

# 10 Drugs Awareness

**Aim:** To investigate the effects on the body of legal and illegal substances and the risks and consequences of their misuse.



## **Sub-theme 1**

Define What a Drug is and Clarify Existing Knowledge of and Attitudes to Drugs Use/Misuse

## **Teaching activity 1**

So What do You Think About Drugs?

## **Sub-theme 2**

Different Categories of Drugs and Their Effects on the Body

## **Teaching activity 2**

What Effect do Drugs Have?

## **Sub-theme 3**

What Motivates People to Take Drugs?

## **Teaching activity 3**

Who Influences Me?

## **Teaching activity 4**

Decisions, Decisions... Everything Counts!

## **Teaching activity 5**

Why do Some People Abuse Drugs?

## Aim

To investigate the effects on the body of legal and illegal substances and the risks and consequences of their misuse.

## Sub-theme 1

Define What a Drug is and Clarify Existing Knowledge of and Attitudes to Drugs Use/Misuse

# Teaching Activity 1

## So What Do I Think About Drugs?

### Learning Intentions

Pupils are learning:

- to define what a drug is;
- to evaluate what they already know about drug use/misuse and explore their personal attitudes to drugs and drug users;
- to respect the views and opinions of others regarding attitudes to drugs and drug users.



**Opportunity for AfL** Sharing learning intentions and success criteria



### Skills and Capabilities

- Working with Others: to respect the views and opinions of others regarding attitudes to drugs and drug users;
- Communication.



### Learning Experiences

- Relevant and enjoyable
- Enquiry based



### Attitudes and Dispositions

- Curiosity
- Openness to new ideas

### Resources

- Large sheets of paper, blue-tack, marker pens for writing
- 'Drugs Quiz' (Resource 1a-b)
- 'Attitudes' (Resource 2)

### Methodologies

- Brainstorm
- Group work
- Self-reflection



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## Aim

To investigate the effects on the body of legal and illegal substances and the risks and consequences of their misuse.

## Sub-theme 1

Define What a Drug is and Clarify Existing Knowledge of and Attitudes to Drugs Use/Misuse

## Teaching Activity 1

### So What Do I Think About Drugs?

#### Teaching Notes

Pupils will have lots of preconceptions and ideas related to drugs, through media, society and peer influences. The first part of this lesson is to give them the opportunity to become more aware of these preconceptions, and start moving towards a more factual knowledge base.

#### Activity 1.1

- a To allow pupils to share their opinions about drugs freely, write DRUGS on the board and do an open brainstorm with the class. This will probably be a mixture of names of types of drugs, definitions of drugs and opinions about drugs.
- b It would be helpful to stick some large sheets to the board, and then list the comments into the groups mentioned above on different sheets of paper as you write them (these can then be referred to in later lessons). Be careful not to tell the students why you are writing what they say onto different sheets.
- c Ask the class to see if they can deduce how you have grouped their comments, and then add the title of the group, 'names of drugs', 'definitions of drugs' and 'opinions about drugs, to the appropriate sheet.
- d Focussing on the sheet of 'definitions' comments produced by the group, give the class a few minutes to discuss, in small groups, what they think a definition of a drug would be. Ask each group to then feed back their definition to the rest of the class and write them up for comparison.

Alternatively, give each group a sheet and stick them all up for the class to view.



**Opportunity for AfL** Pupil reflection

- e An adequate definition may be produced within the group. For teacher reference, a good definition is 'A drug is a substance which when taken has the effect of altering the way the body works or the way a person behaves, feels, perceives or thinks' (Drugs: Guidance for School in Northern Ireland CCEA 2004). A simplified version is 'A drug is any substance which changes the way the body works'.

#### Activity 1.2

To become more aware of what they already know and think about drugs, pupils complete the 'Drug Quiz' (Resource 1a-b) and 'Attitudes' (Resource 2). It is important to have time to discuss these responses to give the opportunity for further clarification and debate.



**Opportunity for AfL** Effective questioning

## Aim

To investigate the effects on the body of legal and illegal substances and the risks and consequences of their misuse.

## Sub-theme 2

Different Categories of Drugs and Their Effects on the Body

## Teaching Activity 2

### What Effects Do Drugs Have?



#### Learning Intentions

Pupils are learning:

- about different drug categories and their effects on the body;
- about the possible negative consequences of drug taking;
- to make links between cause and effect through demonstrations and presentations.



