

Science - Year 6

Animals including Humans – Block 6AH

The Art of being Human

Session 6

Resource pack

Drugs and alcohol: myth or truth?

- 1. If it's a prescription, it must be safe; you can't get addicted to something your doctor prescribes**
- 2. 'Natural' drugs are safer than synthetic ones**
- 3. If you have a good job and family life, you can't be a drug or alcohol addict**
- 4. Drug addiction is a choice**
- 5. You just need to stop taking drugs or stop drinking and you will be fine**
- 6. Legal drugs (cigarettes, alcohol, etc.) are not harmful**
- 7. There are alcohol limits when driving, but you can take drugs and drive**
- 8. Just trying a drug once won't make me an addict or do me any harm**

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Drugs and alcohol myths

(teacher notes)

Myth #1: If it's a prescription, it must be safe; you can't get addicted to something your doctor prescribes. *Although many medications are perfectly safe if taken in the prescribed dosage for a short period of time, prolonged use can be dangerous and even addictive. Some prescription drugs are especially hazardous if the user exceeds the prescribed dosage or takes a combination of drugs. You should **never** take something that has been prescribed for someone else.*

Myth #2: 'Natural' drugs are safer than synthetic ones. *Marijuana, mushrooms and other 'natural' highs affect your brain and produce dangerous side effects. They aren't harmless just because they are organic.*

Myth #3: If you have a good job and family life, you can't be a drug or alcohol addict. *Drugs affect people from all kinds of backgrounds.*

Myth #4: Drug addiction is a choice. *Using drugs is a choice, but when using drugs over a prolonged period of time your body and brain chemistry changes - when this happens, you become an addict and cannot control your usage*

Myth #5: You just need to stop taking drugs or stop drinking and you will be fine. *An addict will likely need help to do this and in fact a sudden and rapid 'detox' program can be highly dangerous (even fatal). You cannot be 'cured' from an addiction as it is a chronic illness. However, you can manage it, usually with help.*

Myth #6: Legal drugs (cigarettes, alcohol etc) are not harmful. *They are harmful AND addictive, they are just legal. Legal in one country also doesn't mean that it is legal in another country.*

Myth #7: There are alcohol limits when driving, but you can take drugs and drive. *Even many prescription drugs say that you shouldn't drive as they can impair your abilities, reactions and judgements.*

Myth #8: Just trying a drug once won't make me an addict or do me any harm. *It may not initially, but can lead to addiction. One dose of a drug could also kill you or leave you seriously ill – especially if you don't know what else has been added to it.*

Types of drugs: stimulants, depressants, analgesics, hallucinogens

Drugs are chemicals that change the way in which the body works. In controlled dosages, some are beneficial, while others are harmful. Can you match the drug type to its definition?

Stimulants

Depressants

Analgesics/Anaesthetics

Hallucinogens

These act on the central nervous system and are associated with feelings of extreme well-being, increased mental and motor activity. They increase your brain activity. Examples include caffeine (e.g. in coffee), cocaine, crack cocaine, amphetamines (speed) and ecstasy (which is also a hallucinogen).

These are chemicals that slow the brain down as well as the central nervous – they can relieve anxiety. Common drugs include alcohol and cannabis.

Opiate and opioid drugs provide pain relief by blocking nerve impulses. They also cause euphoria, sedation and can induce coma. Common drugs include heroin, morphine, opium, methadone, dipipanone and pethidine.

These cause changes in the way a person perceives reality – they alter what you feel, see and hear. Common drugs include cannabis, LSD, ecstasy and psilocybin (magic mushrooms).

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Stimulants

Stimulants act on the central nervous system and are associated with feelings of extreme well-being, increased mental and motor activity. They increase your brain activity. Examples include caffeine (e.g. in coffee), cocaine, crack cocaine, amphetamines (speed) and ecstasy (which is also a hallucinogen).

Long term effects: addiction, paranoia and long-term insomnia, extreme weight change.

