

## TEACHER PREPARATION

### KEY CONCEPTS

1. There are several categories of drugs, and drugs in those categories affect the body in different ways.
2. There are many body systems that are adversely affected by drug use.
3. Intravenous drug users have a high risk of acquiring HIV or hepatitis.
4. Drug abuse destroys life potential.

### OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

1. State the primary physiological effects of drugs within the various categories.
2. Understand the extremely high risk of HIV and hepatitis associated with intravenous drug use.
3. Identify major body systems adversely affected by long-term drug use.
4. Understand the difference between how the drug user perceives himself or herself versus how he or she is perceived by others.
5. Discuss the impact of narcotic drug abuse upon the average lifespan.
6. Identify the effect of drugs on the ability to think and make judgments.
7. Revise or refine goals in Personal Journals from Lesson 2.

### KEY TERMS

See background information for definitions used in this lesson.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

#### SPECIAL TEACHER NOTE:

- Like Lesson 6, this lesson gives names of specific drugs. In some teaching situations, teachers and administrators believe it is wise to deal directly with specific drugs using their pharmacological or their street names, or both. Some educators believe that most of their students already know something

about these drugs, or soon will, and it is better to deal with them in an open and informative way. Other teachers and administrators fear that giving information about specific drugs and their effects will arouse curiosity and actually increase rather than diminish the likelihood of their use. This lesson can be taught by those advocating either approach.

- If you wish to discuss specific drug names, simply teach the entire lesson as written, including the sections marked “optional”.
- However, if you wish to avoid names of individual drugs, omit each of the sections marked “optional” and teach only those with an asterisk.
- If you choose to omit all the optional sections, the lesson will be considerably shorter. At the end of the lesson is a suggested alternate poster activity.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON DRUGS:

Although drug abuse and addiction among young people in many countries has generally stayed the same or even decreased since 2002, they are still dangerous and even fatal to those who use them. For example, the average life expectancy for addicted drug users is between 38 and 41 years, far below the normal life expectancy for non-drug users. Sample sources:

- National Institute on Drug Abuse; <https://www.drugabuse.gov/national-survey-drug-use-health>
- DailyMail.com; <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2788399>
- Treatment4Addiction.com; <http://www.treatment4addiction.com/>

Drugs of abuse fall into four categories: depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, and inhalants.

#### a. **Depressants:**

Alcohol is the most common depressant. Its chronic abuse is associated with many health problems, including hepatitis, cirrhosis of the liver, pancreatitis and immunodeficiency, and cancer of the mouth, tongue, esophagus, and liver.

Opioids and their derivatives are frequently abused. Because they elevate mood, relieve tension and anxiety, and produce euphoria and tranquillity, they have a high potential for producing addiction. Opioids are commonly prescribed because of their effective analgesic, or pain-relieving, properties. Medications that fall within this class – sometimes referred to as narcotics – include morphine, codeine, and related drugs. Morphine, for example, is often used before or after surgery to alleviate severe pain. Codeine, because it is less efficacious than morphine, is used for milder pain. Other examples of opioids that can be prescribed to alleviate pain include oxycodone (OxyContin), propoxyphene (Darvon), hydrocodone (Vicodin), and hydromorphone (Dilaudid), as well as meperidine (Demerol), which is used less often because of its side effects. In addition to their pain-relieving properties, some of these drugs – for example, codeine and diphenoxyate (Lomotil) – can be used to relieve coughs and diarrhea.

#### b. **Stimulants:**

Cocaine, ecstasy (methylenedioxymethamphetamine), ephedrine, and amphetamines are the most common stimulants of abuse.

Abuse of stimulants can result in heart attack (myocardial infarction), stroke, seizures, and liver and lung damage.

