Joan’s Heart Attack

Pre-reading

Questions:
- What do you know about heart attacks?

Definitions:
- Discomfort – being uneasy or in pain
- Choice – the chance or right to choose

Reading

I was a heavy smoker, but I never thought that it could happen to me. I was only 44 years old. I thought that heart attacks only happened to old men. I was too young to have a heart attack.

About three days before my heart attack, I began feeling some discomfort in my neck and shoulders. It felt like my muscles were being pulled. I told my sister about my neck and shoulder pain. She took me straight to the hospital.

My sister knew some of the signs of a heart attack. She had just recently had one herself. I am grateful that she got me to the hospital. I was having a heart attack.

My doctor told me that if I have another heart attack, I might die. The first one did a lot of damage to my heart. I have had no choice but to change many things in my life.

I have quit smoking and have started to exercise. I work-out four times a week. I have also begun to eat healthy foods and make healthy choices. I do not want to have another heart attack.

Source: Revised “Story from the Heart” from The Heart Truth – National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; National Institutes of Health; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Level 3.0
Understanding

1. What does the word damage mean? _____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

2. What is one sign of a heart attack? _____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

3. In Joan’s mind, who had heart attacks? _________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

4. How has Joan changed since her heart attack? (List at least three changes.) _______
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

5. Who else had a heart attack? What does that tell you? ___________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

Writing

Choice A: Retell the story in your own words.

Choice B: Write about someone you know who has had a heart attack. How has his or
her life changed?

Choice C: How do you try to keep your heart healthy?

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Joan’s Heart Attack – Level 3.0