

Myths of Aging Teaching Strategy

Overview of Teaching Strategy

Myths about older adults often drive attitudes about caring for older adults. Many times there are negative connotations entangled in these myths and attitudes. Changing these attitudes and deflating the myths will make students better understand older adults and realize they are more alike than different despite the age disparity. Subsequently this transformation in thinking about older adults may enhance students' connections with the geriatric population leading to a more caring approach.

This teaching strategy is a fun activity to engage students in a discussion about myths and attitudes regarding older adults. Designed in a quiz show game format, it includes topics ranging from physical health to psychosocial issues to sexuality. Opening up the game sparks discussions on common myths associated with aging with accompanied evidence of answers and further discussion. It can be utilized in teams to ignite a spirit of competition or as a whole classroom or seminar activity.

The speaker notes (which are invisible to students) include notes expanding the content of each question with appropriate links to the How to Try This Series assessment tools. This teaching strategy can be an effective tool to begin a discussion with nursing students caring for older adults and help to change negative attitudes. The strategy also includes a short video that portrays a dynamic older adult with a substantive quality of life. The ultimate outcome is for students to develop the ability to approach gerontology with compassion and enthusiasm.

Download All Files for This Teaching Strategy

- [Myths of Aging game](#)

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Develop an understanding of common myths associated with older adults.
- Discuss how attitudes about older adults can affect caring for older adults
- Understand the atypical presentation of both physical and psychosocial issues in older adults.
- Understand the need to uniformly assess issues using tools from the How to Try This series.

Learner Prework

Tell students to watch "[Get Old](#)," a short video presented by Pfizer that portrays a 94-year-old man who adapted to multiple issues related to aging and has an excellent quality of life. Ask the students to write a summary of their ideas about the aging process that may have changed as a result of watching the video.

Suggested Learning Activities

1. Open Myths About Aging, a PowerPoint file in a game show format. The topics are:
 - My Body Is Not the Same – myths and facts about physical issues and aging
 - I Can't Remember – myths and facts about cognitive issues and aging
 - Watch My Behavior – myths and facts about mood and behavioral issues and aging
 - What I Believe Is True – common myths and facts about older adults
 - Sex and the Senior – myths and facts about sexuality and older adults
2. Start the game by clicking onto one of the point values under the selected topics. The file must be opened in the slide show mode in order to click onto the point values to play the game. Advancing to the next slide will reveal the answer. Always click the house icon on the bottom right screen to return the viewer to the game board and restart the process. The categories are numbered from 1-5 and coincide with the topics listed above: My Body Is Not the Same; I Can't Remember; Watch My Behavior; What I Believe is True and Sex and the Senior.
3. Each of the answer slides has speaker notes that supplement the answers and many have links to assessment tools in the How to Try This series that coordinate with the content.
4. Simply editing the slides can change content in each area.
5. The approach in this teaching strategy allows for the question to be presented first followed by lecture content. This active learning approach allows the students to first become invested in the question and process the content in a way in which they can be better connected to the issue.
6. To re-set the game, close the file. When the file is reopened, the board will be reset and the point values will restore to a bolded font.

The [Try This:® Series](#) from the Hartford Institute for Geriatric Nursing (HIGN) at the NYU Rory Meyers College of Nursing contains many evidence-based assessment tools. Those listed below from the Try This: Series are recommended for the content discussed in the quiz game on

myths and facts associated with aging. The use of standardized tools to assess issues such as sleep, sexuality, cognition, depression and incontinence needs to be the first step in addressing these issues. The tools each have an article about using the tool, and a video illustrating the use of the tool, are all available for your use. Below is a suggestion of tools that were mentioned in the speaker notes of the Myths Game.

- [Mental Status Assessment of Older Adults: The Mini-Cog](#)
- [Geriatric Depression Scale \(GDS\)](#)
- [Epworth Sleepiness Scale](#)
- [Pain Assessment in Older Adults](#)
- [Hendrich II Fall Risk Assessment](#)
- [Sexuality Assessment for Older Adults](#)
- [Urinary Incontinence Assessment in Older Adults: Part 1, Transient Urinary Incontinence; Part 2, Persistent Urinary Incontinence](#)
- [Hearing Screening in Older Adults](#)
- [Confusion Assessment Method \(CAM\)](#)
- [Assessing and Managing Delirium in Persons with Dementia](#)

Suggested Reading

Liu, Y., Norman, I., & While, A. E. (2012). Nurses' attitudes towards older people: A systematic review. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 50(9):1271-1282.
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