review each work station’s instructions with students, making sure to discuss the rules of a drop-line puzzle since some students may not have attempted this task previously. Divide class into small groups of 2 to 5 students depending on your class size. One group will work with you doing either a mini-lesson or direct instruction. The other students will work independently at the other work stations.

2. Each student should be given a file folder or 3-prong pocket folder to store all their materials. These can be kept in a crate or container for easy access each week.

3. Students will receive a new copy of “Torrie the Tortoise” (from lesson 1) to keep track of which work stations they have completed.

4. Each time they complete a center, they will color in the matching section of Torrie’s shell. It may take several weeks for students to complete all the work stations and demonstrate their understanding of each of the standards.

5. Each work station should contain a poster explaining which standard is being explored.

6. Each work station should contain instructions and materials to complete standards related project.

7. Be sure to model expectations for each center and thoroughly explain directions. You may need to do mini-lessons for some of the centers i.e. Convergent thinking – talk about what a limerick is as well as what meter and rhyme scheme are used etc.

WORK STATIONS:

G1: - Critical Thinking – LAUGH, LAUGH, LAUGH - Students will reflect upon their learning through analysis of their personal inventory of what is funny to them and makes them feel good. Students will cultivate critical thinking skills using clarity, relevance and depth to understand definitions of humor found through use of a thesaurus.

G2: - Convergent Thinking – Students will discover a quote about humor while completing a drop-line puzzle. They will then determine the meaning of the quote through opinions and conclusions using logical reasoning. Written directions for completion of a drop-line should be included at the station. The quote may be placed on display (bulletin board, poster, etc.) and the students’ opinions may be written on index cards or sentence strips and added to display. Teacher may have students share their ideas/opinions during closure activity.

G4 – Divergent Thinking – Students will choose a brainstorming topic and record their thoughts. Students will then design a poster, poem, song etc. to showcase their ideas that demonstrate the four components of creativity: Fluency, Flexibility, Originality, and Elaboration.

G5 – Evaluative Thinking – Close reading and discussion of the article “Humor that Hurts”. This station is teacher directed. Reading strategies may need to be introduced and/or reviewed. (See attached Close Reading components). Article on “Physical Aspects of Humor” included to give teacher some background information. Teachers may have students include this information during an Affective Lesson.

G6 – Relationships and Connections – Students will research an author from the “Judy Moody “, “Amelia Bedelia”, or “Junie B. Jones” series or choose a humorist/comedian from the list provided. Students will write an informational paragraph analyzing their selected author/humorist/comedian. Students will organize their information by using the Biographical Outline Form.
CLOSING: Teacher will bring students back together in whole group. Discussion will involve opinions, questions, and information about the essential questions to determine the depth of knowledge students have acquired through center work. Students may share completed projects or give status report as to level of completion of remaining centers.

Teachers may also focus discussion and share projects from one standard to demonstrate emphasis of that standard.

- **Summary by the Learner**: Students will gain an understanding and working knowledge of Gifted Standards as applied to the topic of Humor. Students will answer the lesson questions in their journals when all the work stations are complete. Students will record in their journals how each of the standards was demonstrated at each of the work stations.

**Differentiation: Flexible grouping by ability**

**More capable**: to meet the needs of more capable students or higher grade level students different materials may be introduced to stretch student capabilities

**Less capable**: appropriate leveled information will be provided /used to complete work station activities

**Materials for this Lesson:**
- Standards Poster
- Amelia Bedelia, Judy Moody, or Junie B. Jones book
- Work Station instructions
- Articles – Physical Aspects of Humor and Humor that Hurts
- Close Reading
- How To Do a Close Read
- Brainstorming Ideas to use with the divergent Thinking Activity
- Brainstorm Topic List
- Paper/markers/crayons/pencils/
- Close Reading component sheet
- Websites to Use for Research of authors
- Thesaurus
- Class copies of:
  - Torrie the Tortoise (from Lesson 1)
  - Laugh, Laugh, Laugh – personal inventory
  - Drop-line puzzle #1
  - Drop-line puzzle #2
  - Biographical Information Outline
  - Biographical Information Paragraph form
  - Informational Paragraph Rubric
  - Brainstorming Rubric
  - Evaluative Thinking - “Humor that Hurts” Graphic Organizer

