

TRIAGE ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

Materials:

Nurse's Note: The supplies used in this activity are flexible and can vary based on availability. The underlying concept is to give the students equipment for a very basic physical assessment and supplies to "treat" a selection of minor injuries. Examples of possible supplies and equipment are listed below. Feel free to get creative and use what you have on hand.

Assessment Equipment: stethoscopes, penlights, eye chart, automated blood pressure cuff.
Basic first aid supplies: rolled gauze, tape, Band-Aids (multiple sizes), Telfa dressing, ABD gauze pads, fabric sling, alcohol swabs, gloves.

Optional: Small prizes such as stickers, Mardi Gras beads, pencils, colorful Band-Aids, etc.

Steps:

1. Locate the supplies in a centralized "supply room" location within the classroom.
2. Divide students into teams of 3–4. Teams can be student-selected or selected by you. Scatter the teams throughout the classroom into several "treatment room" locations, as space allows.
3. Once teams are formed, have the students assign the following roles within their group:
 - Team Lead - Organizes care and gives instructions to team members
 - Supply Nurse - Goes between the treatment and supply spaces, gathering and returning supplies and equipment
 - Treatment Nurse - Performs assessment and wound care
 - Patient - Gives health history, answers assessment questions, receives treatment
4. Set a timer for 5 minutes. Have students race to: assign roles, assess the patient, gather supplies, apply treatment. Prizes may be given for Teamwork, Best-Dressed Wound, etc.
5. After the activity, debrief the process of forming and working as a team, building trust and rapport with a patient, taking a health history, performing an assessment, etc.
6. Connect the students' experiences with the experiences of the professional nurse.
 - a. Talk about complicating factors such as: staff shortages, limited supplies, environmental conditions, and language barriers.
 - b. Link the conversation back to the literary pieces, and ask questions such as:
 - What distractions or challenges might a nurse have faced on a battlefield during the Civil War?
 - What distractions or challenges might a nurse face on a battlefield now?
 - How might nursing during a war and during a global pandemic be similar? How might they be different?

Closing Thoughts:

Nurse's Note: Basic instructions can be given to the whole group regarding each role, both before and during this activity.

For example:

- *“The Team Lead helps to organize care for the patient and encourages the team.”*
- *“If you're a treatment nurse, you may need to ask questions like, ‘Where does it hurt?’ ‘How did you bump your head?’” etc.*

However, it is important that you resist the urge to say too much during the activity. The goal is for students to figure out how to ask questions of each other and work together as a team. After the activity, during the debriefing process, you can answer questions more fully and help the students draw connections between the accounts of nurses working in the past (literary pieces) and the challenges and opportunities of a nurse working in the field today.