

Unit C Building knowledge and understanding about drugs and alcohol – practising skills to deal with situations

About the unit

In this unit, children build their knowledge and understanding of the effects and risks of using drugs and alcohol through enquiry and research. ‘Draw and write’ activities, quizzes and games are used to identify what children already know and understand about drugs and alcohol. Children reach a definition of what a drug is and identify a range of substances to be investigated. They work together to research basic information about the effects and risks of commonly available drugs, including medicines, volatile substances, tobacco and cannabis. They explore people’s reasons for drinking alcohol, and different attitudes to it. They discuss why drugs are illegal or restricted. They develop their communication skills through a formal debate as part of a scenario on whether a new drug should be restricted.

The knowledge and understanding built in this unit can be used in conjunction with unit B ‘Risk-taking and resisting unhelpful pressure’, which focuses on risk-taking and decision-making skills and dealing with unhelpful pressure or influences. Unit B also focuses on tobacco. This unit is most likely to be used with children in upper key stage 2 rather than younger age groups.

The unit links with unit 5A ‘Keeping healthy’ in the science scheme of work. It also links with activities in the key stages 1 and 2 citizenship scheme of work. The activities could also be linked with work in English and RE. Some links are included in the ‘Points to note’ section.

Where the unit fits in

This unit addresses the following aspects of the key stage 2 non-statutory framework for PSHE and citizenship and the key stage 2 programme of study for science:

PSHE and citizenship

Developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities

Pupils should be taught:

- 1a to talk and write about their opinions, and explain their views, on issues that affect themselves and society

Preparing to play an active role as citizens

Pupils should be taught:

- 2a to research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events
- 2b why and how rules and laws are made and enforced, why different rules are needed in different situations and how to take part in making and changing rules
- 2e to reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, using imagination to understand other people’s experiences

Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle

Pupils should be taught:

- 3a what makes a healthy lifestyle, including the benefits of exercise and healthy eating, what affects mental health, and how to make informed choices

- 3d which commonly available substances and drugs are legal and illegal, their effects and risks
- 3e to recognise the different risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly, including sensible road use, and judging what kind of physical contact is acceptable or unacceptable

Breadth of opportunities

During the key stage, pupils should be taught the **Knowledge, skills and understanding** through opportunities to:

- 5d make real choices and decisions
- 5g consider social and moral dilemmas that they come across in life
- 5h find information and advice

Science

Pupils should be taught:

- Sc2 2g about the effects on the human body of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, and how these relate to their personal health

Expectations

Expectations should be adapted according to the needs, age, stage and maturity of the children. It is expected that by the end of this unit most children will: understand what is meant by the term ‘drug’ and know that different drugs have different effects. They give basic information about some drugs and explain the effects drinking alcohol has on the body and on behaviour. They offer some reasons why laws restrict drug use. They research information using ICT, written literature and by asking people, and then present their findings to the class. They express an opinion and listen to the views of others.

Resources

Resources include:

- the DfES PSHE website – www.teachernet.gov.uk/PSHE (information on resources and links to other websites)
- the cross-government drugs website – www.drugs.gov.uk/ReportsandPublications/General/CannabisReclassificationInfo (information about the proposed reclassification of cannabis)

Many groups and organisations produce online resources that are relevant to drug, alcohol and tobacco education. QCA has not printed these website addresses as it recognises that they can and do change, often at short notice. So that we can monitor and maintain a reliable and useful resource, the website addresses of the following organisations can be accessed through www.qca.org.uk/pshe

- Wired for Health (includes activities for finding out about drugs)
- Galaxy-H (includes activities for finding out about drugs)
- Alcohol Concern
- DrugScope

NB: care should be taken when encouraging children to access websites

Learning objectives

Children learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Children:

