

# 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.

### You Make Me Sick!

**Program Areas:** Agriculture, Horticulture, Healthcare, Culinary Arts

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



The leaves of *Ilex vomitoria*, or yaupon holly, were used by Native Americans to make a black tea which cleansed the body of evil spirits by making people vomit.

Imagine this scene – you are a tribal council elder, sitting in a large circle with your chief and other council members. You’re watching the medicine man as he takes a simmering pot from its perch over the fire. He presses the leaves cooking in the pot with a forked stick and pours the pot’s contents, a ceremonial black tea made from the *Ilex vomitoria* plant, into the large bowls sitting in front of each person in the circle. You drink the tea and contemplate the tribal matters to be discussed at this meeting. Suddenly, everyone’s stomachs are heaving, and up come the tea, along with what everyone ate that day.

*I.vomitoria*, commonly known as the Yaupon Holly, is native to the southeastern United States and also grown as an ornamental plant. Its small, dark green leaves were used by Native Americans to create a body-cleansing tea. The tea was meant to clean the inside of the body, not the outside – as the council elders vomited, their insides were cleansed of any evil spirits which could influence them in making wrong decisions on tribal business.

In modern terms, the Native Americans used the holly tea as an emetic, which is a substance that induces vomiting when it is injected or orally ingested. Emetics are used by doctors and veterinarians when an individual eats or drinks something dangerous that must be expelled from the body as soon as possible. Inducing vomiting can get the substance out of the body before it is absorbed into the bloodstream or digested, reducing the risk of serious illness, injury, or death.

Syrup of ipecac is a commonly used emetic, but is no longer highly recommended by doctors. It is made from dried rhizome – the horizontal, underground root of plants – and the roots of the ipecacuanha plant. The combination of mustard and salt water has been a popular emetic since ancient times, but is difficult to use because of salt content. Too much salt can be detrimental to the body. Copper sulfate, a chemical compound, was once used as an emetic, but is now considered too toxic for this purpose.

Unfortunately, emetics are not always used for their intended medical purposes. People suffering from the eating disorders anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa often induce vomiting in order to lose weight. They can do this either by sticking their fingers down their throats or by using an emetic. This type of induced vomiting is dangerous and can be fatal.

#### Review

1. What are the common and scientific names of the plant used in Native Americans’ black tea?
2. What part of the plant is used to make the tea?
3. What is an emetic?
4. What are emetics used for?
5. Why did the Native Americans drink the tea?
6. Name three examples of emetics.
7. What is syrup of ipecac made of?
8. Why should people use caution when using salt and mustard as an emetic?
9. Why has copper sulfate fallen out of favor as an emetic?
10. What two eating disorders involve the use of emetics?

#### Healthcare Connection

Find one example of a poisonous product manufactured with an emetic already in it. Write a one-page paper describing the product, what makes it poisonous, and why the emetic was added.