

Lesson 19

Too Smart to Start

TEACHER PREPARATION

KEY CONCEPTS

Alcohol has many negative effects on the body.

There are many risks to you and to others if you use alcohol.

Making a wise choice about alcohol will help you achieve your goals and dreams.

OBJECTIVES

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

1. understand the negative effects alcohol has on their body.
2. understand how alcohol affects those around them.
3. know how to stay safe when others drink alcohol.
4. make a wise choice to be too smart to start using alcohol.

KEY TERMS

Alcohol: a drug in liquid form that has several effects on the body.

Drunk: what happens when a person drinks so much alcohol they begin to lose control over their mind and body.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

It has become necessary to begin a discussion about alcohol with children at a young age. They need to know the effects of alcohol on their minds and bodies and how alcohol can affect them as well as people they know and love. Elementary students can be easily influenced by peers, older students and the media to participate in drinking alcohol. Some of your older elementary students are susceptible to alcohol use if there are problems in the home like divorce, critical illness or if a parent or significant adult abuses alcohol. Children who have problems with self-control or low self-esteem are especially susceptible to this risky behavior.

MATERIALS/PREPARATION

1. For **Exploring the Lesson**, you will need copies of Appendix 19a for each student.
2. In **Discovering the Lesson**, you will need 10 foot (3 m) tape or string for **younger elementary students'** activities. For an optional activity, you will need towels, bolts and nuts.
3. In **Discovering the Lesson** for **older elementary students**, you will need a basket and either a bean bag or wadded up balls of paper. For some optional activities, you will need several large marshmallows or soft marshmallow-like candy, a pair of gloves or towel, a bolt and a nut for each team.
4. For **Going Deeper**, if you choose to do the optional experiment, you will need a compass and a few small objects – some that will move the compass needle away from north and some that don't. (You could use the needle compass you made in Lesson 17 or use a manufactured compass.)

LESSON

BEGINNING THE LESSON

[Say to the students:] **We have been learning about behaviors affecting our ability to make wise choices. Behaviors like smoking and using drugs can cause us to miss out on our plans for the future. Now, we are going to study another behavior that can cause problems for us and for those we love. Hector, Dugan and Trish have been learning a lot about how choices can affect our lives. When we last heard from the children, they were stuck in a boat in the middle of a bad part of the Map of Wonders. Let's see if they are still there ...**

READINESS (5 minutes)

[Read to the students:] **Chapter 19 – The Two Pools of Thirsty Island**

The calm had stranded the children's boat in the middle of the dark, diseased part of the map called the "Drugs of Enticement." It was replaced by a gentle wind that blew all through the night. With the morning light, they discovered they had washed ashore on a small deserted island.

"Do you smell something?" asked Trish as she wrinkled her nose and looked up from where she had been sleeping. Both boys yawned at the

sound of Trish’s voice and opened sleepy eyes to survey their surroundings.

“Looks like we’ve washed up on a beach,” said Hector.

“This has got to be better than that dark, diseased place where drugs rule,” added Dugan.

“Did you hear my question?” asked Trish.

“Yeah, there is a faint odor,” agreed Hector.

“Who cares about some smell! I think I may die if I don’t get something to drink pretty soon,” offered Dugan.

“Is there anything to drink in the boat?” said Hector.

“Nope, just a tin cup hanging from the side of a box in the bottom of the boat,” answered Dugan.

“Have either of you looked inside the box?” queried Trish.

“Seems to be stuck,” said Hector as he pulled once more on the latch fixed to the top of the wooden box. “We need something stronger than our fingers to pry the top off.”

“Forget the box, I say we explore a bit and see if there’s any water on the island,” said Dugan. “But we might as well take the cup with us.”

They set off down the beach with Edgar walking closely at Trish’s side. The farther they walked, the hotter they got and the hotter they got, the thirstier they became. Edgar’s tongue was hanging out the side of his mouth when his nose suddenly lifted and turned inland. He followed his nose. A short walk later, they crested a small rise and saw two identical pools side by side.

“All right! Water!” cried Dugan as he rushed to the nearest pool and scooped up a cup full of the liquid.

