

SASO: MIDDLE SCHOOL CHARACTER EDUCATION TEACHING GUIDE

TOPIC: DRUGS (Joe Alexander SASO DVD)

Dr. Carolyn Peluso Atkins, Professor
Department of Speech Pathology & Audiology
College of Human Resources & Education
West Virginia University

Note to Teacher: This lesson encompasses two of the Six Pillars of Character (josephsoninstitute.org): Trustworthiness and Responsibility. Specifically, it focuses on having the courage to do the right thing, building a good reputation, using self-control, being self-disciplined, and being accountable for and considering the consequences of your choices. It offers the teacher guidelines to follow after students have viewed the DVD of Joe Alexander: Drugs.

Discussion questions, scenarios, and suggestions for writing and speaking assignments have been designed to develop student critical thinking, reflection, interaction, and creativity. Discussion questions and suggestions for writing and speaking assignments are interchangeable and should be determined by the teacher.

With regard to discussion questions and scenarios, teachers may pose questions to students individually or in small groups. With regard to the latter, a spokesperson for each group should be selected to summarize his or her group's discussion to the rest of the class.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are drugs?
2. What are legal drugs?
3. What does OTC mean? What are examples of OTC drugs?
4. Can legal drugs or OTC drugs be harmful? How?
5. Is alcohol a drug? Are cigarettes considered to be a drug?
6. What are illegal drugs?
7. What does it mean if someone has a drug problem?
8. What are some of the reasons why people use illegal drugs?
9. Do drugs solve problems? Please explain why or why not.
10. What are the symptoms of drug abuse?
11. How can drug abuse affect your life?

12. How can it your drug abuse affect the lives of your family members?
13. Are cigarettes and alcohol considered to be drugs? Why or why not?
14. What is alcohol poisoning?
15. What are the symptoms of alcohol poisoning?
16. What can you do if you suspect that someone has alcohol poisoning?
17. What is the legal age to buy cigarettes and alcohol? What does it mean to be a minor?
18. What happens to someone who is not the legal age and buys cigarettes or alcohol?
19. What happens to someone who sells cigarettes or alcohol to minors?
20. What can a person do to help someone on drugs?
21. What is an addiction? What are the different types of addiction?
22. What is an enabler?
23. What is a support group?
24. Do celebrities influence drug use? How?
25. Do your peers influence drug use? How?
26. Is there a drug problem in our society today? Why or why not?
27. Can you do anything to eliminate drug abuse?

Scenarios: What would you do?

1. You know that a close friend is involved with drugs. You are worried about him or her. What would you do?
2. You are at a party with your friends where underage drinking is occurring. You are offered a drink. You do not want to drink but you are uncomfortable admitting that. What would you do?
3. You know that a student in your school is a drug dealer. What would you do?
4. You have a very bad headache. You know that your mother has a prescription in the kitchen cabinet that she takes for headaches. What would you do?
5. You have several antibiotic pills remaining that your doctor prescribed for you the last time you had an ear infection. Your friend has all of the same symptoms that you have. What would you do?

6. One of your older friends who drives and has a car offers you a ride home. You suspect that he has been drinking. What would you do?
7. One of your friends has been drinking. He seems to fall asleep and you can't wake him up. Another friend tells you to let him sleep. What should you do?

Writing/Speaking Assignments: Students either may write a paper or give an oral presentation about the topic (length and guidelines to be determined by the teacher).

1. Why do teenagers use drugs and alcohol?
2. Why do teenagers smoke?
3. Describe the effects of cigarettes on the body.
4. Describe the effects of alcohol on the body.
5. Describe the effects of sniffing glue on the body.
6. What happens legally to someone under the age of 18 who is caught with drugs?
7. What happens legally to someone 18 years of age or older who is caught with drugs?
8. What are Class A, B, and C drugs?
9. What happens legally to someone caught selling Class A, B, or C drugs?
10. Do personality changes occur with drug abuse? Please explain.
11. Does physical appearance change with drug abuse? Please explain.
12. Does involvement with school activity change with drug abuse? Please explain.
13. What are steroids and how do they affect the body?
14. Why do some athletes use steroids?
15. What is alcohol poisoning? Who is most likely to have alcohol poisoning?
16. What are the symptoms of alcohol poisoning?
17. How can someone who has alcohol poisoning be helped?
18. What are the consequences of alcohol poisoning?
19. Discuss loyalty to a friend who is a drug dealer or a drug abuser.
20. Describe how the family members or circumstances influence whether or not one uses drugs.
21. Describe how the community influences whether or not one uses drugs.
22. Describe how the school influences whether or not one uses drugs.
23. Describe how the media influences whether or not one uses drugs.

24. Is the media positive or negative with regard to drug use? Please explain.
25. Is the film industry positive or negative with regard to drug use? Please explain.
26. Are television programs positive or negative with regard to drug use? Please explain.
27. Is the recording industry positive or negative with regard to drug use? Please explain.
28. Do celebrities influence drug use? Please explain.
29. How can an alcoholic or a drug user get help?
30. Has drug abuse has changed since your parents' generation? Please explain.
31. What is a support system or a support group? Who benefits from the support?
32. Describe different types of support groups for different addictions.
33. Write a nonfiction or fiction story about drug abuse.
34. Write a poem or song about drug abuse.
35. Select one of the quotations about drugs below and explain what it means. Or, find a quotation about drug abuse and explain what it means. Identify the author of the quotation and describe who that individual is (e.g., Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States).

Quotations about Drugs:

1. Let us not forget who we are. Drug abuse is a repudiation of everything America is. (Ronald Reagan)
2. Alcohol is a good preservative for everything but brains. (Mary Pettibone Poole)
3. Of all vices, drinking is the most incompatible with greatness. (Sir Walter Scott)
4. Cigarette sales would drop to zero overnight if the warning said "CIGARETTES CONTAIN FAT." (Dave Barry)
5. Only in America - do drugstores make the sick walk all the way to the back of the store to get their prescriptions while healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front of the store. (Author Unknown)
6. Nothing pains some people more than having to think. (Martin Luther King, Jr.)
7. What is necessary to change a person is to change his awareness of himself. (Abraham H. Maslow)
8. Water is the only drink for a wise man. (Henry David Thoreau)

9. People who drink to drown their sorrow should be told that sorrow knows how to swim. (Ann Landers)
10. In the 1960s, people took acid to make the world weird. Now the world is weird, and people take Prozac to make it normal. (Author Unknown)
11. The first thing in the human personality that dissolves in alcohol is dignity. (Author Unknown)
12. First you take a drink, then the drink takes a drink, then the drink takes you. (Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald)
13. Alcoholism isn't a spectator sport. Eventually the whole family gets to play. (Joyce Rebeta-Burditt)
14. One reason I don't drink is that I want to know when I am having a good time. (Lady Astor)
15. Drunkenness is temporary suicide. (Bertrand Russell)
16. They deem him their worst enemy who tells them the truth. (Plato)
17. Drunkenness is nothing but voluntary madness. (Seneca)
18. A cigarette is a pipe with a fire at one end and a fool at the other. (Author Unknown)
19. Drug misuse is not a disease; it is a decision, like the decision to step out in front of a moving car. You would call that not a disease but an error of judgment. (Philip K. Dick)
20. Words are the most powerful drugs used by mankind. (Rudyard Kipling)
21. A strong positive attitude will create more miracles than any wonder drug. (Patricia Neal)