**Module: Reading Timing: one hour**

**Level: first year**

**In the name of beauty**

Cosmetics have been used throughout history. The ancient Greeks, the Egyptians, and the Romans all used various kinds of makeup. Some of these cosmetics were used to improve one’s appearance. Others were used to protect one’s skin. However, in some cases, things used for makeup were dangerous or even deadly!

Skin care treatments including perfumes, lotions, and cosmetic masks were used in ancient Egypt by rich and poor alike. Egyptians also developed some of the earliest sunscreens. They used oils and creams for protection against the sun and dry winds. Egyptians, as well as other ancient cultures, used various powders on their skin for beauty as well. Egyptians used black kohl around their eyes. Romans put white chalk on their faces and Indians painted red henna on their bodies.

Most of the ancient cosmetics were harmless. However, in the name of beauty, some people applied dangerous chemicals and poisons to their skin. During the Italian Renaissance, women wore white powder made of lead on their faces. Of course, doctors today know lead is like a poison for our bodies. Also around the time of the Renaissance, women in Italy put drops of belladonna in their eyes. These belladonna drops were made from a plant whose poison affects the nerves in the body. By putting belladonna drops in her eyes, a woman’s pupils would become very large. People thought this made women more beautiful. Actually, this is where the plant’s name comes from. In Italian, belladonna means “beautiful woman.”

When Elizabeth I was queen in the late 1500s, some rather dangerous cosmetics were also being used by women in England. In particular, women were using special hair dye made with lead and sulphur. The dye was designed to give people red hair, the same color as the queen’s hair, but over time, the dye made people’s hair fall out. Finally, women using this dye ended up bald, like the queen, and had to wear wigs.

**Reading comprehension**

1.Write the letter of the word or phrase with the same meaning as the underlined word.

a.makes better d. beliefs; normal ways b. tiny pieces of something solid e. small amounts of liquid c. very old f. something that causes illness or death

1.\_\_\_\_ His new hairstyle really improves his looks.

2. \_\_\_\_ Young girls in that country often wear makeup. It’s part of that country’s culture.

3. \_\_\_\_ Sometimes I put powder on my face. Then it doesn’t look oily.

4. \_\_\_\_ Don’t touch that powder. It is a poison!

5. \_\_\_\_ She put a few drops of medicine in her eyes.

6. \_\_\_\_ Some ancient pictures in the pyramids show women wearing eye makeup.

**2. Choose the best answer**

1. What is the main idea of this reading?

a. The ancient Egyptians used a lot of makeup. b. People have always used makeup.

c. Some cosmetics in the past were dangerous. d. Italian women had the best makeup.

2. Which of the following statements is NOT correct?

a. The Egyptians used makeup to help their skin. b. The Romans used chalk to make their faces white. c. Queen Elizabeth I had blond hair. d. All of the above

3. Where did Italian women apply lead powder?

a. In their hair b. On their hands c. On their faces d. Under their arms

4. What was belladonna used for?

a. To give women pretty eyes b. To change the color of women’s skin

c. To poison plants d. To make people look smarter

5. What is the meaning of “rather” as it is used in the last paragraph?

a. normally b. on the contrary c. preferred d. fairly

 in some cases  in the name of  end up

 **3. Fill in the blank with one of the above idioms. Change its form if necessary**.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, teachers found students did better on longer exams.

2. Let’s follow the map, or we may \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ lost.

3. We must keep fighting \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ freedom!

**Homework:** summarize the text through filling in the gaps with correct words.

Although 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have been used all throughout history, not all of them have been safe. In fact, some of them have been quite 2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to people. For example, long ago in Italian 3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, people thought women with big eyes were beautiful. Therefore, 4 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_beauty, women began to put 5 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_of belladonna in their eyes to make their pupils larger. Belladonna, however, is poisonous, and it can affect the 6 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the body.

**References**

Malarcher, C., & Janzen, A. (2010).*Reading Challenge 2(2nd ed).*Compass Publishing.