**Vocabulary for this Lesson:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Humor</th>
<th>Informational</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beneficial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop-line Puzzle</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thesaurus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Critical Thinking Work Station Instructions

G1- Students will utilize higher order reasoning and reflect upon their thinking

  a. apply the core critical thinking skills to various situations ; analysis

Critical Thinking Analysis

1. Be sure to put your name and date on all your papers.

2. Complete your personal inventory. This is an individual activity. You do not need to discuss this with your partner as you are completing your inventory!!

3. As you are working to complete your personal inventory of what is funny to you and makes you feel good, make certain you are answering the questions in complete statements.

4. Use a thesaurus to find synonyms of the word “humor”. Use these words to compile a definition of “humor” in your own words.

5. Discuss with a learning partner your answers to the personal inventory. Analyze and evaluate each other’s definition of humor. Be respectful and positive.

6. Place your completed work in your folder. Be sure to color in the “CRITICAL THINKING” section on Torrie the Tortoise’s shell.
Convergent Thinking Work Station Instructions

G2- Students will reason logically using induction and deduction
   a. solve problems using logical reasoning

Drop-Line Puzzle

1. Be sure to put your name and date on all your papers.

2. Decipher the quote by using logical reasoning to discover letter placement in the drop-line form.

3. Once the quote is revealed, you need to reason logically as to the meaning of the quote. Should you not know the meaning of any words used, utilize a dictionary to look up the words.

4. You will now need to write your opinion/understanding of the quote on a sentence strip or note card. Be sure to use complete sentences with proper capitalization and punctuation. Share your reasoning with a learning partner.

5. Place your completed work in your folder. Be prepared to display your opinion. Remember to color in the “CONVERGENT THINKING” section on Torrie the Tortoise’s shell.
Convergent Thinking Work Station

{DROP LINE PUZZLE DIRECTIONS}

Puzzles have 2 distinct zones. The first zone, in the top part of the puzzle is the letter columns. The second zone in the bottom of the puzzle is the answer grid.

To solve the puzzle, you must take the letters from the upper letter columns and enter them into the answer grid by having:

RULES

a. The letters must “fall” into the answer grid in the same column where they are stored
b. Each black square in the answer grid represents a space between the words in the quote. No letter will go into the place of a black square.
c. Some squares may have punctuation marks that will fall into the grid
d. Each letter in the storage columns will be used only once. When the puzzle is complete there will not be any leftover letters.

TIPS

a. You need to look at the letter combinations and number of letters in each word, determine commonly used words that have those letters
b. You need to keep re-reading sections you have completed to see if it makes sense, or what word would make sense in that part of the sentence.
c. Don’t get discouraged! Think logically to find words that fit.
Divergent Thinking Work Station Instructions

G4-students will think creatively to generate innovative ideas, products, or solutions to problems
  a. assess ideas for the components of divergent thinking: fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration
  b. apply components of divergent thinking to ideas, products, and problem solving situations, (for improvement)

Divergent Thinking - Brainstorming

1. Be sure to put your name and date on your papers.

2. Choose a topic from the list and on a piece of paper record all of your ideas you can think of that are associated with your choice. You can come up with your own topic but it must be approved by the teacher first.

3. Illustrate all of your brainstormed ideas by creating a poster, poem, song, etc.

4. Once you have completed the product make sure that it demonstrates the four components of creativity: fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration.