Points to note**What do we already know and understand about drugs?**

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the term 'drugs' covers a range of legal and illegal substances • about the effects and risks of using drugs • how to use a variety of sources of information • to talk with others who can provide information • how to present information to others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a 'draw and write' activity to assess the children's current levels of knowledge and understanding about medicines and drugs. Display and discuss the children's answers. Explain that drugs can include medicines, alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, glues and other volatile substances, as well as everyday substances such as caffeine. Negotiate with children a definition of what is meant by the term 'drug'. • Ask the children in small groups or pairs to think more about a particular drug. Supply each group or pair with a large sheet of paper divided into three. Ask the children to write in one section everything they know about the drug, including whether it is legal to have, sell or share it. In the second section they could write all the questions they have about the drug. Ask the children to present the sheet to another group or pair, or to display the sheets around the room. Let other children add to the appropriate columns what else they know about the drug, possible answers to the questions, or any additional questions they might have. • Explain that the children will now research some drugs to find the correct answers to their questions. Draw from the children any ideas they have about where they might find the information. • The children carry out the research in pairs or threes. They could investigate, for example, over-the-counter medicines, caffeine or tobacco, using a range of sources of information, <i>eg leaflets, other literature, ICT, people with appropriate knowledge such as primary care workers, the school nurse, the police</i>. Children could consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – what the drug looks like – how it is used – how it affects the user – whether it is legal to have or sell it • The children present their findings as a poster or leaflet that they will show the class and then display for the rest of the school, and take home to discuss with their parents. During presentations encourage the other children in the class to check that they have answered all the questions from their earlier activity, and to correct any misconceptions they had. They could fill in a chart for this purpose. Discuss ways the children could find further information. • The children reflect on what they learnt, identifying new information they gained and the sources they found most helpful. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe what is meant by the term 'drugs', including that it can be used for a range of legal and illegal substances, and give some examples of these • work cooperatively in pairs or small groups to find information • find answers to simple questions about drugs, using different sources of information, including ICT • identify basic information about a drug, and understand the drug's effects and the risks of using it • communicate information to others in simple terms through a poster presentation or a leaflet | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish ground rules before these activities. See page 20 of the <i>Teacher's booklet</i>. • Link with science: unit 5A 'Keeping healthy' in the key stages 1 and 2 scheme of work. • For more information about 'draw and write' activities and other ways of identifying pupils' needs, see appendix 4 of the <i>Teacher's booklet</i>. • There may be considerable differences between children in their current knowledge, understanding and experiences. There may be a need to take into account the different needs of boys and girls. • An information evening for parents may be helpful to explain what children will be learning during this unit. • Be aware of home situations, such as parents who are drug users, and the school's policy on confidentiality and disclosure. Make sure the children are aware of this policy. Ensure that national or local helplines and other sources of support are clearly displayed in the school and that children know where to find the information. • Children could find out about any drugs but should explore commonly available ones, <i>eg medicines, tobacco, volatile substances</i>. Alcohol will be explored in depth in the next activity. • Encourage the children to think about a range of harmful effects associated with using the drug, <i>eg how it affects the user's health and lifestyle</i>, as well as how it might affect other people around them. |
|---|---|--|---|

Learning objectives

Children learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Children:

Points to note**What do we already know and understand about drugs? (continued)**

- Link with English: En2R, 3a, 3b, 3c in the key stage 2 programme of study.
- Activities for finding out about drugs are at the Galaxy-H website.
- The National Drugs Helpline website includes facts about different substances, their effects on health, and whether or not they are legal.
- Homework activity: the children take their leaflets or posters home and explain what they have learnt to parents or carers. Children gather any questions their parents have, and work with the teacher to find ways to answer them.

