



Goal and Rationale

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

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

- ✓ Explain what marijuana is.
- ✓ Assess how marijuana can be dangerous.
- ✓ Discuss the reasons that some people use marijuana.
- ✓ Think about the short and long-term effects that marijuana can have on people.
- ✓ Brainstorm the different ways that marijuana can impact them and their bodies.

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 what marijuana is.

Slide 3: Tell them you’ll go over the physical effects of marijuana. **Click.**

Go over the effects on the heart. **Click.**

Go over the effects on the blood vessels. **Click.**

Go over the effects on the lungs. **Click.**

Go over the effects on the immune system.

Slide 4: Tell them you’ll go over the psychological effects of marijuana. **Click.**

Go over the information covered in the first bullet point. **Click.**

Go over the information covered in the second bullet point. **Click.**

Go over the information covered in the third bullet point. **Click.**

Go over the information covered in the fourth bullet point.

Slide 5: Go over the effect on the developing brain.



Slide 6: Go over the definition of greening out. **Click.**

Go over the symptoms of greening out. **Click.**

Go over the risks related to greening out.

Slide 7: Pause your presentation to ask students the following questions to make sure they understand what has been covered so far:

1. What is the main active component of marijuana? (Slide 2)

Answer: THC is the primary active component in marijuana, which alters the mind and affects the body.

2. What are some of the physical effects of marijuana? (Slide 3)

Answer: Some symptoms include: THC is the active ingredient in marijuana; it alters the mind and causes harmful effects.

3. Name 3 effects that marijuana can have on your mind. (Slide 4)

Answer: THC stimulates your brain to produce the chemical dopamine, which is the reward system in the brain, which can make marijuana addictive. This may explain why as many as 30% of cannabis users develop cannabis use disorder. It can increase your senses, but also alter them (such as depth perception). It can also distort your sense of time (such as time slowing down). It can create issues with attention, concentration, problem-solving, learning, and memory that can result in poor academic performance. It affects your motor skills, timing, movement, and coordination, making it dangerous to drive and harmful to your athletic performance.

4. Is it safer for teens or young adults to use marijuana? (Slide 5)

Answer: Your brain continues its development until you're 25. When you use marijuana, THC overwhelms parts of the brain that are still developing, and it interferes with the normal way the brain works. One study found that teens who regularly use marijuana lose an average of 5.8 IQ points by the time they reach adulthood.



5. What are some of the symptoms of a green out? (Slide 6)

Answer: Symptoms include: Limb heaviness. Dizziness. Headaches. Nausea. Vomiting. Diarrhea. Disorientation. Confusion. Agitation. Anxiety. Panic attack. Mild hallucinations. Delusions. Paranoia.

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

Slide 8: Read the sentence.

Slide 9: Go over the information on escaping boredom.

Slide 10: Go over the information on fitting in.

Slide 11: Go over the information on escaping their problems.

Slide 12: Go over the information on relieving stress.

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

6. What could you do to escape boredom instead of using marijuana? (Slide 9)

Answers could vary but could include: Rather than turning to marijuana as an escape, it might be more fulfilling to delve into pastimes like board games, video games, nights out with friends, joining a club, or learning a new skill. Seeking a purpose that extends beyond academic pursuits can also alleviate feelings of boredom.

7. What could you do to escape your problems instead of using marijuana? (Slide 11)

Answers could vary but could include: Better to seek actual support of friends, counselors, family members, etc. to help you solve the problem if you're having trouble finding a solution. Another great way to find support is through the Internet, a lot of information is right at your fingertips and chances are, you're not the first person to have ever had this issue.



- 8. What could you do to relieve stress instead of using marijuana? (Slide 12)**

Answers could vary but could include: Taking a walk and looking around, exercise of any kind, watching a comedy special, meditation, journaling, etc. Everyone is different, so find the thing that works for you in stressful times.

- 9. Is using marijuana to relax before a big exam or during finals a good idea? Why? (Slide 12)**

Answer: Having a big test or studying for finals can be an extremely stressful time for students. But remember that marijuana does impair cognitive function and memory, so it definitely is not the right solution to relieve stress during that time.

Once your students have answered questions 1-9, 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.

- 10. What is the presentation trying to tell us about marijuana?**

Answers will vary but could include: that marijuana is a powerful drug that can have a very negative impact on our still-developing teenage brains. The active ingredient, THC, can impact how we think, feel, and behave.

- 11. How does the presentation explain the different reasons that people may try marijuana?**

Answers will vary but could include: some people use marijuana to try and fit in with a crowd, some are peer pressured, others are trying to escape stressful situations at home or school, and some may even be bored.



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

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

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

Answers will vary but could include: I didn't know that it can be addictive, I also didn't know that our brains and bodies keep growing until we are 25, this makes me think twice about using it.

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

Answers will vary but could include: this presentation helped me understand that marijuana can really change the way I behave and think and makes me reconsider the impact that it can have on me in both the short and long term.

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!