

FICTIONAL

J202 Fall 2009

Culver

Assignment: Critique Sample Story

TA KEY – Improved Story

Week 2

Waunakee, Wis. – Wisconsin kids with asthma are getting the chance to fit in at summer camp, with the help of a local volunteer organization and software company.

Camp NoWheeze, located just outside Madison in Waunakee, offers five-day camps for kids with asthma, giving them the chance to participate in all the activities of camp while helping them learn to manage their conditions effectively.

“The best part of this camp is that kids who often think of themselves as ‘different’ get to be ‘the same’ for a week,” says Martin Vebber, who organizes activities at NoWheeze, including boating, swimming and scavenger hunting. “It’s amazing how great kids feel when they sense that they fit in. They have asthma, but it does not have to define who they are or how active they can be.”

Founded in 1985, NoWheeze is run by Interfaith Hospitality Network, a group that organizes the efforts of 500 volunteers on dozens of projects. For Camp NoWheeze, IHN sought help from corporate partner Epic Systems, which develops medical record system software. Recognizing how innovative and important the experience is for kids, Epic donates funding for the project, but also encourages staff to volunteer by giving them added vacation time for days they attend camp.

“In our business, we think of people are more than just a medical record,” says Epic CEO J.P. Sunderland. “Helping with Camp NoWheeze connects us with kids who are learning to use information to manage their asthma. It’s an ideal opportunity for us, and our staff are eager to volunteer each summer.”

For Epic employee Peggy Johnson, volunteering as a nurse at camp brings tangible rewards.

“I like to help kids see that they can learn how to manage their asthma and take advantage of lots of opportunities,” she says. “I feel the difference I’m making every day.”

That difference is critical to the American Lung Association, which promotes lung health and positive management of lung conditions. Camp director Bree Hardy says NoWheeze’s partnership with the Lung

Association helps it maintain a focus on kids with asthma learning to manage it as just one part of their lives.

“Our kids come to see themselves as a whole, rather than just focusing on their breathing,” Hardy says. “They see they’re just like other kids because every one of us has to manage all the different parts of ourselves. For some people, that means asthma and for others, a fear of spiders. Asthma doesn’t have to make a kid ‘different.’”

Camp NoWheeze attracts 200 campers to six five-day sessions each summer. Campers ages 5 to 15 are eligible to attend. Kids who are interested in joining an active group that embraces the chance to fit in can find more information online at www.nowheeze.org.