Learning objectives

Children learn:

Possible teaching activities

Learning outcomes

Children:

Points to note

Learning about alcohol

- about the effects and risks of drinking alcohol
 - about children and young people and the law with respect to alcohol
 - about how alcohol can affect people differently
 - that alcohol is measured in units
 - to participate in group activities and discussions
- Use simple quizzes or games to assess the children's current knowledge and understanding of alcohol, their attitudes to drinking and their knowledge of the law concerning young people and alcohol. For example, children should know the legal age for buying alcohol.
 - Ask the children to work in small groups to research the effects of drinking alcohol, *eg using their current knowledge, ICT, leaflets and other sources*. Ensure that the children understand that the effects depend on how much is drunk.
On large sheets of paper each group records:
 - short-term and/or long-term effects
 - effects on the body/health
 - effects on the way people feel or behaveThe children use different colours to highlight the positive or negative effects. They discuss their findings with the class.
 - As a class, discuss different opinions on the effects of alcohol, and why the effects might not be the same on everyone. Show the children two different-sized containers of clear water. Add the same amount of food dye to each and ask them to observe what happens. Explain that the smaller container, which will be darker in colour, represents the way that smaller people are more affected after drinking the same amount of alcohol.
 - Explore how alcohol can be measured in units, and that different drinks contain different amounts of alcohol. In groups, the children pour water into different sized glasses, *eg pint glass, half-pint glass, wine glass*, and add an equal amount of food dye to each to represent a unit of alcohol. Ask the children to describe what they see, and use this to explain why some drinks are stronger than others. NB: The more diluted the dye, the paler the water will be.
 - Show the children a chart of the recommended daily limits of no more than 2–3 units of alcohol for women and 3–4 units for men. Ask the children to explain how knowing about units can help people keep within the recommended limits.
- describe in simple terms how alcohol can affect and damage the body/health
 - know the law with respect to young people and alcohol
 - understand that alcohol can change the way people think, feel and behave
 - explain why alcohol affects different people differently
 - know that alcohol is measured in units and that there are recommended limits for men and women
 - take part in group activities and contribute ideas to discussions
- Be sensitive to children who may have problem drinkers at home, or among their friends and family. Ensure that all children have access to helplines and information about other support, both inside and outside school, *eg Drinkline (tel: 0800 917 8282)*. For information about alcohol misuse, see the Alcohol Concern website. Be clear about the school's procedures for dealing with disclosure in class.
 - Be sensitive to children whose families have religious or other beliefs that prohibit drinking.
 - See the Wired for Health website for examples of simple games, quizzes and other ideas. The teacher's section has information and ideas for activities on alcohol, and links with the children's website Galaxy-H.
 - Children need to know the effects of alcohol on the body, such as long-term liver damage, but should also be given ample opportunity to look at the immediate effects drinking has on the way people feel and behave.
 - Links could be made with science Sc 2c and 2g in the programme of study and with unit 5A 'Keeping healthy' in the key stages 1 and 2 scheme of work.
 - Health professionals may be able to support these activities.
 - Details on the recommended number of units of alcohol for women and men, and the legal limits for drinking alcohol and driving, can be found on the DrugScope website or the Alcohol Concern website.

Learning objectives

Children learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Children:

