STORY
Cholera Epidemic in Haiti Causes Havoc

11/19/2010

Estimated Time: One 45-minute class period with possible extension
Student Worksheet (reading comprehension and discussion questions without answers)

PROCEDURE

1. WARM UP
Use initiating questions to introduce the topic and find out how much your students know.

2. MAIN ACTIVITY
Have students read NewsHour Extra's feature story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions on the student handout.

3. DISCUSSION
Use discussion questions to encourage students to think about how the issues outlined in the story affect their lives and express and debate different opinions.

INITIATING QUESTIONS

1. What is an outbreak?
2. What is a riot?
3. What is a waterborne disease?

READING COMPREHENSION

1. How many Haitians are living in tent cities following the January 2010 earthquake?
   1.3 million

2. What is Cholera and how is it contracted?
   Cholera is an acute diarrhoeal disease that if left untreated, can be fatal. People contract cholera from poor sanitation conditions and unsafe drinking water.

3. How many Haitians have been infected and died from the disease?
   Over 1,000 Haitians with more than 18,000 cases reported in recent weeks.
4. What are the symptoms of cholera?
   Symptoms of cholera include diarrhea, high fever, vomiting and dehydration.

5. What percentage of cholera cases can be treated and cured if detected early?
   If cholera is detected early, up to 80 percent of cases can be treated and cured with oral rehydration salts.

6. Who are Haitians blaming for the cholera outbreak?
   Researchers have traced this outbreak to a strain of bacteria identical to one found in South Asia. Frustrated civilians began rioting against United Nations workers from Nepal who have been widely blamed for bringing the disease to the region.

7. What other areas has the disease spread?
   The disease is spreading rapidly with reports of cholera cases in the Dominican Republic and Florida from individuals who had been traveling and working in Haiti in the past week.

8. How is the Haitian government addressing the cholera outbreak?
   The Haitian government and the Ministry of Health have responded to the cholera outbreak by building 12 treatment centers to support isolating the outbreak and providing medical assistances to those infected. Aid workers are also focused on prevention. The government has launched a country-wide radio and television campaign encouraging Haitians to wash their hands and avoid contaminated water sources.

9. What are the Haitian government and aid workers doing to halt the crisis?
   Ensuring access to clean water, promoting good personal hygiene and food handling practices, including hand washing and trying to prevent public urination and defecation is a top priority in halting this crisis.

10. Name the two northern cities where riots erupted?
    Cap-Haitien and Port-de-Paix

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. If you worked in the Haitian government or the Ministry of Health, what steps would you take to address the cholera outbreak?

2. What precautions could you and your family take to prevent a waterborne disease outbreak?

3. Many Haitians are frustrated and angry about the cholera outbreak. Have you ever been angry or frustrated about a situation? How did you deal with your feelings?