

# W. O.W. Factor

Words Of Wisdom for Wisconsin FPS Coaches and Students

## USING AN ARTICLE TO PRACTICE THE FPS PROCESS

This issue helps you analyze a research article to practice specific steps of the FPS process.

**FIRST:** Read the attached New York Times article *Cra-Z-Art toy jewelry kits are found to have high lead levels*

**SECOND:** Answer these questions:

1. What is the main challenge of this article?
2. What are the causes of this challenge?
3. What specific examples were given about lead content?

**NEXT:** Write this up as a challenge using the cause-effect-consequence format.

One **KEY VERB PHRASE (KVP)** mentioned in the article is “ensure that toys meet all safety standards.” This KVP can be developed into a complete Underlying Problem as follows:

*Some toys manufactured in China have been shown to contain lead. Therefore, how might we ensure that toys sold in the U.S. meet all applicable safety standards in 2017 and beyond, so that children won't suffer the dangerous consequences of lead poisoning?*

Use this KVP to write a complete underlying problem (condition phrase, KVP, purpose and the 3 parameters of topic, time and place):

*increase the safety of toys used by children*

A “**WHO**” is a person or agency that has the PIE (**P**ower, **I**nterest and **E**xpertise) to implement a solution. **What WHOs were mentioned in this article?**

The **SOLUTION** of having a recall was mentioned in the article. This solution might be written up as follows in an elaborate manner (telling WHO will do WHAT, and WHY or HOW it helps solve the problem):

*The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) will initiate an immediate recall of all Cra-Z-Art toy jewelry kits. Taking them off the shelves will ensure that they aren't purchased and children will be safe from the dangerous lead they contain.*

**Write an elaborated solution for one of the following solutions that were mentioned:**

- retailers voluntarily remove them from their shelves
- sue companies that manufacture these products
- force retailers to show certificates of compliance to accredited testing



# W. O.W. Factor

Words Of Wisdom for Wisconsin FPS Coaches and Students

## TEACHER GUIDE

### **Question Answers**

1. Toys with dangerous levels of lead end up for sale at many U.S. stores.
2. Toys were manufactured in China, whose products often violate various American safety standards. Also the CPSC lacks the resources to properly check the enormous stream of shipments that come through the nation's ports every day.
3. Some jewelry-making sets from Cra-Z-Art contained as much as 10 times the amount of lead permitted by federal child safety limits. Their wristbands contained lead that exceeded the federal safety limit of 100 parts per million, and some contained as much as 980 parts per million.

### **Possible Challenge**

Because the CPSC lacks the resources to properly check the many shipments that enter our nation's ports each day, some jewelry-making sets manufactured in China contained as much as 10 times the amount of lead permitted by federal child safety limits. After they were sold at many retailers, children who ended up with these toys were at risk of dangerous health effects.

### **WHOs**

- New York State attorney general
- Retailers (Target, Kmart, Toys "R" Us, Walmart)
- Manufacturers, importers
- Distributors
- LaRose Industries
- Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC); laboratories

### **Solutions**

- Retailers that sell these toys will be encouraged to voluntarily remove them. This will get the toys off the shelves in time to save many children from dangerous lead levels.
- Consumers will file a class action suit against any retailer that sells toys containing toxic materials. This will discourage retailers from selling these dangerous toys, thus keeping children safer.
- The CPSC will force retailers to show certificates of compliance that show the toys they sell have been tested by an accredited laboratory before reaching the U.S. This will reduce the chance of toys with dangerous toxic materials from being sold.

# **Cra-Z-Art Toy Jewelry Kits Are Found to Have High Lead Levels**

By RACHEL ABRAMS

APRIL 22, 2016

The New York State attorney general said on Friday that his office had opened an investigation into how toys with dangerously high levels of lead ended up for sale at retailers including Target, Kmart and Toys “R” Us.

The attorney general, Eric T. Schneiderman, said that some jewelry-making sets from the arts-and-crafts brand Cra-Z-Art contained as much as 10 times the amount of lead permitted by federal child safety limits. Mr. Schneiderman’s office said that one or more of the products was also sold at other retailers, including Amazon and Walmart, and called on all the retailers to immediately remove them from their shelves.

Mr. Schneiderman’s office has asked the stores to provide more information about the safety testing and certification for the toys, which it said were manufactured in China and sold throughout New York State.

“Manufacturers, importers, distributors and retailers all have responsibility to ensure that products intended for use by children are safe,” Mr. Schneiderman said in a statement. “My office’s discovery of high-lead products on store shelves in New York points to an alarming breach in the safety net that is supposed to protect our children from dangerous chemicals.”

Charlie Zakin, the vice president for advertising at Cra-Z-Art, a division of LaRose Industries I Randolph, N.J., said the company was unaware of the investigation.

“However, the safety of our products is our highest priority,” Mr. Zakin said, adding that all of the items in question had passed “rigorous” safety testing and “conform to all regulatory standards.”

In a statement, Walmart said that it required suppliers to meet “all applicable” safety standards.

Target and Toys “R” Us said they were looking into the matter, and Kmart said it would cooperate with any investigation. Target and Kmart affirmed their commitment to safety, and representatives for Amazon could not be reached for comment.

Mr. Schneiderman’s office bought a number of products in October, November and February as part of a broader test for toxic chemicals in children’s products. The office tested 10 boxes of three Cra-Z-Art jewelry-making sets and found that the included wristbands contained lead that exceeded the federal safety limit of 100 parts per million. Some contained as much as 980 parts per million.

Mr. Schneiderman does not have the authority to order product recalls. That power lies with the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the federal agency that sets the standards for lead in children’s toys. The safety commission usually works with companies to obtain voluntary recalls, and in rare cases, it can sue companies to block the sale of hazardous products. In a statement, the attorney general called on the commission to issue a nationwide recall for Cra-Z-Art.

“Just hours after receiving information about these jewelry-making kits, C.P.S.C. staff opened an investigation into the safety of these products,” Elliot Kaye, the commission chairman, said in a statement. “C.P.S.C.’s investigation will be thorough and swift, and we will certainly take all warranted steps to protect the public.”

China is a not-uncommon source of products that violate various American safety standards. But in recent years, more muscular federal laws have made it increasingly unusual for tainted toys to wind up at large national retailers, which have the resources to ensure that their products follow the rules.

The last time Target issued a recall for a toy with excess lead was 2010, according to Scott Wolfson, a spokesman for the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Walmart sold a child's bowling game that was recalled because of lead in 2011, Mr. Wolfson said, adding that other retailers go back even further. In 2015, the safety commission announced three lead-related toy recalls.

"I would say it is rare these days to find that kind of a problem at major retailers," said Charles Margulis, a spokesman for the Center for Environmental Health, a nonprofit group.

This was not the case just a few years ago, like in 2007, when Mattel was forced to recall millions of Chinese-made toys with unsafe levels of lead. A year later, federal lawmakers passed the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act, which gave the Consumer Product Safety Commission much broader testing and enforcement authority.

Most children's manufacturers that ship products must get their products tested by an accredited laboratory before they reach the United States, Mr. Wolfson said. These certificates of compliance must then be sent to stores. Mr. Schneiderman's office has asked the retailers to provide copies of the certificates, according to letters obtained by The New York Times.

The safety commission works with the authorities to screen products at the nation's ports before they get to store shelves. In recent years, the number of recalls for lead toys has plummeted.

But lead remains one of the most persistent problems, and the agency has acknowledged that it lacks the resources to properly check the enormous stream of shipments that come through the nation's ports every day.