

JUST A FEW DRINKS - LESSON PLAN

'Just a few drinks' four short films on the physical, social and medical effects of too much alcohol on the immature body.

Here you will find four 7 minute films commissioned by BBC2 Learning Zone about how too much alcohol affected the lives of four teenagers. The clips feature real people, not actors.

Learning objectives

The films explore how four normally sensible teenagers ended up drinking too much and the different unforeseen consequences that occurred.

The objectives to explore:

- o **How much is too much?** Making the right choices in the future if you do try alcohol and exploring the differences between moderate social drinking and excess.
- o **Alcohol and risk taking** How risk escalates the more you drink, with the main priority to highlight harms to health and wellbeing.
- o **Alcohol and the location of drinking** The added danger of drinking in unsupervised environments such as parks and unsupervised parties.
- o **Alcohol and the law** Understanding the possible consequences of drinking in public places, asking older friends to buy alcohol for you, attempting to buy from shops or clubs yourself.
- o **Alcohol and its physical effects on your body** Each clip clearly explains in a scientifically but understandable way, the effects that alcohol has on the brain and why your behaviour changes, you feel sick, or pass out.

Social norms

The films are careful not to suggest that the scenarios are typical of teenage behaviour. It is made clear that most 11 - 15 year-olds do not drink alcohol (56% of 11 - 15 year-olds have not consumed a whole drink) and that regular underage drinking has decreased (from 26% of 11 - 15 year-olds drinking weekly in 2001 to 6% in 2018).

The aim of the lesson plans are to explore what students could do to avoid the situation happening to themselves, or to reduce the risk before things got out of hand and how they would look after a friend if they saw signs of risk taking emerging.

Before you show the films:

If this is a stand alone session we suggest you set the context by beginning with 'The decision whether to drink or not' activity (alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/staying-safe-avoiding-risk-taking/) which explores why teenagers may choose to drink or not.

An alternative is to use a **Diamond Nine activity**, where you ask pupils to list nine reasons why young people drink (highest risk first) and to rank them in order of risk – see the example **blank sheet** and **completed sheet** for suggestions. You can also use the same activity to list nine reasons why teenagers don't drink, by order of importance to them. It is always good practice to explore motivation for any kind of substance use / misuse. Visit the **Just a Few Drinks activity** in the Challenge Zone of our Online Learning Zone, talkaboutalcohol.com.

Lesson guidance

We have put together lesson notes for each of the films individually highlighting issues that can be discussed and suggesting that you pause the films and ask pupils to develop their own outcomes both positive and negative.

The other suggested lesson format is that you show the four clips over two PSHE lessons, putting together Alan and Emily and then Jordan and Anna. Pupils should watch the films and consider how they would help the young people in question to have a really good night out without getting into the harmful situations they ended up in.

At the end of each film they could get into groups and have 10 minutes to think of what different decisions could be made at key points in the film, followed by a whole class discussion.

Activities post films at end of lesson 2

High risk / Low risk continuum activity

The aim of this activity is to identify risk and strategies to reduce risk.

Try and avoid a diet of negativity and explore how the situation could be avoided or made better so pupils learn how to avoid riskier situations.

Put up a **low risk sheet** at one end of the classroom and a **high risk sheet** at the other end. Ask pupils to come up with statements about the film, to hand them to you and then you read them out. Ask pupils to place themselves on the scale of low to high risk in the room for each statement and then explore with them why they have chosen that level of risk, what would make it lower risk etc.

Suggestions....

- o drinking when skateboarding
- o trying to buy alcohol when you're under age
- o going home on your own
- o drinking neat spirits
- o drinking fast without food
- o drinking in a public place when underage.

As you read out each one of the statements. Pupils move to a place on the continuum according to the amount of risk they think is involved.

Get them to briefly discuss with a person near to them before a whole group discussion. If the group is too big or if classroom management is an issue pupils can be asked to place the statements along the continuum – these can then be challenged and moved by other pupils – giving reasons why. It's important to ask questions like "What would make it higher risk, lower risk?"

You could end the session by either spending time on our interactive body (talkaboutalcohol.com/interactive-body/) exploring the effects of too much alcohol on different parts of the body or use the worksheet [How much is too much - getting the balance right](#).

The [Alcohol and you](#) leaflet can be downloaded free of charge via our website home page alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/ or email kate@alcoholeducationtrust.org if you would like hard copies to be posted to you.

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