Depressants

Depressants are chemicals that slow the brain down as well as the central nervous – they can relieve anxiety. Common depressants include alcohol and cannabis.

Long term effects: addiction can result, withdrawal can be painful, and the drug may cause seizures and death.

Analgesics/Anaesthetics (painkillers)

Opiate and opioid drugs provide pain relief by blocking nerve impulses. They also cause euphoria, sedation and can induce coma. Common analgesics include heroin, morphine, opium, methadone, dipipanone and pethidine.

Long term effects: highly addictive and your body can build up tolerance for the drug, meaning you need a higher dose to maintain the same effect. Withdrawal can be long and physically painful. If combined with alcohol and other drugs can lead to death from respiratory failure.

Hallucinogens

Hallucinogens cause changes in the way a person perceives reality – they alter what you feel, see and hear. Common Hallucinogens include cannabis, LSD, ecstasy and psilocybin (magic mushrooms).

Long term effects: Flashbacks (these may be pleasant or nightmarish) and depression as well as increased panic, impaired memory and ability to concentrate. May lead to psychosis.

What are drugs?

Over the counter drugs: *e.g. paracetamol or ibuprofen to treat general pain. You can buy these drugs without a doctor's prescription.*

Prescription drugs: *e.g. antibiotics. You need a prescription from a doctor for these drugs and you can only get them from a pharmacist.*

Illegal, classified drugs: *e.g. heroin, cocaine or cannabis. These drugs are classified as A, B or C depending on how harmful they are – e.g. Crack Cocaine is a Class A drug, 'Mephedrone' and cannabis are class B drugs, while Ketamine is a class C drug.*

Get the facts, Metropolitan Police

http://safe.met.police.uk/drugs_and_alcohol/get_the_facts.html

Alcohol: *a potentially harmful substance that only adults over the age of 18 are allowed to buy, or drink in public.*

Excessive alcohol consumption can cause:

- Vomiting
- Excessive urinating
- Greater risk-taking
- Violent behaviour
- Brain and liver damage
- Damage to your stomach and digestive system

Drinking can become addictive

Cigarettes

These are also highly addictive and have the following negative impacts on the body:

- Cause illnesses such as cancer, heart attacks and strokes
- Make your mouth taste disgusting and stain your teeth

Useful websites:

What are drugs? Newsround, BBC

http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_1600000/newsid_1609600/1609624.stm

Know drugs, KidsHealth

<http://kidshealth.org/en/kids/know-drugs.html#>

Tobacco effects, Look Out Zone

<https://www.lookoutzone.co.uk/tobacco/tobacco-effects.html>

Alcohol effects, Look Out Zone

<https://www.lookoutzone.co.uk/alcohol/alcohol-effects.html>

Drugs overview, NHS

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/drugs/Pages/Drugsoverview.aspx>