**Opportunity for AFL** Sharing learning intentions and success criteria



#### Skills and Capabilities

- Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making: make links between cause and effect through demonstrations and presentations;
- Communication.



#### Learning Experiences

- Varied to suit learning styles
- Challenging and engaging



#### Attitudes and Dispositions

- Personal responsibility
- Community spirit



#### Resources

- 'PowerPoint Presentation' (Resource 3)
- 'Drugs and Their Effects' (Resource 4a - Pupil Copy, 4b - Teacher Copy)
- 'Drugs Facts Quiz' (Resource 5)
- 'Size Does Matter' (Resource 6)
- Two containers with measured water
- Food colouring in droppers
- 2 raw and 4 boiled eggs
- Container to catch eggs; kitchen towels etc.

#### Methodologies

- Teacher presentations
- Individual work: Information Sheets and Quiz
- Whole class discussion

## Aim

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## Sub-theme 2

Different Categories of Drugs and Their Effects on the Body

## Teaching Activity 2

### What Effects Do Drugs Have?

#### Teaching Notes

This activity includes a PowerPoint presentation to explain how drugs are categorised and their effects on the mind and body. The last activities are demonstrations to show the possible negative consequences of drug taking.

When presenting drug information to young people, it is essential that the information is factual and objective. For example, telling young people that drugs kill is not helpful. While drug use can cause fatalities, many young people use drugs with no obvious implications. The aim is for pupils to be factually aware about drugs - the facts alone will often put pupils off experimenting without the need for any embellishments. Being objective will give pupils more freedom to voice their natural curiosity about drugs, especially alcohol which they see commonly used and enjoyed by adults. Supplementary information to back up the presentation can be found on the internet at [www.drugsprevention.net](http://www.drugsprevention.net). This is a helpful website produced by the Health Promotion Agency containing detailed information about drugs.

#### Activity 2.1

**a** Remind pupils of the definition of a drug from the last lesson, and display the sheet of drug names previously collated.

**b Presentation explaining 4 categories of drugs** (Power Point presentation provided on CD).

The aim of this presentation is to help pupils understand how drugs are categorised and their effects on the mind and body. The four categories are based on the way the drug impacts on the individual and should not be confused with the drug's legal status. The four main categories are depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens and opiates.

Some drugs like ecstasy (E) cross the categories since they have both stimulant and hallucinogenic effects.

To help the pupils understand, we are using the analogy of a car to illustrate how drugs affect the individual.

- 1 Depressants act like the brakes to slow the body down.
- 2 Stimulants speed the body up like the accelerator.
- 3 Hallucinogens alter how you see things like someone pouring oil over the windscreen.
- 4 Opiates block pain like the airbag.

**c** While these are crude analogies, the pupils will remember them. It is important to stress that with illicit drugs you have no idea of what or how much of the drug you are taking, or the potential side effects.

**d** Draw the comparison to medication bought in the chemist that will have a label and a leaflet telling you the ingredients and potential side effects.

#### Activity 2.2

**a** Give pupils 'Drugs And Their Effects' (Resource 4a). Talk through the drug names they produced during the last lesson, in relation to this information.

Discuss how some street names can make a drug sound exciting and mask the fact that some drugs can cause damage. For example:

- **Speed** - The word speed creates a message of excitement of daring. It makes no reference to any potential harm like the comedown - the after effect of taking speed.
- **Ecstasy** - Ecstasy creates a message of pleasure. Again, no reference is made to the harm caused by heat exhaustion, dehydration and, in the longer term, depression.

**b** Using what they have learned from the presentation, ask pupils to complete the 'Type' column for the drugs. (There is a completed sheet for reference (Resource 4b)).

## Aim

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## Sub-theme 2

Different Categories of Drugs and Their Effects on the Body

### Activity 2.3

- a** The possible negative consequences of drug taking were touched on through reading the 'Effects' of drugs section of the information sheet. Now get pupils to complete the 'Drugs Facts Quiz' (Resource 5) which applies this information to real life situations.
- b** Do the practical demonstration 'Size does Matter' (Resource 6) to emphasise how drugs have a bigger effect on smaller people. Some questions to aid understanding and encourage discussion could be:

- 1 When administering anaesthetics for an operation, the nurses weigh children so that they get the right amount of drug to put them to sleep. What would happen if they didn't do this?
- 2 How can we relate this to taking other drugs e.g. the dangers of underage drinking? Also introduce the fact that the organs of children are still developing and are more easily damaged by drugs and it means they don't form properly.