5. Use the rubric to assess your work.

6. Place your completed idea recording sheet, finished product and rubric in your folder. Be sure to color in the “DIVERGENT THINKING” section on Torrie the Tortoise shell.
**Brainstorming Ideas to use with the Divergent Thinking Activity:**

- What are things that make you laugh?
- List many funny and unusual ways you may use make someone laugh.
- List several unique/unusual ways someone may use to get to the beach.
- Answer the question – “Why did the chicken cross the road?”
- List all the ways you realize school that school has started...
- Excuses, excuses—list all the excuses you can think of that Lucy could give to Charlie Brown for him missing the football or her moving the football.
- List all the reasons: “I know I need a bath when...”
- List all the reasons: “I know I am in trouble when...”
- List all the reasons: “I know it is time to go to bed when...”
- List interesting ways that you could improve a cross camel’s disposition
# Brainstorming Rubric

Name__________________  Date__________________  

Product___________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fluency</strong></td>
<td>One to two ideas</td>
<td>Three to four ideas</td>
<td>Five ideas</td>
<td>More than Five ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Flexibility</strong> – <strong>Did you think of different ways using synonyms, homonyms, etc. to think of your idea?</strong></td>
<td>Use of one different way to look at my idea</td>
<td>Use of two different ways to look at my idea</td>
<td>Use of three different ways to look at my idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Elaboration</strong> – <strong>Did you use details to describe/illustrate your ideas?</strong></td>
<td>One idea used more than one detail</td>
<td>Two ideas used more than one detail</td>
<td>Three ideas used more than one detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Originality</strong></td>
<td>All of my ideas were the same as my partner(s)</td>
<td>Most of my ideas were the same as my partner(s)</td>
<td>Some of my ideas were the same as my partner(s)</td>
<td>None of my ideas were the same as my partner(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluative Thinking Work Station
Instructions
G5-students will evaluate and solve a variety of authentic problems
a. implement the evaluative thinking process
b. apply and adapt a variety of strategies to resolve problems, dilemmas and evaluate their effectiveness

Evaluative Thinking – Close Reading

1. Be sure and put your name and date on the top of your paper.

2. The teacher will be working with you in this center. The teacher will pass out the article “Humor that Hurts”.

3. The teacher will introduce the text and set the purpose of reading – to recognize humor that hurts and how to avoid these situations.

4. The students will “read” with a pencil – making notes, circling unknown words, notating questions they have, etc.

5. When finished with the first reading, students will turn and talk, with a learning partner, about what has been read.

6. The teacher will then read the text and discuss the information with students (you may choose to use the suggested questions or your own). Students will follow along with the text; listening closely.

7. Students will record information gained from the discussion and reading of the text on the graphic organizer.

8. Place your completed work in your folder. Be sure to color in the “EVALUATIVE THINKING” section on Torrie the Tortoise’s shell.
CLOSE READING

Read carefully – with the eye of a writer. It is to uncover multiple layers of meaning and emphasize the importance of students critically examining a text thru multiple readings to understand:

- the purpose of in reading and the author’s purpose in writing the work
- to develop schema and to apply transfer form one text to another
- thoughtful discussion and to use the text itself to enhance comprehension, by continuing to return to the text for support and confirmation of ideas

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS THAT ARE TEXT RELATED TO THE ARTICLE “HUMOR THAT HURTS” – Students will record their answers on the graphic organizer.

1. How does “put down” humor affect people who are being teased?
2. Explain the term “tongue – fu”. What is another term that comes to mind when hearing “tongue-fu” and how do these relate to one another?
3. Evaluate the terms “laughing at” and “laughing with” and what the results of each might be.
4. What gifted standard does this article relate to and using the text, supports your choice?

*this article is from The Humor Project in Saratoga, NY. The project has a current website, should you wish to find additional resources/articles. www.humorproject.com
Evaluative Thinking – Graphic Organizer
“Humor that Hurts” by Pearl Gaskins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name __________________________</th>
<th>Date __________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How does “put down humor” affect people?</td>
<td>Explain the term “tongue-fu.” What is another term that it sounds like?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate how “laughing at” and “laughing with” someone are Different.</td>
<td>Which Gifted Standard(s) does this article relate to? Use the text to support your choice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relationships and Connections Work Station

Instructions

G6- students will make relationships and connections among various topics and disciplines

Relationships and Connections – Author Research

1. You will need to choose either an author of a humorous series or choose a humorist/comedian from the provided list.

2. As you conduct your research, be sure to fill in and organize your information using the Biographical Outline Form.

3. You will then take the information from the Biographical Outline Form and write an informational paragraph that creates an understanding of your author/comedian.