Basic drugs awareness leaflet, BNLT

<http://www.bntl.org/bda.html>

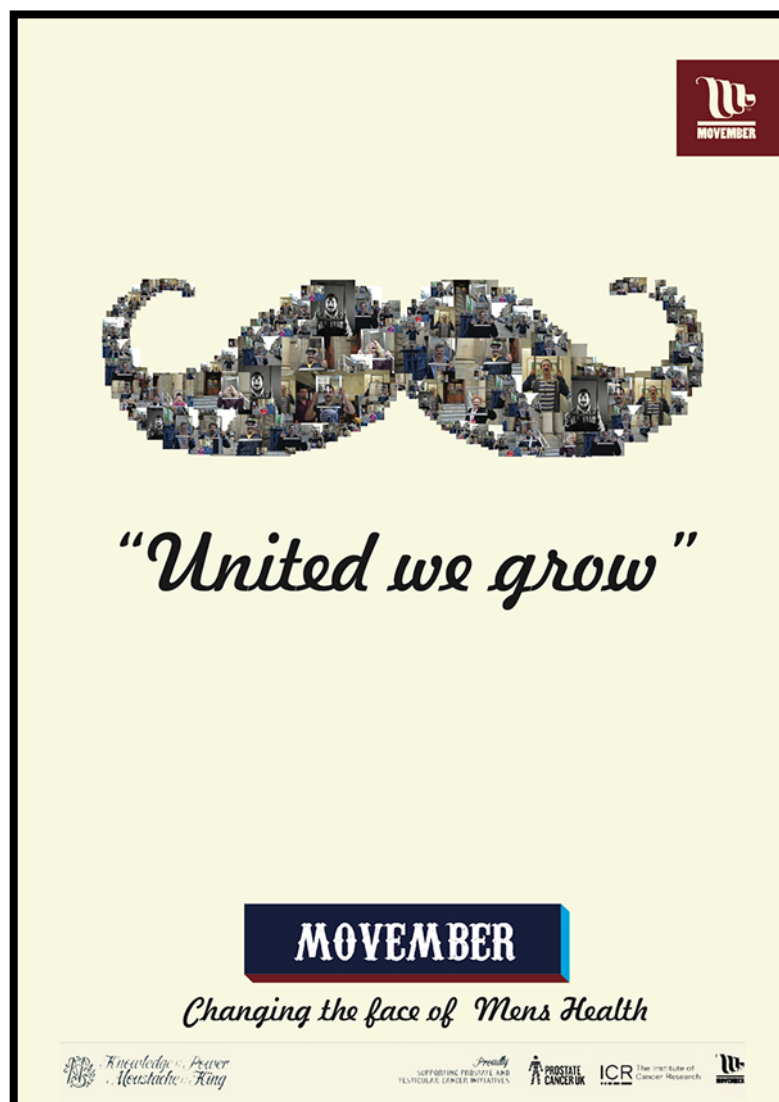
Images for photo montage