#### Answers to Quiz

- 1 Which of the drugs above causes the greatest number of deaths in Northern Ireland each year?  
**Answer:** Tobacco - 3,000 people die from smoking-related diseases in Northern Ireland each year. Alcohol comes second with 140 deaths a year. Heroin and other drugs kill far less. This does not mean that other drugs are harmless. Drugs can cause other kinds of harm, such as: family violence or rows (as caused by alcohol), failed exams or lost jobs (as caused by cannabis), stealing (for any drug), seizures (as caused by ecstasy and alcohol).
- 2 Which would make a person's body temperature rise, sometimes causing death?  
**Answer:** Ecstasy ('E')
- 3 Which of the above drugs causes more problems for teenagers than any other drug?  
**Answer:** Alcohol - Alcohol causes more problems for teenagers than any other drug. For adults too, alcohol causes more problems (such as family rows, violence, poor work performance etc) than any other drug.
- 4 Which rarely kills, but can cause people to lose interest in study, work, sport and friends?  
**Answer:** Cannabis - Cannabis slows down the brain, which impairs learning and motivation. Cannabis can remain in the body for up to 28 days, so a regular cannabis smoker accumulates more and more of the active ingredient, THC. At first the slowing down effect is hardly noticeable, but it gradually builds up.
- 5 Which of the above can be injected?  
**Answer:** Heroin - Heroin can be injected, and if syringes are shared, there is a danger of spreading hepatitis and HIV. Heroin is taken in other ways too, but it is just as addictive in either case.



**Opportunity for AfL** Effective questioning

- c** The next demonstration highlights that we do not reliably know what street drugs contain. When we take prescribed or controlled drugs we know what is in them and how much to take. When someone uses street drugs they don't know what is in the drug or what else is mixed with the drug. It's a bit like playing 'Russian Roulette'.
- d** To demonstrate this, play egg roulette:
- 1 Bring in 6 eggs, 4 are hardboiled and 2 are raw.
  - 2 Explain that although all the eggs look and feel the same they are not. This is like taking tablets without knowing what they are.
  - 3 Ask for 6 volunteers who will come up one at a time and squeeze the egg in their hand (over a bucket!).
  - 4 This practical demonstrates several things; you can take a drug and nothing happens the first number of times but then you can have a bad experience. It is possible to have a bad experience the first time you use a drug (getting a raw egg first time). The point is, you can't tell by looking at the drug what's inside and how it will affect you.



**Opportunity for AfL** Effective questioning



**Opportunity for AfL** Formative feedback

## Aim

To investigate the effects on the body of legal and illegal substances and the risks and consequences of their misuse.

## Sub-theme 3

What Motivates People to Take Drugs?

# Teaching Activity 3

## Who Influences Me?



### Learning Intentions

Pupils are learning:

- to identify how family, friends and media influence them;
- to learn and build on others' experiences when considering feedback from class members;
- to listen actively and share opinions during group discussions.



**Opportunity for AfL** Sharing learning intentions and success criteria



### Skills and Capabilities

- Being Creative: learn and build on others' experiences when considering feedback from class members;
- Working with Others: listen actively and share opinions during group discussions;
- Communication.



### Learning Experiences

- Media-rich
- Skills integrated
- Varied to suit learning style
- Relevant and enjoyable



### Attitudes and Dispositions

- Pragmatism
- Personal responsibility

### Resources

- 3 blindfolds and food for 'Trust Game'
- 'Influences On Me' (Resource 7)
- Media articles for discussion of media influence

### Methodologies

- Teacher demonstration
- Class discussion
- Self-reflection
- Drawing and symbols
- Group project work

## Aim

To investigate the effects on the body of legal and illegal substances and the risks and consequences of their misuse.

## Sub-theme 3

What Motivates People to Take Drugs?

## Teaching Activity 3 Who Influences Me?

### Teaching Notes

The theme, 'Managing Influences and Making Decisions' looks at generic influences on individuals. This activity gives another opportunity to look at specific areas of influence in more detail. The activities highlight how much influence friends, family and the media can have over us, and provide situations for pupils to reflect on their own decision making process.

