Toxic Substances Guided Practice

If you've had a drink from a reusable water bottle or eaten canned food, chances are you've swallowed a little (BPA) Bisphenol-A. BPA is an important chemical building block in polycarbonate plastic, which is a clear, nearly shatter-proof plastic used to make water bottles and baby bottles. BPA is also part of plastic films used to line food and soft drink cans. Over time, BPA can leach out of plastic and be consumed along with foods and drinks. Most people have some BPA in their bodies – of thousands of Americans tested, 95% had traces of BPA in their urine.

In the late 1990s, some scientists became concerned that BPA may be toxic. Many people have stopped buying bottles make of polycarbonate plastic because they are concerned about the effects of BPA on their health. But other groups, including government agencies, have claimed that the health risks of BPA are low and the public is overreacting.

"BPA mimics estrogen, which means it can cause problems with development and reproduction."

"The majority of people only consume very small amounts of the chemical, and this is quickly metabolized and flushed out of the body before it can cause harm."

Toxic Substances Independent Practice

1. Explain the phrase “The doses makes the poison.”
2. List three types of chemical hazards that affect human health and describe how each of those three affect humans.
3. Why might the citizens of one town need to be concerned with the chemical hazards in the air of a town many miles away?
4. Describe how chemical hazards can get into soil and some of the ways that they can cause harm to humans.