#### c. **Hallucinogens:**

Those that are commonly abused include LSD, mescaline, PCP, marijuana, and hashish. These

drugs alter the user's perception of reality and produce hallucinations of the senses of sight, hearing, and smell. Hallucinogens are stored in fatty tissue, and can be released into the bloodstream months later if the user loses weight. In such cases, the user may experience the effects of the drug as if it were just administered.

d. **Inhalants:**

These represent an increasing problem of abuse, especially among children. The substances abused most commonly are gasoline, spray paints, aerosol sprays, glue, lacquer thinner, amyl nitrite, ether, nitrous oxide, and correction fluid. They are commonly abused by children because most of the substances are legal and may be found around the home. The effects of inhalants include hallucinations, euphoria and giddiness, as well as the sensation of crawling insects, needle pricks, dental pain, and the urge for self-mutilation.

5. Central nervous system (CNS) depressants are substances that can slow normal brain function. Because of this property, some CNS depressants are useful in the treatment of anxiety and sleep disorders. Among the medications that are commonly prescribed for these purposes are the barbiturates.

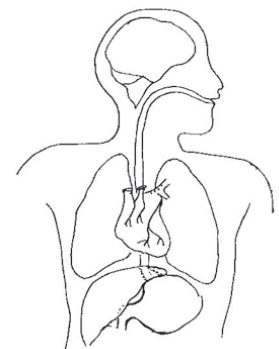
**REFERENCES:**

- National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institutes of Health  
[www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)
- Scholastic Inc.  
<http://headsup.scholastic.com/teachers/14-drug-education-activities>

## MATERIALS / PREPARATION

**In the Box: Grandmothers' Letter and an envelope containing a pill in capsule form.** (You could put a harmless drug capsule in an envelope and pull it out during the reading of the story to give extra effect.)

- A can or bottle of carbonated soft drink
- Salt shaker (approximately one gram)
- Small, clear, transparent drinking glass
- Sketch drawing of human torso on board ahead of time. (It does not need to be perfect!)
- Cut out symbols to represent each of the four main categories of drugs: two for depressants, four for stimulants, three for hallucinogens, and five for inhalants.



# LESSON

## BEGINNING THE LESSON

### INTRODUCTION

Last time, we listened to the story, “Mystyck and the Mousetrap”, and we discussed different types of drugs. Today, we have another letter to read. Let’s listen.



### STORY

ABOUT 2 MINUTES

[Read the following story:

“The Ups and Downs of Drugs” – Yelena’s Story.]

The students at School No. 2 had passed the same flu bug back and forth for nearly two weeks. Everyone was sick and tired of being sick and tired. Everyone seemed irritable. Everyone had had it.

“Who was it who caught the cold that started this flu epidemic?” wondered Dmitri. “Oh, to be able to go back and undo that one! We’d all breathe easier then.”

“Achooo!” sneezed the teacher from the other side of her desk. “I’ve heard if you leave a cold untreated, it will hang around for six days. But, if you treat a cold, you can get rid of it in just a week minus a day.”

Her attempt at a joke fell on humorless ears that were nearly as stuffed as their noses.

“No need to drag this out today. Let’s see what the grandmothers have for us and get on with it while we still have the strength,” suggested the teacher. She opened an envelope, and a small drug capsule of some kind tumbled out on the desk when she pulled out the letter.

“Hmmm? Wonder what our grandmothers want us to experience during this lesson,” mumbled Sasha from behind the handkerchief he was using to blow his nose.

The teacher gave Sasha a skeptical look and began the letter:

*Dear Ones,*

*We determined to tell you the truth about ourselves when we began this venture – not that anyone of our generation was ever encouraged to be so forthright. It would be far easier to take our personal shortcomings to our graves. Our upbringing taught us to view such silence as heroic. We think this approach is a mistake.*

*Personal issues are seldom restricted to that person when it comes to influence or effect. I think Dostoyevsky wrote somewhere, “Sin begets sin.” In other words, family problems affect generation after generation. Yelena wanted to write about what happened to her.*

Dear Natasha,

I’m afraid that it is I, your grandmother Yelena, who must begin this business of laying bare a secret I’ve kept hidden from you and almost everyone else.

In most parts of the world, medical doctors are held in high esteem. There have been plenty of abuses to go along with some equally genuine caring and healing. I chose my profession from my twin desires to know how the human body worked and to aid in the healing of the body. They were noble desires, but they were compromised along the way.

My studies were very challenging, and my internship was grueling. Long nights,

little sleep, and life and death demands pushed me farther and farther down the road to compromise. I'm speaking about drug use.