4. Use the Informational Writing Rubric to score your partner’s paper. Let your partner score your paper. Be sure to include two positive comments! Be prepared to share your paragraph with the class.

5. Place your completed work in your folder. Be sure to color in the “RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS” section on Torrie the Tortoise's shell.
# Informational Paragraph Rubric

| Name: ____________________________ | Date ________________ |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Knowledge</strong> - Knowledge and understanding of topic (content, key facts)</th>
<th>6 points</th>
<th>5 points</th>
<th>4 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three or more sentences that tell about the author/humorist</td>
<td>One or two sentences that relate to topic</td>
<td>Demonstrates limited knowledge of topic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Relationships/Connect</strong> - Ability to synthesize and evaluate information; - selection of details supports topic</th>
<th>6 points</th>
<th>5 points</th>
<th>4 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All details are related to the author/humorist.</td>
<td>Some details are related to the author/humorist.</td>
<td>None of the details relate to the author/humorist.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several connections-to-self have been made.</td>
<td>One connection-to-self has been made.</td>
<td>No connections-to-self have been made</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Communication</strong> - Communication of language and/or delivery of information</th>
<th>3 Points</th>
<th>2 Points</th>
<th>1 Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph is well organized and makes sense.</td>
<td>Organizes and communicates ideas with some effectiveness.</td>
<td>Organizes and communicates ideas with limited effectiveness.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>There are less than 3 grammar errors (spelling, punctuation, capitalization)</td>
<td>There are 3 – 5 grammar errors (spelling, punctuation, capitalization)</td>
<td>There are more than 5 grammar errors (spelling, punctuation, capitalization)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The paragraph has an opening sentence, at least 3 detail sentences and a concluding sentence</td>
<td>The paragraph is missing some sentences. It has an opening sentence, some detail sentences and may have a concluding sentence</td>
<td>The paragraph is missing most of the sentences. It contains 3 or fewer sentences.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biographical Information Paragraph</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Topic Sentence</strong> (Sentence about the person):</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Specific Details about the Topic- three or more complete sentences</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusion: Sentences</strong>-(including connections between you and the person)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Biographical Information Outline

Name_________________________Date________________

1. Name of person (birth name and stage name if they differ):
   __________________________________________________________

2. Where were they born and are they still living or deceased (have died)?
   __________________________________________________________

3. How did they get their start?
   __________________________________________________________

4. What humorous activities lead them to fame?
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

5. How long did or have they participated in this activity?
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

6. What lead them to choose a humorous direction with their work or how has the humorous tone of their work affected them?
   __________________________________________________________
7. Make connections between the author and yourself (even if they are force fit/using synectic connections)

8. What are two interesting/unique facts that you would like to share about the author?

9. If an author, what are the titles of some of their works? If they are a humorist/comedian, where do they perform?
WEB SITES TO USE FOR RESEARCH OF AUTHORS:

Peggy Parish – author of Amelia Bedelia books
www.scholastic.com/teachers/contributor/peggy-parish
http://faculty.libsci.edu/literarymap/authors/parish.htm
www.authorsillustrators.com/parish/bio.htm
www.kidsreads.com/authors/peggy-parish
http://peggyandhermanparish.weebly.com/peggy-parish.html

Judy Blume
www.judyblume.com/about.php
www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/judy-blume-interview-transcript
www.biography.com/people/judy-blume-9216512

Megan McDonald – author of Judy Moody series
www.scholastic.com/teachers/contributor/megan-mcdonald
www.judymoody.com
www.meganmcdonald.net/

Dav Pilkey – author of Captain Underpants Series
www.pilkey.com
www.scholastic.com/teachers/contributor/dav-pilkey
www.famousauthors.org/dav-pilkey

For students who finish early or who are interested in this topic and would like to extend their learning, the following are humorists and comedians to research with suggested sites. These particular sites are safe. Be sure to check all information if you use additional sites for these humorists/comedians:
Lucille Ball – www.biography.com/people/lucille-ball-9196958
Red Skelton – www.biography.com/people/red-skelton-9485657
Mr. Bean (Rowan Atkinson) – www.biography.com/people/rowan-atkinson-9191636
Bob Hope- www.biography.com/people/bob-hope-9343481
Jerry Seinfeld – www.biography.com/people/jerry-seinfeld-9542107
Tim Allen – www.biography.com/people/tim-allen-9542074
Drew Carey – www.biography.com/people/drew-carey-16257107
When the doorbell rang, I panicked. My hair looked like the Bride of Frankenstein’s, clumps of mascara hung from my lashes, and my dog was chewing my best shoes into shreds. (Too bad it wasn’t Halloween.) To top things off, I knocked over half a bottle of perfume—on myself.