“Wait!” yelled Hector. “You don’t know if that water is safe to drink!”

“You are way too suspicious,” countered Dugan as he took a long swallow, draining his cup.

“That burns! What is this stuff?” choked Dugan.

Edgar cautiously sniffed the pool Dugan had just sampled and backed away with a low growl.

“I don’t think Edgar cares for your choice of drinks,” said Hector.

“It’s not that bad. It just has a funny taste to it,” said Dugan a bit defensively.

“Water isn’t supposed to have a funny taste,” said Trish.

“Hey! Looks like Edgar found something more to his liking,” said Hector.

Edgar looked up at the sound of his name and then dropped his snout into the second pool for a drink.

It wasn't long before Hector and Trish had followed Edgar's lead and eased their thirst from the second pool.

"Dugan, come join us, this water doesn't have a funny taste. It is just cool and refreshing," invited Trish.

"No thanks. The taste kind of grows on you after a while," said Dugan holding up his cup while spilling some of its contents. As Dugan continued to drink from the other pool, he got sleepier and sleepier. Finally, his chin dropped to his chest and he began to snore quietly. He dreamed he was floating in a warm liquid, somewhat thicker than water, which caused him to float without effort. The diffused light played off the semi-clear amber colored liquid in a most inviting way. "This is great!" dreamed Dugan. "I could float like this forever!"

Everything in his body relaxed from the top of his head right on down to his toes. He let his arms and legs wander slowly through the liquid. As he slowly rotated, all he could see was the warm liquid stretching toward every horizon. A lopsided smile touched Dugan's face. "Nice," he slurred.

As he kept floating in his dream, he noticed, for the first time, there was a current in the thick liquid carrying him along. "I wonder where I'll end up?" he asked himself in a sleepy sort of way. "What does it matter?" he mumbled to himself.

After a while, Dugan became aware something had attached itself to his leg. He reached down through the thick liquid to pull it off, but it wouldn't budge. Finally, he lifted his leg above the waterline to find a strange reddish little crab-like creature sucking on his calf muscle. "Hey! Let go!" he yelled in his dream. As he began to thrash around in his attempts to remove the creature, he noticed the liquid had turned from an inviting amber to a dirty brown. "What's going on?" he complained.

Soon, the liquid was filled with nasty things bumping up against Dugan and trying to attach themselves to him. He couldn't scream because a crusted wart-colored slug had fastened on to his tongue! "Ahhh!" he cried. "Laaat goo oa mhee," he mumbled. "Hhllp!"

Dugan felt his body being shaken as he slowly woke from his nightmare.

"Hey, buddy. Are you okay?" asked Hector.

“You had us worried,” added Trish. “You fell asleep after drinking from the pool and we couldn’t wake you up.”

“Ohhh! It was horrible,” cried Dugan. “I couldn’t get free. And worst of all, I just knew they would turn me into something awful if I couldn’t break free.”

“Who are they?” asked Trish.

“Uh? I don’t know,” shivered Dugan. “At first, everything was warm and pleasant. I was floating in an amber liquid, but then it changed. And they began to attach themselves to me.”

“You are going to have to be more clear,” encouraged Hector.

“The only thing I’m clear about is I never want to drink anything from that pool again! It starts out well enough, but then it traps you into becoming someone you’d never want to be,” moaned Dugan. He grabbed his stomach as he stumbled his way back to the boat complaining about his stomach and a growing headache.

“That stuff is really making you sick,” sympathized Trish.

“I told you to wait until we checked it out,” lectured Hector.

“Thanks for reminding me. I feel so much better now,” said Dugan not meaning a single word he said.

Once they were back in the boat, they realized they had no plan.

“Now what?” asked Trish.

“Hey look!” said Hector. “The box we couldn’t open earlier is open. Wonder why?”

Inside the box was an old-fashioned phone. As they looked at it, it rang.

“Hello?” said Hector picking up the receiver. “Oh, yes. How did you know? Really? Well, I’m sure that will be a big relief to him. Of course, I’ll do it right away. And thanks.”

“Who was that?” moaned Dugan.

“What did they say?” added Trish.