At first, it was only a little something to keep me awake when the caffeine in coffee no longer did the trick. Such a difference it made! I was more alert! My mind seemed clearer. I got more done – and my performance evaluations improved. Unfortunately, I didn't stop there. The stimulants kept me up when I needed to sleep, so I occasionally took a sedative to allow myself to rest.

I reasoned that there was no real danger – I knew what I was doing. After all, I was trained to prescribe such drugs to those who really needed them and I really needed them to do my job. I knew, of course, that a long regimen of these drugs could harm my liver and permanently alter the chemistry in my brain. But I told myself this was only a temporary solution. Soon, I would get my schedule under control and stop using the drugs so readily available to me. I was sure no one could tell, so what was the harm?

Then there was the day I slipped on the icy stairs outside the bakery. My lower back hurt so much I couldn't bend over to tie my boots! But doctors don't take sick days. Besides, there were others in worse shape waiting in our hospital's beds. I knew the problem, I'd thrown my back out and the muscles had constricted, holding my back in the wrong position. I could have treated it with rest and heat, but that would require days or weeks. One little pill could relax those same muscles and take away the pain – and the pills I had in mind were locked in a cabinet to which I had the key.

After a while, my rationale for taking some particular drug was less specific. I now needed them just to get through the day. I walked through my days in a drug-induced fog. It is a wonder I didn't kill someone.

Don't get me wrong! Most of the drugs I took had a positive side when administered properly. The problem was that all of these drugs also had a negative side, and I could no longer be trusted with the key to the cabinet.

I wish I could tell you it was my strength of will or character that saved me, but it wasn't. It was Olga's prayers and Ludmilla's willingness to endure my abuse that finally broke me and got me the help I desperately needed.

Your Grandmother,  
Yelena

*So what do you think, Natasha? Your grandmother had become dependent on the drugs. And I knew all about the drugs that now wait for you. Of course, drugs are far more available today, and no one will insist that you become a doctor or nurse before you can get your hands on them. Remember, it is much easier not to start using drugs than it is to stop.*

*Remember, wisdom is often the art of learning from someone else's mistake.*

*Your Grandmothers*



## DEMONSTRATION AND DISCUSSION

ABOUT 7 MINUTES

In today's lesson, we are going to discuss some of the physical and psychological effects that drugs have on the body.

If you had a choice of having water, orange juice, milk, or a soda with your evening meal, how many of you would select a soda?

*[Hold up a can or bottle of soda.]*

**Why?**

Open the bottle or can and carefully pour some into the glass until it is approximately half full. Be careful to pour gently so as to minimize the loss of carbonation.

Sprinkle some salt into the glass – enough until it begins to bubble vigorously.

Sprinkle more salt into the glass.

Sprinkle even more salt into the glass.

Thank the student volunteer and offer him or her the rest of the bottle or can as a reward.



**= 9 minutes**

*[Listen for such responses as: it tastes good, it is sweet, it keeps me awake, it relieves thirst.]*

**I believe I can assume that most of you have consumed a beverage similar to a soda. I also believe that I am right to assume that some of you have read the list of ingredients on a soft-drink container and some of you have not. What are some of the ingredients you recall to be in a soft drink?**

*[Listen for responses such as: sugar (or sugar substitute), caffeine, corn syrup, food coloring, preservatives, and carbonated water.]*

**What do you suppose could happen if I added a new ingredient?**

*[Listen for such responses as: change the taste, change the color, ruin the flavor, and improve the taste.]*

**I am going to add just a pinch of salt to the soda.**

**How does adding a very small amount of salt affect the soda's appearance? How does it affect its flavor? Would someone volunteer to taste it?**

*[Encourage a student volunteer. They will not notice the taste of salt strongly. If no student will try it, you demonstrate that the taste of the drink has not been significantly changed.]*

**What do you suppose will happen if I add twice as much salt as the first time?**

*[Responses may include that it will cause twice as many bubbles, change the color, and ruin the flavor.]*