As I opened the door, my dream date started sneezing. “Perfume,” he said weakly. “I’m deathly allergic.”

That was only the beginning. He was nervous, I was nervous. (I’d had a crush on this guy for a billion years.) No wonder the night turned into the dating disaster of the century.

Believe it or not, our waitress was his ex-girlfriend. (I think she was out for revenge.) She served us—I swear—frozen fries, and spiked our soup with garlic. Her glare chilled the whole place. We hurried out, still hungry. That’s when we discovered he had locked the keys in the car. We got in with a borrowed hanger. But not before he snagged my nylons—and his jacket. (At least the police didn’t arrest us mistakenly for breaking and entering.)

Were we jinxed or what? The movie was sold out. (I probably wouldn’t have liked it anyway.) I turned around to go back to the car, and stepped right into a huge wad of sticky, pink bubble gum.

So here we are, my shoe glued to the sidewalk, I’m stinking like a French pooodle, and my stockings have run like railroad tracks. My poor date is hungry, tired, and teary-eyed from sneezing. I’m holding onto his arm, scraping the gum off my shoe, when he sneezes again. I lose my balance, and we go tumbling to the ground. Our eyes meet. It’s too much. We burst into side-splitting laughter. Like magic, the tension and frustration disappear.

The moral? When everything that can go wrong does, humor can save the day. But humor does much more than that. Research shows that humor has benefits from improving self-esteem to strengthening the body’s immune system. It can even help you solve problems creatively.

And best of all, you don’t have to be Bette Midler or Robin Williams—anyone can tap the power of humor.

**LAUGHTER AND SELF-ESTEEM**

Of course, humor is fun for its own sake. But if you can tickle your own or someone else’s funny bone, chances are you’ll improve your sense of self-esteem. In fact, one of the greatest benefits of humor is increased self-esteem. People feel better about themselves when they laugh, says Annette Goodheart, a psychotherapist in Santa Barbara, California. When you laugh, the brain makes chemicals that produce a sense of well-being. Also, a good laugh can release painful feelings of anger, depression, embarrassment, and fear.

Humor helps us to take ourselves less seriously. “Young people often think that to act like an adult, you have to be serious,” says Donna Cooper, a humor training consultant based in West Hartford, Connecticut. While the average four-year-old chuckles, giggles, or laughs almost 500 times a day, the average adult laughs only 15 times a day. Instead, says Cooper, try lightening up. She suggests that you take your responsibilities seriously and yourself lightly.

Humor also allows us to accept our shortcomings. “To laugh at yourself and invite others to laugh with you takes the stress of perfectionism off your back,” says Joel Goodman, director of the HUMOR Project in Saratoga Springs, New York. Noel Rappin, an award-winning teen comic, for example, often turns painful life experiences into comic skits. When Noel, 18, of Wilmette, Illinois, was a freshman on the basketball team, he spent most of his time on the bench. In a comedy skit, when he finally gets to play, his uniform rips, and the coach yells at him for touching the ball. Joking about that painful experience, “brought it down to size.” Noel says. “After a while, I realized how much less resentful I was.”

**BUILDING BRIDGES**

Looking for a love potion? Try a laugh

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**When there are things you can’t change, humor helps.**

—Matthew Savard, 17

**PEARL GASKING**

APRIL 1989 13

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Teacher background info for “Humor that Hurts”.................pg2

Yuk it Up!

Here are some ways to lighten up your life.

2. The next time you are in a sticky situation, ask yourself, “What would my favorite funny person do or say if he or she were in my shoes?”
3. Carry a pad, and jot down funny things you hear and see.
4. Tell a funny story about yourself. Or tell a tragic story and make it funny.
5. Ask your teacher to start a humor board.
6. Collect funny pictures and family stories in a humor scrapbook. Share it at the next family gathering.