“Apparently, the Librarian has been keeping an eye on us, and it’s time to return to the library,” answered Hector.

“And how do we do that?” probed Trish.

“Well, actually since the Map of Wonders is part of the library, I suppose you could argue we never left the library in the first place,” mused Hector.

“How do we get off this island and back to the Librarian?” persisted Trish.

“Oh, easy,” said Hector. “The Librarian said as soon as I hang up the phone, our connection with the island will be broken and we’ll be back where we started.”

“That doesn’t make sense,” puzzled Trish.

“Oh, just do it,” moaned Dugan. “I think I’m going to throw up!”

Hector hung up the phone and a strange pulsating hum started to grow as the three friends and Edgar suddenly found themselves out of breath and back in the library.

“I need to sit down,” said Dugan. And he did just that.

EXPLORE (20 minutes)

[Say to the students:] **Dugan just experienced what can happen when you drink alcohol. He made a bad decision and it made him very sick. In his dream, he felt like he had been tricked. Drinking the liquid from the pool seemed fine at first, and then he realized nasty creatures were beginning to attach themselves to him. This story is a reminder there are a lot of risks associated with drinking alcohol. We are going to talk about how alcohol can cause some of these problems.**

***Automobile accidents – Driving after drinking alcohol is the cause of many deaths and injuries. It is important you don’t get into a car with a driver who has been drinking. Vision and judgment are impaired and it is too dangerous to be in a car with a drinking driver.**

***Bad behavior – People who have had too much alcohol may become angry and careless. They may want to start a fight or enter into a fight. There is a chance they may want to hurt you or they may hurt you by mistake. Try to avoid people who drink too much.**

***Bad verbal behavior – People who drink too much alcohol may say things that are not true, hurt your feelings or make you feel ashamed. They are not in control of their words. Try to avoid them.**

***Your health – Alcohol damages and can destroy many parts of your body when you drink too much.**

For Younger Elementary Students

*[Give each student a copy of the picture of the body (Appendix 19a) or have your students do their best to make a simple drawing of the body. Have a large drawing of the body on the board. As you read to them the different parts of the body affected by alcohol (see the list under **Older Elementary Students**), have the students mark those parts of the body on their individual papers. The point is to help them realize how much of the body can be affected by alcohol.]*

For Older Elementary Students

[Say to the students:] **A small amount of alcohol can make a person feel relaxed. With more alcohol, people cannot control their behavior and can do silly or hostile things or even throw up. Alcohol goes from the mouth to the stomach and small intestine. It passes through the walls of the stomach and small intestine into the bloodstream. Then, the blood takes the alcohol to the brain and liver. We are going to see what parts of the body are affected when someone drinks. When a person continues to drink a lot, there are many health problems that can develop. Label each part of the body we discuss and next to it write one problem that can occur from abusing alcohol.**

[Read to the students:]

- 1. Brain — Drinking alcohol affects the brain by causing dizziness, making you feel sleepy and slow to react. A person does not think clearly and may do things they wouldn't normally do, like fighting, disobeying rules or saying hateful things. Many times, alcohol can cause depression and sadness. Drinking too much can cause blackouts or permanent damage to the brain, like memory loss or hallucinations. Alcohol can affect the way the brain will develop and grow.**
- 2. Liver — The liver is a reddish-brown organ in the abdomen that does a very important task. It cleans our blood. When there is too much alcohol in the blood, the liver can't keep up with its job.**
- 3. Heart — Alcohol abuse can cause heart disease and high blood pressure.**
- 4. Stomach — Alcohol can cause ulcers and cancer of the stomach.**
- 5. Pancreas — Alcohol can contribute to pancreatitis which causes extreme pain in the middle of the body.**

6. **Eyes** — Vision can become blurred.
7. **Hands** — Hands can begin to shake.
8. **Skin** — The skin becomes dry and wrinkled from dehydration.
9. **Esophagus** — Alcohol can cause bleeding and weaken the ability of the esophagus to process food to the stomach correctly.
10. **Mouth** — Alcohol can damage the tissue in the mouth, cause the tongue to swell, teeth to decay and gums to develop disease. It can also contribute to mouth cancer.

