

# Class Hearing on Drugs

Knowing the effects of drugs other than alcohol and tobacco is important. Having and applying this knowledge helps students make good choices when they encounter drugs.

## SEL COMPETENCY

Responsible  
Decision Making

**SKILLS** problem identification, situation analysis, problem-solving

## MATERIALS

- ✓ Teacher Customized Activity Projectable
- ✓ Drug Information Sheets
- ✓ Student Journals
- ✓ Family Connection take-home worksheet

## CLASSROOM CONFIGURATION

- 1 whole class 2 small groups
- 3 small groups 4 individuals

## OBJECTIVES

Students will

- ✓ explain some common characteristics of harmful drugs;
- ✓ deliver a convincing case describing the harmful effects of various drugs.

## ★ COMMON CORE CONNECTION

This lesson addresses the following Common Core Standards:

### WRITING: TEXT TYPES AND PURPOSES

- ✓ W.5.1.a, W.5.1.b, W.5.1.d

### WRITING: RESEARCH TO BUILD AND PRESENT KNOWLEDGE

- ✓ W.5.7, W.5.8, W.5.9.b

## SKILLS Progression



**LAST YEAR**, students learned about and explained the harmful effects of various drugs.



**THIS YEAR**, students investigate the effects of drugs and present a persuasive case against drug use in a mock court.



**NEXT YEAR**, students will study the effects of illicit and illegally obtained drugs.

## 1 DISCOVERING 10 MINUTES

Lesson Link

ACTIVITY 1

Tell students that today they will continue their education about harmful substances and ways to effectively avoid them by learning about the harmful effects of drugs other than alcohol and tobacco.

**SAY:** *Hear ye, hear ye! This class is now in session. The order of business today is to put drugs on trial. You, my esteemed students, will become lawyers and witnesses to testify and make a case against the harmful effects of drugs.*



Display the **Teacher Customized Activity Projectable** that you prepared before class with a list of drugs that might be an issue in your community or of a newspaper article detailing something related to illegal drug use. Remind students that they have already discussed some harmful drugs. Invite volunteers to identify drugs that they have discussed in class, and ask them to write a few lines responding to the content on the projectable. Then call on volunteers to identify other harmful drugs. If students do not mention prescription drugs, add these to the list. Explain that even legal drugs, such as prescription and over-the-counter drugs, can be harmful if used improperly.

Invite volunteers to identify harmful effects of drugs. Record their ideas on the board. Guide students to recognize the impact on the user's physical and mental health. Mention also the danger of addiction.

**ASK:** *What do you think drugs do to relationships? How do you think drug use affects one's family and friends? How does drug use affect the community?*

## 2 CONNECTING 10 MINUTES

INSTRUCTION

Explain that today the class will hold a hearing about drugs and their harmful effects. Write the word "hearing" on the board. Explain that at a hearing people come together to learn more about a problem of wide concern. Witnesses are called to give testimony about a problem before a panel or judge. After hearing the testimonies, the panel usually makes a recommendation for taking action.

### Introduce the class hearing activity

Distribute the Drug Information Sheets to students. List on the board the drugs that will be researched for the hearing. Explain that students will be divided into teams. Each team will be assigned one of the drugs listed on the board. Teams will work together to learn about the assigned drug and to prepare "expert" testimony about how the drug can be harmful to users, their family and friends, and the community. At the hearing, each team will have 10–15 minutes to present its findings. At the hearing, the attorney will present a short description of the drug and then call on family, friends, and community members to give testimony about the drug's effects.

## Community Connection

Share examples of effective letters to the editor from a newspaper. Then ask students to use their notes from the class hearing to write a letter to the editor about the harmful effects of drugs on family and the community. Have students work in small groups to share and revise their letters. As a class, select letters to send to the local and school newspapers.

## Family Connection

Invite students to discuss the class hearings with their family. Ask students to conduct a similar hearing at home in which they and their family members evaluate the negative effects that drug use would have on their home life and family relationships. Send home the Family Connection take-home worksheet entitled **Home Court**.

## Applying Across the Curriculum

**SOCIAL STUDIES** Ask students to research the court process for civil proceedings and for debating civic issues. Ask them to find out how courts and government agencies conduct hearings and render decisions. If possible, have students attend a hearing on a local issue conducted by the town or city council, a local government agency, or the school board. Students should prepare a short report on their findings.

**LANGUAGE ARTS** Have students work in groups to write a position paper for the class arguing against drug use. Explain that position papers express a clear opinion about an issue. Position papers are generally written to express the official opinion of an entity, such as a political party or group. Students may write about one specific drug or about drugs in general. Ask them to include a quote from an expert and at least one statistic in their papers and to provide sources for the information they use as the basis of their position paper.

Point out that several roles are needed for the class hearings. One student from each team will play the role of the attorney who presents the case. The other team members will serve as witnesses who testify as family, friends, and community members about the dangers of the assigned drug. Have students turn to the Practicing page in the Student Journal to review the roles in more detail.

