

Class Starters & Enders

Making the Most of Instructional Time Five Minute Lessons

Class Starters and Enders help utilize the last minutes of class when a lesson ends but there is not enough time to start another, or for an interest approach at the beginning of class. Mini-lessons correlate to GPS in the programs areas below.

Cellucotton and Kleenex

Program Areas: Healthcare, Business, Marketing, and Forestry

Instructions: Read the narrative and make notes of important points, answer questions, and be ready to discuss this topic.

During World War I, a shortage of cotton for bandages forced the military to look for an alternative. Kimberly-Clark came to the rescue with a "Cellucotton" product that would later become Kleenex. It was a clean product for dressing wounds and was also used in gas masks. The use of deadly mustard gas in WWI forced troops to wear gas masks much of the time.

After the war, the company faced a marketing dilemma as they had massive stockpiles of Cellucotton and a sudden end of demand for the product. In a stroke of marketing genius, Kimberly-Clark began to sell the war surplus as a cold cream and makeup remover. In 1924, it was expanded to be used as a facial tissue. In 1925, the first Kleenex tissue ad was used in magazines showing "the new secret of keeping pretty skin as used by famous movie stars..."

It was a disposable, sanitary substitute for handkerchiefs and face towels. A few years after the introduction of Kleenex, the company's head researcher tried to persuade the head of advertising to try to market the tissue for colds and hay fever. The advertising personnel declined the idea but decided to commit a small amount of ad space to mention using Kleenex tissue as a handkerchief. Sales took off. By the 1930s, Kleenex was being marketed with the slogan "Don't Carry a Cold in Your Pocket," and its utilization as a disposable handkerchief replacement became predominant.



Kleenex and other Kimberly-Clark products are paper products made from wood pulp. The widespread use of these products creates a big market for forest products. Georgia is a major producer of forest products, and Kimberly-Clark is a major agribusiness and purchaser of forest products.

Kleenex is a brand name for a variety of paper-based toiletry products such as facial tissue, bathroom tissue, paper towels, and diapers. Often used as a genericized trademark, especially in the United States, "Kleenex" is in fact owned and used as a trademark by Kimberly-Clark Worldwide Inc. Kleenex products are manufactured in 30 countries and sold in more than 170.

In the USA, the Kleenex name has become, or as a legal matter nearly has become, genericized: the popularity of the product has led to the use of its name to refer to any facial tissue, regardless of the brand. Many dictionaries, including Merriam-Webster, and Oxford, now include definitions in their publications defining it as such.

Review

1. How did the use of handkerchiefs spread disease?
2. What do the terms generic and genericized mean?
3. Name some brand names that are almost generic.
4. How does the story of Kleenex relate to forestry?
5. How does the story of Kleenex relate to healthcare?
6. How did an ad featuring movie stars help sell Kleenex in 1925?
7. How does the story of Kleenex relate to business and marketing?
8. Why was it necessary for the company to change their marketing around 1918?
9. In World War I, the forerunner of Kleenex was used for _____ and _____.
10. What could have been the result if a good marketing person/group had not found new markets for "Cellucotton"?

History and Science Connections

Write a paragraph or more on each of the following:

- Explain the use of poison gas in World War I.
- Explain the affect of poison gas on the body.