**What do you observe? Hmmm, I don't get the same reaction. Maybe we need even more salt.**

**Why do you think we didn't get a similar reaction as with the first amount of salt? I wonder what the salt has done to the soda. Will someone taste it now?**

*[Encourage a student to taste it. It will taste saltier, but it will not be horrible.]*

**What does it taste like?**

*[Salty.]*

**Does it have as much carbonation as it did to begin with?**

*[No, the carbonation should be substantially reduced.]*

**How useful is the soda now? Can it fulfill its original purpose?**

*[No, not very well. It doesn't taste as good, and the salt will make one thirstier.]*

## EXPLORING THE LESSON



### CLASS DISCUSSION

ABOUT 3 MINUTES

How would you explain the chemical reaction in our experiment if the soda represents our bodies and the salt represents drugs?

*[Initially, a small amount of a drug can have an interesting and perhaps an enjoyable effect; however, the effect does not last. It may not seem to affect us very much at first, just as the taste was not significantly affected at first.]*

The addictive aspect of many drugs follows a similar pattern: More of the drug is required to produce an effect.

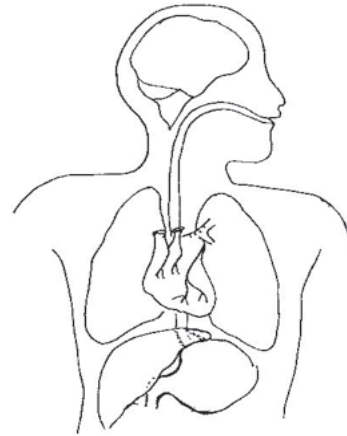
Today's story accurately tells us that drugs which typically cause people to become addicted are often the same drugs originally designed to help reduce pain or treat physical, psychological, and emotional problems.

Natasha's grandmother, Yelena, painfully described how certain prescription drugs, when abused, can alter the brain's activity and lead to dependence and possibly addiction.



= 12 minutes

Sketch this diagram on the board. It does not need to be perfect!



### LISTING AND CATEGORIZING ACTIVITY

ABOUT 32 MINUTES

#### OPTION A

OPTION B: If you are omitting the optional shaded sections of this portion you will have time to include the Alternate Poster Activity at the end of the lesson.

*[Begin optional Section A.]*

Most of you already know the common names or "street" names for a variety of drugs that people in our society use today. It is important that we learn to identify not only the common names, but also the more formal and scientific names, because we may find that they will help us acquire more accurate information about the different types of drugs. So, let us begin by writing on the board the names for drugs that you know.

Make this session one of guided conversation between you and the class members. Encourage students to share what they have learned, even if it has been incorrect, and make guesses. In this lesson, you have the information you need to correct students' misinformation and naïvete.

Allow about eight minutes for each category.

Write the words "Depressants", "Stimulants", "Hallucinogens", and "Inhalants" on the board. Write them so that they can serve as headings, so that a list can be made under each one if you plan to include the optional sections. (See Lesson 6, "Key Words" for definitions of terms. Also see "Background Information" for this lesson.)

Depressants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alcohol</li> <li>• Opium</li> <li>• Heroin</li> <li>• Methadone</li> <li>• Morphine</li> <li>• Codeine</li> <li>• Sleeping Pills</li> </ul>

**Do not worry if you do not know much about the drug. Perhaps you have heard the name from someone else. Once we have them on the board, we will try to categorize them and learn more about them.**

*[End optional section A.]*

**Drugs affect several areas of the body. We are going to discuss some of the primary effects that the different categories of drugs have on specific parts of the human body. Drugs are classified into four major categories: depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, and inhalants.**

*[Begin optional Section A.]*

**What drugs do you think belong under the category of depressants? Feel free to give me slang or "street" terms too and we will see if we can put them in the right category.**

*[Listen for students to suggest: alcohol, opium, heroin, methadone, morphine, and codeine. List student responses under the heading of "Depressants".]*