Points to note**Attitudes to drinking alcohol**

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about different reasons why people do or do not drink alcohol • to reflect on the impact of one's behaviour on others • to participate in a group activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give the children 'character cards' representing people with different attitudes to drinking alcohol, eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>an adult who drinks a glass of wine each day</i> – <i>a young person who gets very drunk at the weekend</i> – <i>a person who doesn't drink alcohol at all because of their religious or other beliefs</i> – <i>a person who is on medication and doesn't drink alcohol at all</i> – <i>a person who used to drink whisky heavily and now doesn't drink at all</i> <p>In pairs or as a class, the children discuss the reasons why each character does or doesn't drink alcohol. Reasons are noted on the board or on individual sheets. Explore reasons for drinking, such as pressure from peers and cultural expectations; and those for not drinking, such as loss of ability to make judgements, effects on health, and religious and cultural reasons. Discuss other reasons not covered by the characters. The children could role-play the characters talking to each other, explaining their views on drinking.</p> • Discuss how a person who drinks alcohol might affect others around them. Draw a class spider diagram to record the children's views. • Individually the children write down their own attitudes to drinking, giving a reason for their views. They could share their ideas with a partner. • The children develop short dramas, write a story or draw a cartoon board to explore what could happen when a group of friends go out, some of whom drink. These should show: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – why some people want to drink and some don't – how someone resists pressure from others to drink when they don't want to – how the other people in the group feel and react – how the drinker feels after the event | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe reasons why some people choose to drink alcohol and some don't • understand how people's choices about drinking alcohol can have an impact on others • reflect on their own attitudes to drinking • demonstrate and practise resistance skills • contribute to paired or group discussions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sensitive to children who may know problem drinkers. Ensure that children have access to helplines and information about other support in and outside school. • When discussing reasons why people drink, it is important that children record realistic messages and reasons for drinking alcohol without presenting an advert for drinking. • This section may provide an opportunity to explore different cultural or religious attitudes to alcohol and drinking, eg <i>complete abstinence in Islam and ritual use in some Christian churches</i>. There may also be an opportunity to explore how attitudes change over time, eg <i>where younger generations drink alcohol in families who originate from countries where alcohol is forbidden</i>. • The difference between someone who drinks a moderate amount of alcohol and a heavy drinker may be discussed. • Link with English: En1 S&L4a, 4c, 11a in the key stage 2 programme of study. • The Wired for Health and Galaxy-H websites give suggestions for activities, and downloadable stories and worksheets to accompany these activities or provide alternatives to them. |
|--|--|---|---|

Learning objectives

Children learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Children:

Points to note**Debating a topic**

- about the laws on drugs, alcohol and tobacco and about reasons for having such laws
 - how to take part in a discussion or debate
 - to consider other people's opinions and a range of relevant factors when making a decision
- Ask the children to identify drugs that are legal or illegal, drawing on their knowledge from earlier activities. Discuss the reasons why laws restricting the use of drugs are made.
 - Explain to the children that they will work in groups to decide whether a new drug, *eg a medicine or something that goes in a drink*, should be legal or illegal. Explain that they will debate the issue and reach a decision through a vote. They will be able to suggest a total ban or laws to regulate the drug's sale or use, and the punishments for breaking the law. Give the children information about the drug, *eg*
 - *what it looks like*
 - *how it is taken*
 - *the way it makes people feel*
 - *its long- and short-term effects on the body*
 - To conclude the debate, each group takes a vote. Group representatives briefly explain their decision, with reasons, to the rest of the class. Remind the children of their definition of 'drugs' from the first activity.
 - Ask the children to reflect on their decisions and to compare their views with the real laws on similar drugs. Ask them to consider how much they have learnt about drugs and to write down questions they still need answering.
- take part in a discussion, offering reasons for their views
 - understand that there are laws restricting the sale of drugs and drug use, and offer some reasons for having laws
 - identify situations where drug use can have bad consequences
 - begin to recognise that legal substances can be harmful to health
- Guidance about discussions and debates can be found on the DfES citizenship website, www.dfes.gov.uk/citizenship
 - The discussions need to be carefully monitored to ensure that all children participate. More formal debates could have a chairperson and key speakers for or against the drug, who draw witnesses from the rest of their group to argue the case.
 - Explain that this debate is similar to the sort of discussions that take place in real life, for example when a new medicine is produced.
 - The debate may be based on a real drug, *eg a volatile substance, alcoholic drink, energy drink/tablets, caffeine or cannabis*, or one that combines elements of several existing drugs or medicines. The debate can be more or less formal, depending on the previous experience and ages of the children.
 - If cannabis is discussed, ensure that children understand that it is still an illegal substance.
 - Children take part in the debate in role, *eg as people who:*
 - *are medical experts and can explain the effects of the drug on the body*
 - *disagree with illegal drug or alcohol use because of religious beliefs*
 - *have been hurt or affected by someone who has used the drug*
 - *are police officers with evidence of how people using the drug have affected the safety of others in the community*
 - Link with English: En1 S&L3c, 3d in the key stage 2 programme of study.