### Activity 3.1

- a Bring three volunteers to the front of the class. They must trust you to place three different pieces of food into their mouths.
- b Check the volunteers have no food allergies. Blindfold them. Offer each one in turn, a piece of food, which you will place into their mouth. Do not let them touch it. Their friends are invited to encourage or discourage them to take it.
- c Having offered two volunteers something nice, the third might feel it is safe enough to try something. Give them a lemon or the equivalent, which would be less pleasant.
- d The dangers of taking something without knowing its content are highlighted. Anyone taking illegal drugs cannot be certain what they are taking, even though in the past things have been fine. Dosage, (how much of the drug is present) varies greatly, and mixing types of drugs is common. Issues around peer pressure can also be highlighted by this activity.
- e Explore with the volunteers how much pressure they felt under, to take the food during the exercise.



**Opportunity for AfL** Effective questioning

### Activity 3.2

- a Discuss the influence of media in particular, with the use of 'Influences On Me' (Resource 7) as an option.
- b An extension here could be to choose some newspaper articles with provocative or biased headlines and discuss the influence of media within this context. Aspects such as media influence with respect to alcohol, smoking, being part of the group, being thin etc. could be analysed separately through project work and presented to the rest of the class.



**Opportunity for AfL** Formative feedback

Pupils write in their personal journal about what they have realised about the external influences that affect their decision-making.



**Opportunity for AfL** Pupil reflection





## Aim

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## Sub-theme 3

What Motivates People to Take Drugs?

# Teaching Activity 4

## Decisions, Decisions... Everything Counts...

### Learning Intentions

Pupils are learning:

- to identify that the choices they make will have consequences;
- to value other people's ideas to stimulate their own thinking when discussing issues related to scenarios;
- to examine options and weigh up pros and cons when considering choices of behaviour in scenarios.



**Opportunity for AfL** Sharing learning intentions and success criteria



### Skills and Capabilities

- Being Creative: value other peoples ideas to stimulate own thinking when discussing issues related to scenarios;
- Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making: Examine options, weigh up pros and cons when considering choices of behaviour in scenarios;
- Communication.



### Learning Experiences

- Supportive environment
- On going reflection



### Attitudes and Dispositions

- Self belief
- Community spirit

### Resources

- 'Go On Have A Drink' (Resource 8a)
- 'Everyone Is Going Out With Someone!' (Resource 8b)
- 'I Can't Lose Face With The Lads!' (Resource 8c)
- 'They Always Looked Up To Fergal' (Resource 8d)
- 'The Decision Making Framework' (Resource 3) from theme 3 'Managing Influences and Making Decisions'



### Methodologies

- Group work
- Class discussion

## Aim

To investigate the effects on the body of legal and illegal substances and the risks and consequences of their misuse.

## Sub-theme 3

What Motivates People to Take Drugs?

## Teaching Activity 4

### Decisions, Decisions... Everything Counts...

### Teaching Notes

It is assumed that pupils have already completed the activities on developing a decision making framework in Theme 3: Managing Influences and Making Decisions.

This activity applies the idea of decision making to some real life scenarios. These exercises form a basis for dealing with peer pressure by making the pupils aware of the skills needed to make informed decisions and to stick to them. They should not just say what must be done, but why it is the best action to take, after considering the consequences.

### Key Points to Draw Out:

- 1 We need to be careful to balance the need to feel accepted by a group, with the need to be true to what is right, important or healthy. We should not compromise values easily.
- 2 Most peer pressure is not other people bullying us and forcing us to do things. We feel an internal pressure to fit in with the group in order to belong and so therefore accept their influence.
- 3 Although others may influence us, we are responsible for our own actions and their consequences.
- 4 We must take account of all consequences and not just ignore or forget the ones we don't like or want.
- 5 We are free to make our own decisions, however we are not free to escape consequences.
- 6 Practice saying NO! Ensure that the pupils know that saying no is a valid and important choice and option.

Use Resources 8 a-d, which contain appropriate scenarios, or ask the pupils to share some typical real life dilemmas of their own and use them instead.