*[End optional Section A.]*

**What might be some negative consequences of misusing depressants?**

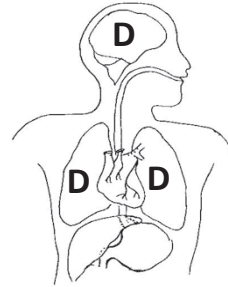
*[Ask for student responses.]*

- **A person usually feels sleepy and uncoordinated, but as the body becomes accustomed to the effects of these drugs, these feelings begin to disappear.**
- **If one uses these drugs long enough, the body will develop a tolerance for the drugs and larger doses will be needed to achieve the same initial effects.**
- **Continued use can lead to physical dependence and, when use is reduced or stopped, there is withdrawal.**
- **Because all central nervous system (CNS) depressants work by slowing the brain's activity, when an individual stops taking them, the brain's activity can rebound and race out of control, possibly leading to seizures and other harmful consequences.**
- **Withdrawal from prolonged use of most CNS depressants can have life-threatening complications.**
- **Taking a large single dose of a CNS depressant could cause severe respiratory depression, which can lead to death.**



Mark a “D” on the brain and lungs of your diagram.

Now we need to place a “D” for “depressants” on the body parts that are affected and often damaged by depressants: the brain and the lungs.



 = 20 minutes

Stimulants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cocaine</li> <li>• Ephedrine</li> <li>• Methamphetamine</li> <li>• Amphetamines</li> <li>• Ecstasy</li> <li>• “Crack” cocaine</li> <li>• Diet Pills</li> </ul>

[Begin optional Section A.]

**What drugs do you think belong under the category of stimulants?**

[Listen for students to suggest cocaine, ephedrine, methamphetamine, amphetamines, Ecstasy (methylenedioxy-methamphetamine), and “crack” cocaine.]

[End optional Section A.]

**What might be some negative consequences from misusing stimulants?**

[Taking high doses of some stimulants repeatedly over a short time can lead to feelings of hostility or paranoia, dangerously high body temperature, an irregular heartbeat, and the potential for cardiovascular failure or lethal seizures.]

[Begin optional Section A.]

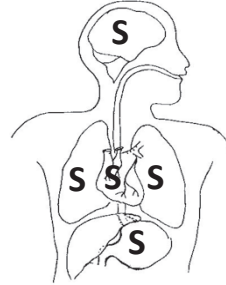
There are enormous medical complications associated with cocaine use. Some of the most frequent complications are cardiovascular effects (including disturbances in heart rhythm and heart attacks), respiratory effects (such as chest pain and respiratory failure), neurological effects (including strokes, seizure, and headaches), and gastrointestinal complications (including abdominal pain and nausea).

Cocaine use has been linked to many types of heart disease. Cocaine has been found to trigger chaotic heart rhythms, called ventricular fibrillation, accelerated heartbeat and breathing, and increased blood pressure and body temperature. Other physical symptoms may include chest pain, nausea, blurred vision, fever, muscle spasms, convulsions, and lapsing into a coma.

[End optional Section A.]

Mark an “S” on the brain, heart, lungs and stomach of your diagram

Now we need to place an “S” for “stimulants” on the body parts affected and often damaged by stimulants: the brain, the heart, the lungs, and the stomach.



 = 28 minutes

### Hallucinogens

- LSD
- Mescaline
- Marijuana
- Ketamine
- PCP

*[Begin optional Section A.]*

**What drugs do you think belong under the category of hallucinogens?**

*[Listen for students to suggest: LSD, mescaline, marijuana, Ketamine, PCP.]*

*[End optional Section A.]*

**What might be some negative consequences of misusing hallucinogens?**

*[Ask for student responses.]*

**Because drugs of this classification affect the Central Nervous System, those under their influence will experience sensory distortions, altered mood, loss of judgment, slowed reaction time, increased blood pressure, heart rate and body temperature, illusions and mistaken perception of real stimuli as well as acute panic and anxiety and paranoia.**

*[Begin optional Section A.]*

**Ketamine is odorless and tasteless, so it can be added to beverages without being detected and it induces amnesia. Because of these properties, the drug is sometimes given to unsuspecting victims and used in the commission of sexual assaults referred to as “drug rape”.**

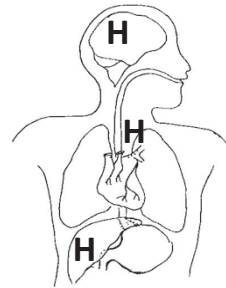
*PCP is an intravenous, surgical anesthetic. Its sedative and anesthetic effects are trance-like, and patients experience a feeling of being “out of body” and detached from their environment. At low PCP doses (5 mg or less), physical effects include shallow, rapid breathing, increased blood pressure and heart rate, and elevated temperature. Doses of 10 mg or more cause dangerous changes*

Mark an “H” on the brain, heart and kidney of the diagram.