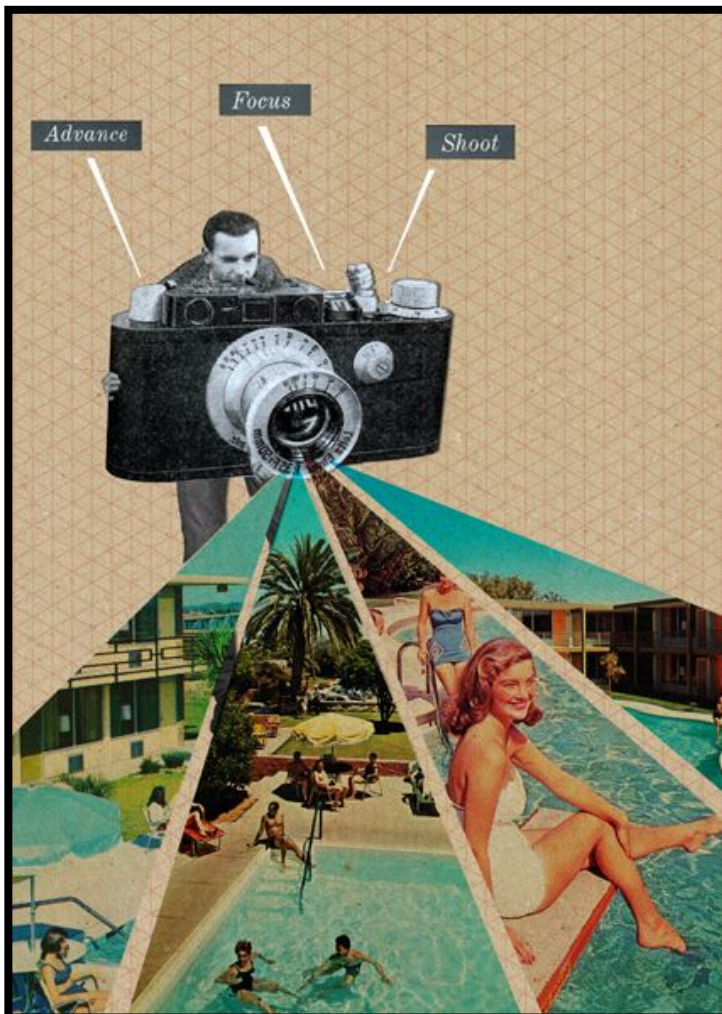




Sample photo montage ideas



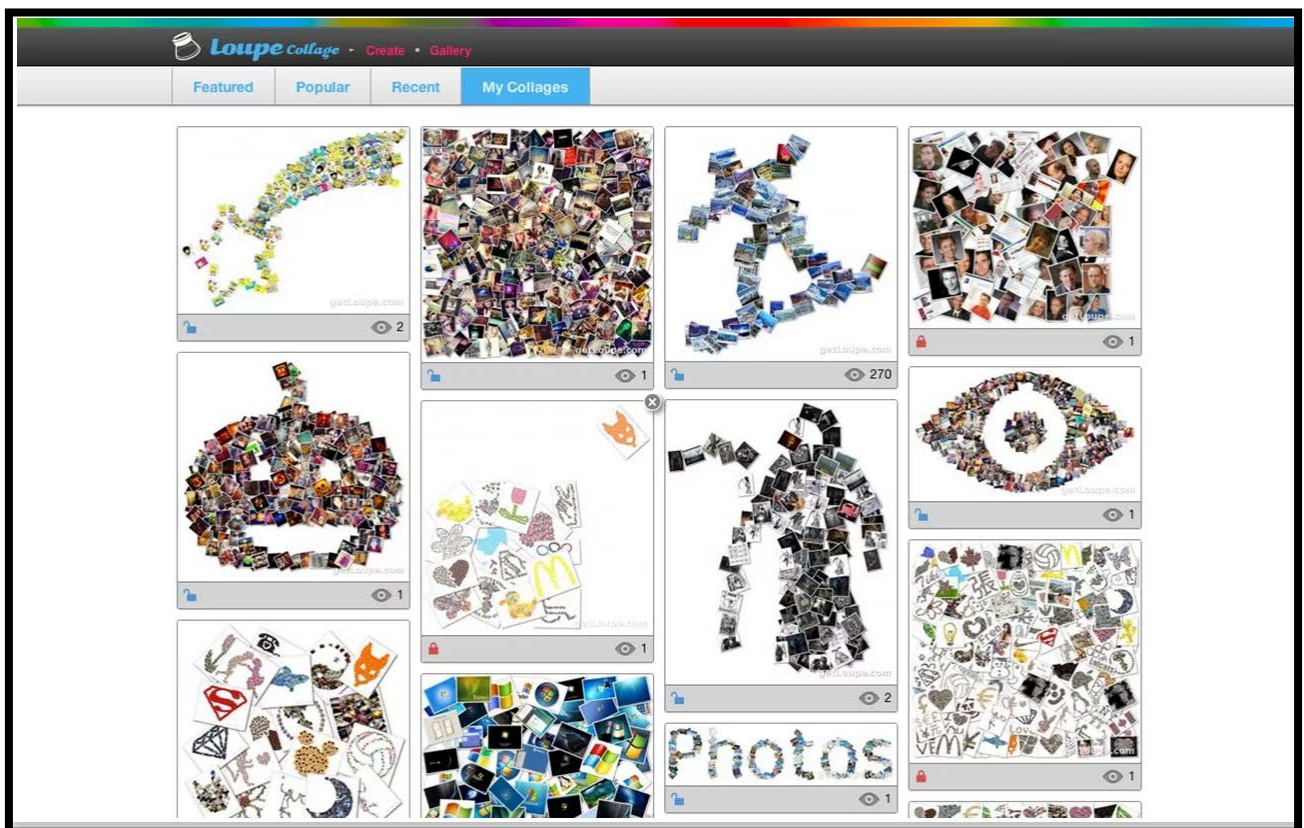




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