There are many ways to approach this:

- a Ask small groups to take one scenario each and ask them to give feedback related to the decision making framework.
- b Give small groups time to discuss the various scenarios using the decision making framework, then follow up with class discussion, maybe in circle time, drawing out the main concerns and themes that arose from the group work.

- c Small groups role-play a scenario, adding on the possible outcomes. This means they may repeat a scenario two or three times. It is important to give the performing group time to explain their choice of endings and then open this up for discussion afterwards. No ending is 'right' or 'wrong' here, and people will behave in certain ways dependent on consequences, even if it may not be exactly what they 'ought' to do. Empathy, realism and a non-judgemental attitude need to be strongly exemplified during these discussions.



**Opportunity for AfL** Effective questioning and formative feedback



## Aim

To investigate the effects on the body of legal and illegal substances and the risks and consequences of their misuse.

## Sub-theme 3

What Motivates People to Take Drugs?

# Teaching Activity 5

## Why Do Some People Abuse Drugs?

### Learning Intentions

Pupils are learning:

- to identify why some people misuse drugs;
- to value other people's ideas to stimulate own thinking during discussions;
- to respect the views and opinions of others, reaching agreements using negotiation and compromise when completing group card ranking activity.



**Opportunity for AFL** Sharing learning intentions and success criteria

### Skills and Capabilities

- Being Creative: value other people's ideas to stimulate own thinking during discussions;
- Working with Others: respect the views and opinions of others, reaching agreements using negotiation and compromise when completing group card ranking activity;
- Communication.

### Learning Experiences

- Investigating and problem solving
- Ongoing reflection

### Attitudes and Dispositions

- Concern for others
- Integrity - moral courage



### Resources

- 'Why Do Some People Misuse Drugs?' (Resource 9)
- Plain pages/large sheets (dependent on approach taken)

### Methodologies

- Class discussion
- Group card ranking activity
- Self-reflection

## Aim

To investigate the effects on the body of legal and illegal substances and the risks and consequences of their misuse.

## Sub-theme 3

What Motivates People to Take Drugs?

## Teaching Activity 5

### Why Do Some People Abuse Drugs?

#### Teaching Notes

The activity gives pupils the opportunity to reflect on why people take drugs. People's motives for taking drugs vary considerably. Also the same person will have very different motivations for starting to use a drug, deciding to continue to use it, and deciding to stop using the drug.

- a** The main reasons identified for young people taking drugs are outlined in 'Why Do People Misuse Drugs' (Resource 9). These can be used in a variety of ways:
- As a prompt for class discussion, following a preliminary brainstorm of 'Why do some people misuse drugs?' The pupils may come up with most of the reasons themselves or use the resource as a reference.
  - The sheet can be cut into cards and pupils can make a Diamond Ranking of what they think are the most common reasons. Discussion can then follow from feedback on this.
  - In card form, groups of pupils sort cards according to 'agree'/'disagree' and 'don't know'. The cards are then stuck onto large sheets around the room with the relevant headings. Discussion could then follow on the similarity/difference between opinions and clarification of 'don't knows' could come from student feedback. This approach would again highlight the diversity of attitudes and opinions concerning drug misuse.
  - Pupils have five minutes in their group to list on a plain page all their ideas as to why people misuse drugs. The sheets are then rotated around groups every few minutes, where the other groups tick or cross the ideas to show whether they agree or disagree. The sheets are then used as a basis for discussion.
- b** Discussions could include the issue of peer pressure. Is it really an external pressure from your friends to do something you might not otherwise do or is it more an internal pressure in an attempt to fit in with your peers - peer influence? As referred to at the bottom of the resource, all of the reasons can be summarised into two broad categories:
- to be part of a social group or occasion;
  - to escape and distance ourselves from others, pain or difficulties.
- c** Pupils write in their personal journal about their attitudes to drugs and drug use. Some prompt questions could be:
- Why do you think drugs are good?
  - Why do you think drugs are bad?
  - How do you feel about taking drugs yourself?
  - How do you feel about situations where you might be under pressure from others to experiment with drugs such as alcohol or tobacco?
  - Do you feel any of your attitudes or opinions about drugs have changed recently?
- d** Alternatively, pupils could repeat the Drug Quiz and Attitudes Quiz from Activity 1 and compare their answers to see if they have changed.



**Opportunity for AfL** Pupil reflection and self-evaluation