*in blood pressure, heart rate, and respiration, often accompanied by nausea, blurred vision, dizziness, and decreased awareness of pain. Muscle contractions may cause uncoordinated movements and bizarre postures. When severe, the muscle contractions can result in bone fracture, as well as kidney damage or failure as a consequence of muscle cells breaking down. Very high doses of PCP can cause convulsions, coma, hyperthermia, and death.*

*[End optional Section A.]*

**Now we need to place an “H” for “hallucinogens” on the body parts affected and often damaged by hallucinogens: the brain, the heart, and the kidneys.**



 = 36 minutes

Inhalants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aerosol sprays</li> <li>• Gasoline</li> <li>• Cleaning solvents</li> <li>• Acetone</li> <li>• Nail polish remover</li> <li>• Lighter fluid</li> <li>• Amyl nitrite</li> <li>• Glue</li> </ul>

*[Begin optional Section A.]*

**What drugs do you think belong under the category of inhalants?**

*[Listen for such responses as aerosol sprays (of any kind), gasoline, cleaning solvents, acetone, nail polish remover, lighter fluid, amyl nitrite, glue.]*

*[End optional Section A.]*

**What might be some negative consequences of misusing inhalants?**

*[Ask for student responses.]*

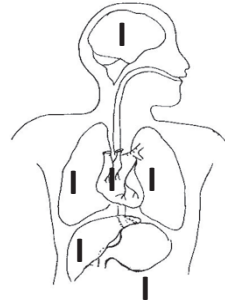
**A strong need to continue using inhalants has been reported among many individuals, particularly those who abuse inhalants for prolonged periods over many days. Compulsive use and a mild withdrawal syndrome can occur with long-term inhalant abuse. Additional symptoms exhibited by long-term inhalant abusers include weight loss, muscle weakness, disorientation and inattentiveness, lack of coordination, irritability, and depression.**

**The toxic effects of prolonged inhalant abuse include damage to parts of the brain involved in controlling thinking, movement,**

Mark an “I” on the brain, heart, lungs, liver, and kidneys of the diagram.

vision, and hearing. Inhalant abusers risk an array of devastating medical consequences. Inhalants are also highly toxic to other organs. Chronic exposure can produce significant damage to the heart, lungs, liver, and kidneys.

Now we need to place an “I” for “inhalants” on the body parts affected and often damaged by inhalants: the brain, the heart, the lungs, the liver, and the kidneys.



 = 44 minutes

[Begin optional Section A.]

Depressants	Stimulants	Hallucinogens	Inhalants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alcohol</li> <li>Opium</li> <li>Heroin</li> <li>Methadone</li> <li>Morphine</li> <li>Codeine</li> <li>Sleeping pills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cocaine</li> <li>Ephedrine</li> <li>Methamphetamine</li> <li>Amphetamines</li> <li>“Crack” cocaine</li> <li>Diet pills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LSD</li> <li>Mescaline</li> <li>Marijuana</li> <li>Ketamine</li> <li>PCP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gasoline</li> <li>Cleaning solvents</li> <li>Acetone</li> <li>Nail polish remove</li> <li>Lighter fluid</li> <li>Amyl nitrite</li> <li>Glue</li> </ul>

[End optional Section A.]

Notice the large number of major organs that can be damaged by the misuse of drugs. What did you learn from the information provided in today’s lesson? What were you surprised to learn about the effects of certain types of drugs?

As we have discussed, drugs affect many parts of our bodies on the inside. The misuse of drugs can cause us to be less able to pursue our dreams. The misuse of drugs is a huge dream breaker.