CHOICES

laughter helps to prevent lung infections.

Good, hearty laughter causes your heart rate to increase—strengthening the heart. Your blood pressure also goes up while you laugh. But when you stop, your blood pressure drops below what it was before you laughed—relaxing you and reducing the stress on your heart.

Humor also stimulates your immune system, which helps to fight diseases. According to joint studies by Dr. Fry and Lee Berk, an immunologist at Loma Linda University School of Medicine in California, laughter plays a role in preventing certain infections. It also works as a pain killer. Some experts suggest that when you laugh, endorphins—the body’s natural pain killer—are released inside the brain. Not surprisingly, many hospitals are using laugh therapy to help patients recover.

HUMOR AND CREATIVITY

Have you ever been in a brainstorming session that turned into a brain-tickling session? After a few good laughs, your problem was probably easier to solve. Studies have shown there is a link between humor and creative problem solving. In one study, some students were shown a math film; others saw a comedy film. Three out of four students who saw the comedy film were able to solve a problem that called for creativity. Only one in five students who saw the math film were able to solve the same problem.

Humor also may help you think more clearly. “You can’t think-straight if you’re tense,” points out Goodheart, “and laughter helps you relax.”

I'M NOT FUNNY ...

With all the great bene-

In this way, laughter helps to prevent lung infections.

Surveys show that a majority of people list a sense of humor as the first or second most important quality that they look for in members of the opposite sex.

Humor also builds bridges between people by dissolving tensions. After laughing about our disaster, my date and I let down our guards. “The act of laughing transforms a tense situation into a supportive one,” says Meg Stone, 15, of Winnetka, Illinois. Meg, who often competes in speech tournaments, uses humor to get her audience on her side. And research has found that people will remember what you say longer and more clearly if you say it with humor.

Humor can take the sting out of criticism. Matthew Savard, 17, also of Wilmette, Illinois, wrote a funny song criticizing a 12-page English assignment. Instead of becoming angry, his teacher wanted a copy.

In fact, humor can take the sting out of all sorts of stressful situations. “When there are things you can’t change,” Matthew says, “humor helps.” For example, when Matthew’s parents split up, he ended up moving twice a week between his mother’s and his father’s home. Instead of getting aggravated, Matthew tried looking at all of the moving back and forth as crazy vacations.

LAUGH-ERCISE

Laughter has plenty of health benefits, too. After a roll-around-on-the-floor bout of laughter, you feel relaxed and often exhausted. Your side may hurt and your belly ache. Studies have shown that, like aerobic exercise, a good laugh works out the muscles in your body from your scalp to your abdomen. Laughter exercises your heart, lungs, central nervous system, and your hormone-producing endocrine system, according to Dr. William F. Fry, a psychiatrist affiliated with Stanford University Medical School in California. Fry has been studying the effects of laughter for 30 years. He has found that when people laugh, they inhale and exhale more deeply, expelling carbon dioxide and other toxic gases that build up deep in the lungs.
fits of humor, we should take comedy more seriously. (Just kidding.) Anyone can learn to enjoy humor, even people who forget punch lines and who aren’t even ticklish.

Humor isn’t just joke telling and class clowning. Humor is a set of skills that allow us to look at the world in a positive offbeat way. It’s a way of exaggerating things, looking for the absurd in life, and understanding that situations could always be worse. And everyone has his or her own unique sense of humor.

“Everyone has a sense of humor,” says Charles Lindner, who teaches comedy at the New School in New York City. “I see funny things because I trained myself to look for them, and you could do that, too. Keep your eyes and ears open—there is humor all around you.”

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HUMOR THAT HURTS

“Stupid!”
“Toothpick legs!”
“Fatty!”

If you’ve ever been the object of mean-spirited teasing, you know only too well that some humor hurts. “Humor can either be a powerful tool to build people up or a terrible weapon to tear people down,” says Joel Goodman, head of the HUMOR Project in Saratoga Springs, New York.

