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Let's talk about using common analogies to teach  
A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION & SHARING

Lisa Romard, MS, RN, CPNP, ANP, AE-C



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- **Disclosures:**

- This presentation and clinical recommendations support “best available evidence” from medical literature.
- I refrain from making recommendations regarding products or services.
- I have no financial relationship requiring divesting.
- I have associations or memberships with the following organizations
  - Stony Brook University Hospital
  - Association of Asthma Educators
  - National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
  - Asthma Coalition of Long Island



#### What is literacy?

Literacy can be defined as a person's ability to read, write, speak, and compute and solve problems at levels necessary to:

- Function on the job and in society
- Achieve one's goals
- Develop one's knowledge and potential

#### Why is health literacy important?

Only 12 percent of adults have Proficient health literacy, according to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy.

#### What is plain language?

Plain language is a strategy for making written and oral information easier to understand. It is *one* important tool for improving health literacy.

#### Who is responsible for improving health literacy?

The primary responsibility for improving health literacy lies with public health professionals and the healthcare and public health systems. We must work together to ensure that health information and services can be understood and used by all Americans.

<http://www.health.gov/communication/literacy/plainlanguage/PlainLanguage.htm>



#### Limit the number of messages, use plain language, and focus on action.

Keep it simple. The number of messages will depend on the information needs of the intended users.

As a general guideline:

- Use no more than four main messages.
- Give the user specific actions and recommendations.
- Clearly state the actions you want the person to take.
- Focus on behavior rather than the underlying medical principles.
- Use familiar language and an active voice.
- Avoid long or run-on sentences.
- Organize similar information into several smaller groups.

Many of the same plain language techniques that make the written word understandable also work with verbal messages:

- avoiding jargon
- using everyday examples to explain technical or medical terms the first time they are used.

For more information on plain language, visit [www.plainlanguage.gov](http://www.plainlanguage.gov).



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BMJ. 2000 Feb 26; 320(7234): 572–575. PMID: PMC1117606

**Management of chronic disease by practitioners and patients: are we teaching the wrong things?**

“ Feeling able to carry out a management task makes people more likely to try the task, but confidence alone does not ensure suitable behavior ”

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1117606/>



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Analogy Definition:

An analogy is a [comparison](#) in which an idea or a thing is compared to another thing that is quite different from it.

It aims at explaining that idea or thing by comparing it to something that is familiar

<http://literarydevices.net/analogy/>



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### Function of Analogy in Literature

Writers use analogies to link an unfamiliar or a new idea with common and familiar objects.

It is easier for readers to comprehend a new idea, which may have been difficult for them to understand otherwise.

Comprehension of a new idea picks up the pace when they observe its similarity to something that is familiar to them.

In addition, by employing this literary tool, writers catch the attention of their readers.

Analogies help increase readers' interest as analogies help them relate what they read to their life.

<http://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/time/analogies.html>



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Can analogies be used to help patients understand instructions,  
Self management information, how something works, what the problem is etc?





In order to construct and use analogies effectively:

Understand what works and what does not

An analogy works best when the concept being taught is new

If the patient already has some understanding of the topic it may be better to build on the already available framework.

Use analogies if a concept is hard to grasp



Lets share some analogies you as educators are using

EX: Using your daily controller therapy to reduce airway inflammation is like...

Daily controller medication "Cleans" up the inflammation & mucus & prevents it from building up in the airways  
Using the tools correctly, the inhaler medication with a spacer, will be effective, use of inhaler alone or incorrect use could not be effective



<http://www.chp.edu/CHP/MDI+Chamber+with+Mouthpiece>

Daily brushing your teeth helps reduce the plaque, food build up on your teeth tongue & mouth & prevent infection, cavities etc  
Using the tools correctly Tooth paste & brush will be effective, alone or incorrect use will not be effective




[www.lucylearns.com](http://www.lucylearns.com)

Clip art 2015

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 **This "Is like"...**

- Size of air-tubes **Is like** 
- Wheezing **Is like** 
- Bronchoconstriction **Is like** 
- Airway inflammation **Is like** 
- Using a spacer **Is like** 
- The daily controller medication **Is like** 
- Controller meds **Is like** 
- Rescue meds **Is like** 
- Not monitoring use of medications **Is like** 
- Over use of rescue meds **Is like** 
- AAP Zones **Is like** 

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WHY WOULD WE GET CREATIVE ABOUT TEACHING?  
WHY ARE WE SHARING IDEAS ABOUT EXAMPLES & ANALOGIES?