**ALTERNATE  
ACTIVITY:  
POSTER**  
ABOUT 30 MINUTES

[Have students in groups of three make one poster per group to display in the classroom choosing one of the following:

1. A poster depicting the harmful effects of drugs.
2. A poster ad designed to convince students not to use drugs.]

 = 44 minutes

## ENDING THE LESSON

Today, we learned that there are several types of addictive drugs, and all of them can have harmful effects on our bodies. In fact, all major body systems are affected in some way by these drugs.

Most of us would rather learn not to pick up hot coals without having to be burned. We are glad that our parents warned us or that we realized it for ourselves. In the same way, it's much better if we can learn to avoid being burned by dangerous drugs without having to experience the pain and hurt ourselves. It's much better if we can detect these dream breakers in advance and avoid them entirely.

Before dismissing your students, remember to dictate the Parent-Teacher questions to them.

 = 45 minutes

## RESOURCES

### GOING DEEPER

Drug users put themselves at a severe disadvantage in competitive situations such as athletics, academics, and career-building. Even when people are aware of the effects of drugs, some still begin experimenting with drugs, and hurt themselves and their opportunities, which makes it harder for them to compete in life. Grandmother Yelena was a brilliant doctor, but even she was compromised in her ability to care for herself, her family, and her patients because of her drug addiction.

An ancient Jewish proverb says that “the prudent (wise man) see danger and take refuge, but the simple (man) keep going and suffer for it” (Proverbs 27:12). Wise people recognize the dangers associated with illegal drugs and steer clear, but simple-minded people plow ahead into trouble and danger.

Natasha’s grandmother was a very intelligent and gifted woman, but she made some foolish decisions and took the way of the simple rather than the wise in a number of situations. We are going to examine Grandmother Yelena’s decisions concerning drug use and abuse in light of Proverbs 27:12.

### ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY

Arrange the students into small groups of three to five. If possible, give each group a copy of Grandmother Yelena’s letter to work with. Otherwise, just read the letter aloud to the entire class once more. As the groups work on their presentations, they may want to ask you to re-read parts of the letter or to help them check their facts.

In your groups, carefully go over the storyline of the letter and find all of the points at which she made decisions about drug use. Decide among yourselves the following:

1. Which of her decisions were wise ones?
2. Identify the dangers she saw and how she took refuge from them or ignored them and kept going.
3. Determine how her decisions affected her and those around her. Which were wise decisions and which were foolish?
4. What **COULD** Yelena have done instead of what she actually chose to **DO**?

Once you have gathered all of this information, choose one of the following options to share your conclusions with the rest of the class. You may choose a different option of your own to show what you think she should have done to make wise choices.

1. Develop a skit and perform it for the class.
2. Make a poster or storyboard.
3. Write another version of the letter.
4. Make a “photo” magazine essay.
5. Do an interview.
6. Write a newspaper article.

## FOCUS POINT

Be sure to leave time for discussion at the end of the learning activity so your students can discuss the connection between the learning activity and the lesson. Listen to see whether they seemed to understand the key points listed. If you sense that one or more of these points may have been lost, be sure to guide the discussion to make sure they get these main ideas.

1. Drug users put themselves at a severe disadvantage in competitive situations such as athletics, academics, and building a career.
2. Wise people avoid drugs and their dangerous effects.
3. Simple-minded people often don't have enough sense to avoid danger.
4. No one **MUST** remain simple-minded. Very often it is possible to leave simple-minded ways behind and choose the ways of the wise.

## PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION

Today, we discussed the effects of drugs on the body. Every drug has some kind of effect on our bodies.

All major body systems – the heart, lungs, digestion, and nervous systems – are affected in some way by drugs. Persons who use needles for drugs are at a high risk for contracting **two incurable diseases**:

- HIV, which usually becomes AIDS.  
Anyone who contracts HIV will certainly have his or her dreams shattered.
- Hepatitis.  
Some forms of hepatitis are also serious enough to shatter a young person's dreams.

### For Family Discussion:

1. Ask your adolescent about the activity done in class today. We used a carbonated beverage and salt.
2. Ask your adolescent why using drugs even just one time can be a bad choice.