Put-down humor includes laughing at someone because of their race, religion, sex, or the way they look, dress, or talk. Put-down humor may wound or damage self-esteem.

In the long run, using put-down humor hurts the teaser’s self-esteem, too, says Annette Goodheart, a therapist in Santa Barbara, California. “It promotes the fear that if I do that to someone else, they will do it to me—I could easily be next.”

If you are the victim of put-down humor, try having a funny come-back ready, says Charles Lindner, who teaches comedy at the New School in New York City. For example, when teased about being short, Lindner’s friend replies, “So what, when it rains, I’m the last one to get wet.” At The HUMOR Project, that type of reply is called “tongue-fu.” It takes those who insult you off guard and tells them that you can laugh at yourself and choose not to let them hurt you.

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What’s the difference between laughing with someone or laughing at them? Here Joel Goodman, director of the HUMOR Project in Saratoga Springs, New York shows you.

**LAUGHING AT SOMEONE**

The humor comes from contempt and insensitivity.

Destroys confidence through put-downs.

Excludes some people from the fun.

A person may not choose to be made fun of.

Reinforces stereotypes because the joke makes fun of a particular group’s race, sex, age, etc.

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**LAUGHING WITH SOMEONE**

The humor comes from caring and empathy.

Builds confidence.

Everybody’s involved in the fun.

Someone chooses to become the butt of a joke, and encourages others to laugh with him or her.

Pokes fun at shortcomings that we all have as human beings.
Physical Aspects of Humor

“Laughter is the best medicine” is an old saying and has a lot of truth to it. We all know it feels good to laugh, but did you know that laughter can actually make you a healthier, as well as happier person? Several scientific studies have concluded after studying the physical and mental effects of laughter that there are several benefits of laughter. The name of this branch of scientific study is gelotology (from the Greek word for laughter, gelos.)

Human babies start to laugh when they are about ten weeks old. By the time they reach four months, they are laughing about once every hour. A four-year-old child laughs as often as every four minutes. Age seems to take its toll on our laughter because the average adult laughs only about fifteen times a day with each laugh lasting from only about half a second to one minute. Some cheery souls laugh as much as 400 times in the course of a day. Laughter is contagious so be careful if you are around someone who laughs a lot—you may catch it.

People laugh in a variety of ways. There are crackles, cackles, roars, teeters, snickers, teeshees, and any number of sounds escaping from humans. It is our chest capacity and vocal power that help determine how we laugh, along with a lot of other factors. Your laugh will probably get deeper as you grow older. As your vocal cords become less elastic with advancing age, your laugh will become higher pitched—remember the laugh of the old witch?

Let’s examine the laugh. First, something you believe is funny stimulates your brain and your brain sends signals along nerves throughout your body. Different glands are stimulated and produce chemicals such as epinephrine that cause you to be more alert, make your heart and lungs work faster, and

Cartoon Thinking
cause your arteries to contract (shrink) so your blood pressure starts to go up. While all this is going on, your face muscles contract making your face take on the characteristics of a grimace. Your lips are pulled back and your nostrils are flared. Your stomach muscles, along with your chest muscles tighten, and your diaphragm contracts. These changes cause air to build up in your lungs, and the muscles that control your vocal cords start to go into a spasm... you can’t speak. Suddenly the stomach and chest muscles contract in a spasm, forcing the air out of your lungs as fast as 70 miles per hour. This air rushes past your vocal cords and causes the roar of laughter. In addition, your tear glands have been squeezed by your cheek bones, and your eyes water.

The chemicals that are released causing you to start to laugh are still flowing in your body and keep you laughing. This increase in the rate of your heart causes the circulation of the blood to flow faster and causes you to have a red face, your temperature to go up as much as half a degree, and your leg muscles to start to feel weak. This weakness may cause you to collapse, gasping for air. As you calm down, your muscles start to relax. Your heart rate drops, and your blood pressure drops... actually, below normal levels. You have relaxed and reduced your stress, which is why the effects of laughter are a lot like the effects of exercise. Some scientists say that laughter is inner exercise because it vibrates through your whole body and gives a good workout to the muscles of your chest, diaphragm, and stomach helping to strengthen your heart and lungs, much like jogging.