Research shows that patients remember and understand less than half of what clinicians explain to them.



**What is Health Literacy:**

the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions

- Healthcare providers have a duty to provide information in simple, clear, and plain language and to check that patients have understood the information before ending the conversation.

The 2005 White House Conference on Aging;  
Mini-Conference on Health Literacy and Health Disparities.



- To provide information in simple, clear, and plain language and to check that patients have understood the information before ending the conversation.

**Always:**

- Use Plain Language.
- CONSIDER OTHER TOOLS FOR COMMUNICATION ENHANCEMENT FOR UNDERSTANDING CONTENT BEING TAUGHT SUCH AS ANALOGIES
- Slow down.
- Break it down into short statements.
- Focus on the 2 or 3 most important concepts.
- Check for understanding using **teach-back**.



## Ask Me 3

- Is a patient education program
- Designed to improve communication between patients and health care providers Encourage patients to become active members of their health care team
- Promote improved health outcomes.
- The program encourages patients to ask their health care providers three questions:
  1. What is my main problem?
  2. What do I need to do?
  3. Why is it important for me to do this?
- Studies show that people who understand health instructions make fewer mistakes when they take their medicine and they may also get well sooner or be able to better manage a chronic health condition.

Source:

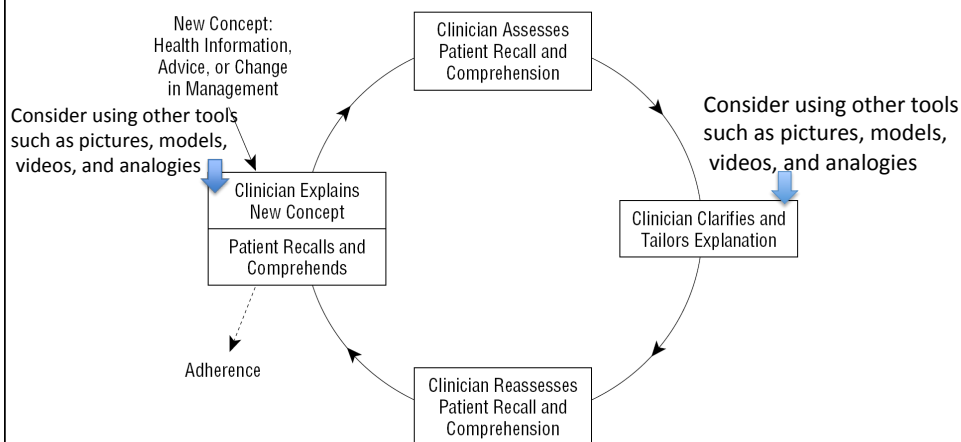
<http://www.npsf.org/for-healthcare-professionals/programs/ask-me-3/>





- Why do I use it?
- What is it?
- How do I use it?
- When do I use it?
- Asking patients to repeat **in their own words** what they need to know or do, in a non-shaming way.
- **NOT** a test of the patient, but of how well **you** explained a concept.
- A chance to check for understanding and, if necessary, re-teach the information.
- Research & Evidence demonstrate: application of interactive communication to assess recall or comprehension is a top patient safety practice

AHRQ, 2001 Report, *Making Health Care Safer*



Modified chart from: Schillinger D, Piette J, Grumbach K, Wang F, Wilson C, Daher C, Leong-Grotz K, Castro C, Bindman A. Closing the Loop Physician Communication With Diabetic Patients Who Have Low Health Literacy. *Arch Intern Med/Vol* 163. Jan 13. 2003