

class assignment #5

This article appeared in a newspaper a few years ago. The name has been changed to protect the family of the student. After reading the short article, answer the following questions. The answers may be e-mailed (101#5 Your Name) or turned in word-processed. This assignment is due no later than 1:30 p.m. on Friday, 22 November. 10 points

Suicide toxins sicken nine

The Associated Press

GRINNEL, Iowa—A Grinnell College student committed suicide by taking so much potassium cyanide that fumes from his body sickened nine people.

Four paramedics, two college staff members and three students became nauseated and weak from the toxic fumes Monday. They were treated at a hospital and released.

Samuel K. Brooks, 20, a sophomore from Placentia, Calif., swallowed a crystalline form of potassium cyanide, which prevents oxygen from reaching the cells. He then asked his roommate to call for help, authorities said.

The chemical reacted with water in Brooks' body and created hydrogen cyanide gas, said Mickey Munley, the college's director of public relations.

Brooks' dormitory at the private liberal arts college, about 50 miles east of Des Moines, was evacuated because of the fumes. Grinnell Regional Medical Center, where Brooks' body was taken, also had to be ventilated.

"It's a very rare poisoning," said Dr. David Cranston, head of the emergency department. "You hear about it in mystery novels, but you don't see it in life very often."

1. What did Samuel Brooks do that caused his death?
2. *According to this news article*, how does potassium cyanide kill cells?
3. The newspaper description of how potassium cyanide kills cells was not quite accurate. Rewrite this last phrase of the first sentence of the third paragraph, "...which prevents oxygen from reaching the cells" to accurately convey the action of potassium cyanide *directly on cells*. Your rewrite should be worded for a general, non-technical newspaper reading audience. There are seven words in this phrase. Include no more than twelve words in your rewrite of the phrase. (You can do it with just six words!) This sentence should now read, "Samuel K. Brooks, 20, a sophomore from Placentia, Calif., swallowed a crystalline form of potassium cyanide, <new text inserted here>." The new sentence should be grammatically and informationally correct, and make sense!!!
4. After Brooks swallowed the cyanide, *what occurred inside his body* that caused other people to get sick?
5. According to this article, how many additional people (besides Brooks) were sickened *by the toxic fumes emanating from Brooks' body*?
6. List at least two *completely different ways* that hydrogen cyanide gas *is utilized today in our society* and *give a complete reference for each*.