## Model the class hearing activity

Provide guidance for how to play an assigned role. Use the example below or come up with your own model.

**SAY:** *Let's assume I have decided to play the role of a family member. I am pretending my sister is using the drug that has been assigned to my group. I will research the effects of the drug and then pretend to have some of the experiences described. For example, if the research shows that a user's personality is different, I might testify that my sister has changed. She seems confused and can't concentrate. Her grades have suffered. I might also talk about how upset my mom and dad are, which is causing a lot of trouble for the whole family.*

Emphasize to students that they will each play a role in the process. They can choose the role they will play, but each team should have a balance of expert witnesses—family, friends, and other members of the community.

Explain that choosing roles will be the first step they will do after getting into their teams.

## **3** PRACTICING 65 MINUTES

### ACTIVITY 2

### Explain the class hearings activity

Have students turn to the Practicing page in the Student Journal. Have volunteers read each step aloud. After each step, check for understanding and answer questions as needed.

#### Class Session 1

- Form groups and assign drugs.
- Have groups assign roles.
- Ask students to investigate the assigned drug and its impact.
- Have groups prepare testimony for the hearing with statements, questions, and answers. Encourage students to present ideas for how to prevent and reduce drug use.
- Invite groups to practice their presentations.

#### Class Session 2

- Welcome participants and explain the purpose of the hearing.
- Invite each team to present its case.
- After each presentation, respond to what you have heard.
- Conclude the hearing with a summary statement.
- Have students answer the Reflecting questions.

## Students practice making their case against drug use

Organize students into teams and assign each team a drug. Be sure students have the Drug Information Sheets and provide references for students to research the drug they have been assigned. Provide guidance as needed to keep teams on task. Encourage students to practice their testimony in their groups and as homework. After the second class session, ask if they enjoyed making a case against drug use and if it helped them solidify their stance against illegal drug use.

### Reflecting

Students use their journals to reflect individually and as a class on what they learned in this lesson.

<b>What?</b>	What drug did you research? What are the harmful effects of this drug? What are the harmful effects of some of the other drugs put on trial?
<b>So what?</b>	How do you feel about what you learned today about drugs? Did any of the information surprise you? If so, what?
<b>Now what?</b>	How will you respond if someone asks you to try one of these drugs? What would you say to a friend who wanted to try one of these drugs? What information would you provide?

## 4 APPLYING 5 MINUTES

Have students complete the Applying page in the Student Journal to further reinforce the information they learned about drugs.

## ASSESSING

**PRACTICING (INFORMAL FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT)** Consider responses during the Discovering phase and monitor students as they prepare and practice their testimony to assess students' understanding of the negative effects of drugs on the user's mind and body, as well as on family, friends, and community.

**APPLYING (FORMAL FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT)** Check the Applying page of the Student Journal to ensure students are accurately applying information they learned about drugs.

### Reflecting Resource: Student Journal p. 66

**Reflecting** Reflect on what you've learned about the harmful effects of drugs in this lesson.

**What?** What drug did you research? What are the harmful effects of this drug? What are the harmful effects of some of the other drugs put on trial?

**So What?** How do you feel about what you learned today about drugs? Did any of the information surprise you? If so, what?

**Now What?** How will you respond if someone asks you to try one of these drugs? What would you say to a friend who wanted to try one of these drugs? What information would you provide?

66 LESSON 6

### Applying Resource: Student Journal p. 67

**Applying** Use the Drug Information Sheets and the information provided by other groups during the classroom hearings to answer the following questions.

Name one additional drug presented in the classroom hearings.

Based on the information given in classroom hearings and the Drug Information Sheets, what effects could this drug have on your community?

Name another drug presented in the classroom hearings.

Based on the information given in classroom hearings and the Drug Information Sheets, what effects could this drug have on your community?

LESSON 6 67

## BUILDING SKILLS BEYOND THE LESSON

### Make a Concept Map!

#### REINFORCEMENT

**PRACTICING** Encourage teams to draw concept maps for their case. They will label the center oval with their case drug. Each group role should be listed around the center oval. Spokes around each role should provide tasks or information for that role.

### Write It Out!

**PRACTICING** Ask each team member to focus on the effects of drug use on a user's family, friends, and other community members. Challenge students to write from one of these perspectives about how the drug use is affecting that person.

### Write a Script!

#### ENRICHMENT

**PRACTICING** Challenge students to write a script for a public service announcement (PSA). They can summarize the information that they prepared for their part in the court case. Invite volunteers to record their PSAs to share in class or on the school announcements.

### Write a Rap!

**APPLYING** Invite partners or small groups to combine their verdicts on drug use to write a short hip hop song about making positive and healthy choices. Encourage students to incorporate movement and dance. Have each team perform their song for the class.