



Goal and Rationale

The goal of this presentation, "Alcohol", from our teens/young adults series is to teach teens and young adults what alcohol is, how alcohol can be dangerous, and how they can make the right choices when it comes to identifying and rejecting alcohol.

By the end of this activity, we hope that students will be able to:

- ✓ Define what alcohol is.
- ✓ Discuss how alcohol can be dangerous.
- ✓ Theorize the short and long-term effects that alcohol can have on people.
- ✓ Evaluate the different ways that alcohol can impact them and their bodies.
- ✓ Come up with a plan for rejecting alcohol if necessary.

Suggested Procedure for Educators

*** Editing the presentation is not permitted. When opening the PowerPoint, click on read-only. ***

Slide 1: Present the subject that will be covered in this presentation.

Slide 2: Go over the fermentation process.

Slide 3: Go over each type of alcohol. The sugar in barley creates beer, the sugar in grapes makes wine and the sugar in potatoes makes vodka.

Slide 4: Tell them we'll go over the biology involved with drinking alcohol. **Click.**

Go over the mouth section. **Click.**

Go over the stomach/small intestine section. **Click.**

Go over the blood vessels section. **Click.**

Go over the brain section. **Click.**

Go over the kidneys section. **Click.**

Go over the lung section. **Click.**

Go over the liver section.



Slide 5: Tell them we'll go over what drinking alcohol does to the mind. **Click.**

Go over the first bullet point. **Click.**

Go over the second bullet point. **Click.**

Go over the third bullet point.

Slide 6: Go over how alcohol affects behavior.

Slide 7: Pause your presentation to ask students the following questions:

1. What is the process that makes people drunk? (Slides 2-3)

Answer: The reason why alcohol makes people drunk is because of a process called fermentation. Fermentation is a natural process through which microorganisms like yeast and bacteria convert sugar into alcohol, called Ethanol. Ethanol is the key ingredient in alcohol and the active component that gets you drunk.

2. Can you name some of the things that happen to the body when you drink alcohol? (Slide 4)

Answer: Alcohol mixes with saliva and enters your bloodstream through tiny blood vessels. Your stomach and small intestine absorb more alcohol into your bloodstream. Alcohol dilates your blood vessels, which causes a feeling of warmth. Your kidneys produce and release a lot of urine. This decreases the water content in your body, increasing the alcohol concentration. Your brain releases serotonin and dopamine that will make you feel good and relaxed for a short time. Alcohol vapor diffuses from your blood into your lungs. Your liver breaks alcohol down into water and carbon dioxide (which you exhale), making you feel less drunk.

3. What happens when you drink and urinate a lot? (Slide 4)

Answer: Your kidneys produce and release a lot of urine. This decreases the water content in your body, increasing the alcohol concentration.

4. Explain what happens to your mind when you drink. (Slide 5)

Answer: After their first drink, people often feel more relaxed, but that feeling wears off pretty fast, whether they drink more or not. After some time, some people will feel down, others will feel anxious. The more you drink, the more amplified these side effects will be, and they'll last longer. Because of things like dehydration, electrolyte imbalance, gastrointestinal effects, low blood sugar, etc. that alcohol produces, people may experience a hangover the next day.



After discussing these questions with your students, resume the presentation.

Slide 8: Go over the consequences of mixing alcohol and medication.

Slide 9: Go over the consequences of mixing alcohol and marijuana.

Slide 10: Go over the consequences of mixing alcohol and opiates.

Slide 11: Go over the consequences of mixing alcohol and cocaine.

Slide 12: Go over the prevention tips if someone is going to drink.

Slide 13: Go over the prevention tips if someone doesn't want to drink.

The presentation is over. Ask students the following questions to make sure they understand what has been covered in the second part.

5. What happens when you mix alcohol and drugs? (Slides 8-11)

*Answer: **Alcohol and medications**, it can significantly reduce the drug's effectiveness. This is not just about diminishing the benefits of the medicine but also about potentially endangering your health. If you're on essential medications that your body relies on, these interactions can have severe consequences. **Alcohol and marijuana** can amplify the effects of marijuana. Alcohol increases the absorption of THC. This heightened effect can lead individuals to "green out," which is when a person experiences adverse mental or physical effects due to marijuana. **Alcohol and opiates** are depressant substances, meaning that they slow down your central nervous system. Therefore, it can lead to decreased or halted respiration, reduced heart rate and blood pressure, loss of consciousness, coma, and can be life-threatening. **Alcohol and cocaine** cause the liver to form cocaethylene. Cocaethylene is just as potent as cocaine but stays longer in the system. This increases the risks of dangerous and toxic effects on your cardiovascular system, including heart attack and stroke. It can also produce liver problems and put you at a higher risk of cocaine-related accidents/violent behavior.*

6. What are some preventive things you can do if you're going to drink? (Slide 12)

*Answer: Eat food before and during the party.
Bring a water bottle and make sure to drink water between drinks.
Don't drink coffee or energy drinks.
Don't drive. Assign a designated driver. Get someone to drop you off, take a cab, or use public transportation to get there and back.*



- 7. What are some things you can do if you're going to a party and don't want to drink? (Slide 13)**

Answer: Prepare a reason in advance to not get tongue-tied. Some examples: You may have a practice the next day, a big exam coming up, etc.

Volunteer to be the designated driver.

Find friends who also don't drink or who will respect your decision and won't pressure you to drink.

Once your students have answered questions 1-7, proceed to a large group discussion using the thematic questions below. Depending on the grade level or age group of your students, you can expect this entire activity including the presentation to take between 20-30 minutes.

Discussion questions

Note: the sample answers below represent potential correct answers and can be used to facilitate deeper discussion with your students.

- 8. What is the presentation trying to tell us about alcohol?**

Answers will vary but could include: that alcohol is a drug that harms our body and mind. It also affects our behavior and can have negative consequences for our future. That mixing alcohol and other drugs can be very dangerous.

- 9. How does the presentation explain how alcohol affects behavior and what out-of-character behavior might occur under the influence?**

Answers will vary but could include: the presentation tells us that alcohol alters your perception of the real world. It removes your inhibitions but also strips away your control. This is why people might fight and argue, usually for stupid things. The decisions they make are usually off because of the way they perceive reality. So, they'll take their car and endanger themselves and others. They might do something foolish like sending embarrassing tweets or texts.



- 10. What emotions did you feel during this presentation? Explain your answer.**

Answers will vary but could include: curiosity, fear, anxiety, determination, confusion, doubt, sadness, uncertainty, pride, excitement, and/or hope.

- 11. What lessons can we learn about alcohol from this presentation? Explain your answer.**

Answers will vary but could include: that alcohol can harm the body and the mind and affect our behavior negatively. That there are ways to drink responsibly. That not drinking is okay. That mixing alcohol and drugs is dangerous.

- 12. How has this presentation informed and/or changed your opinion about alcohol? Explain your answer.**

Answers will vary but could include: that alcohol is a dangerous drug, and we can't let peer pressure or trying to fit in influence our decision-making.

Note: Teachers, please have your students share their feedback with us using the form linked at the end of this curriculum's web page, we want to continue to make our message stronger and more effective. Thanks!