These good effects last long after the laughter stops, because your muscles are more relaxed. The heart rate is lower, less stressed. Your blood pressure is lower, and you have burned calories. In fact, some believe that 30 seconds of hearty laughter has the same benefit as three minutes of exercise on a rowing machine. Evidence exists that a good laugh prompts the stomach to secrete enzymes that aid digestion and can be good for your liver. I guess the kings of old were pretty wise to have a court jester around the banquet table!

It is also believed that the right side of the brain, considered to be the creative one, is more active when people laugh. Watch the next time you and some friends start to brainstorm to solve a problem, and you will notice that the more fun you all are having the more ideas you come up with, and that usually those ideas are the most creative. In addition, other chemicals are released called endorphins and enkephalins. These chemicals dull feelings of pain and produce a general all over sense of well-being. Some of the chemicals produced have been shown to be a first line of defense against colds.

The psychological effects are pretty good, too. Laughter causes you to be less worried or upset. It can relieve you of stress and pressure, making you feel less anxious and tense. Scientists believe that we may have developed laughter as a way to deal with events that cause us stress... an outlet for the pressures that build up.

For a long time now doctors have known the benefits of laughter, even if they did not know the exact chemicals involved. In the 1400's a surgeon, Henri de Mondeville, told jokes to his patients as they left the operating room to speed their recovery. In the 1700's Richard Mulcaster, an English educator, advised tickling under the armpits as a
treatment for colds and melancholy. The medicine men of the Ojibwa, a North American Indian tribe, performed tricks and stunts to make their patients laugh away their illnesses.

Laughter seems to be helpful for headaches, infections, arthritis, and high blood pressure among other things. People with a respiratory condition known as emphysema who have difficulty breathing find that a fit of laughing helps to clear their lungs and allow them to breathe more freely. Laughter also helps as an anesthetic, lessening pain. A dose of laughter can act like a tranquilizer and can even help bring seriously mentally disturbed people back in touch with reality. Some prisons use cartoon therapy to help some of the inmates understand their problems.

All types of humor are used in hospitals and centers for the elderly to help these people feel better and recover faster from their medical problems. When people laugh, they feel less depressed and less anxious about their illness. Laughter will never replace medicine and getting sick is not a joke, because you won’t be able to just laugh off something like the flu, but it is clear that a good laugh is good for you and certainly can’t hurt. Enjoy your own laughter and that of others and have fun!
Laugh, Laugh, Laugh

It’s good to laugh because when we do, our brains release chemicals known as endorphins. As these chemicals are released into our bodies, they make us feel very good. Another reason it’s good to laugh is

A funny family/personal event was

I think the funniest person alive today is

because

I really can laugh hard when

A favorite joke of mine is

The funniest poem/story I have ever read is about

The funniest TV sitcom is

because

by Teddy Meister

Challenge, Copyright © 1990, Good Apple
How To Do a Close Read

1. Introduce text, set purpose, read

2. "Read" with your pencil!

3. Turn and Talk

4. Teacher reads again and students listen closely

5. Teacher asks to talk about book.

6. Students record information

Created by: Betty Sanchez
DROP-LINE PUZZLE 2

Directions: Solve the quote and then use your convergent thinking to determine the meaning of the saying. Use the space provided below the puzzle to write down your ideas.

Drop Line Puzzle #1 - Answer

Directions – solve the quote and then use your convergent thinking to determine the meaning of this saying. Use the space provided under the puzzle to write your ideas.

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Ella Wheeler Wilcox
Drop Line Puzzle 2-Answers

Directions: Solve the quote and then use your convergent thinking to determine the meaning of the saying. Use the space provided below the puzzle to write down your ideas.

"B E A L T U R M G E A. I R C B I N E E C H T E."

"L A U G H T E R I S T H E"

"B E s T M E D I C I N E."

"H A R R Y W A. B E E C H E R"
Drop Line Puzzle #1

Directions: Solve the quote and then use your convergent thinking to determine the meaning of the saying. Use the space provided below the puzzle to write down your ideas.

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CCSD Version Date: May 2011