DISCOVER (25 minutes)

[The following activities are intended to simulate the feelings of having had too much alcohol. Please consider the age and abilities of your students before trying these exercises. Choose the ones appropriate for your class.]

For Younger Elementary Students

Activity 1: *[Place a piece of tape or string on the ground at least 10 feet (3 m) long. First, have a student walk on the tape to show how easy it is to do when you are not impaired. Then, have the same student spin in place for a minute until they are dizzy when they stop. Have them attempt to walk a straight line along the tape or string. Repeat the spinning until the student cannot walk straight on the line. Ask the students what it felt like to try to walk when they felt dizzy.]*

Activity 2: *[After your students have washed their hands, have them place their index finger on their tongue, press down and repeat the alphabet. What did they sound like? How did they feel?]*

Activity 3: *[Divide the class into three or four teams. On a thick towel place a bolt and a nut that fits the bolt. Have the students place their hands under the towel and try to screw the nut onto the bolt then unscrew the bolt for the next student. The team wins when all the students on the team complete the task.]*

[Say to the students:] **All of these activities were to simulate how difficult daily activities can be when alcohol affects your abilities. What conclusions can you make about how drinking alcohol could affect your body?**

For Older Elementary Students

Activity 1: *[Place a small basket in the center of the room. Have the students stand back about five feet (1.5 meters) from the basket and spin in place for one minute or until they are dizzy. Put a bean bag or wadded ball of paper in their hand and ask them to toss the bean bag or ball into the basket.]*

Activity 2: *[Divide the class into three or four teams. Have several bolts and nuts that screw onto them. Have the students put on large work gloves or hold a towel and put a blindfold over their eyes. Have the students screw the nut onto the bolt (wearing the gloves or using the towel) then unscrew it for the next person on their team. The first team to have every student complete the task wins. Ask the students how it felt to perform that task.]*

Activity 3: *[Give a few students three large marshmallows or soft marshmallow-like candy and have them put them in their mouths. Then have the students recite sentences written on the board (poem, song or alphabet). Have the students listen to each other. What was the reaction of those with their mouths full of marshmallow? What was the reaction of those listening to the student trying to speak?]*

[Say to the students:] **These activities simulate how alcohol can affect your ability to complete simple daily activities. If drinking alcohol is so dangerous, why do you think people drink it? Does it make sense to you to put alcohol into your body?**

APPLY (5 minutes)

*[Give an oral quiz to your class to see if they understood the lesson on alcohol. Have the students answer with thumbs up for “true” and thumbs down for “false.” Explain the correct answer after each question. Simplify or eliminate the statements as needed for **younger elementary students.**]*

Quiz: True or False?

- 1. Alcohol is a drug. True**
- 2. Alcohol can cause you to have high blood pressure. True**
- 3. Drinking alcohol makes you a safe driver. False**
- 4. Drinking alcohol can make your hands shake. True**
- 5. It is easy to walk straight when you drink a lot of alcohol. False**

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6. It is important to keep yourself safe from the effects of other people who drink. True
7. Alcohol makes it difficult to walk straight and talk clearly. True
8. Alcohol can affect the way the brain can develop and grow. True
9. People who drink alcohol never get in fights or say mean things. False.
10. Alcohol is something you want to avoid. True

SHARE (5 minutes)

[Say to the students:] Think/Pair/Share with someone sitting next to you about what you have learned about alcohol during this lesson.

ENDING THE LESSON

[Say to the students:] Every year, millions of people die in the world due to alcohol consumption. It is a preventable cause of death. Your parents and teachers want you to grow up into a healthy adult who will achieve your dreams and goals. One of the *DreamBreakers* you need to avoid is alcohol. We have discussed all the reasons why it can cause harm to your bodies. We have talked about the risks of being around people who abuse alcohol. You have learned about peer pressure and how the media often presents the use of alcohol as fun, glamorous and cool. Now, it is up to you to decide what you will do. Will you reach your dreams for your life? What choices will you make about alcohol?

GOING DEEPER (optional)

[You can teach this part of the lesson by simply talking about how some things can pull a compass off and cause it to not point to “true north.” After making that point, skip to the discussion marked below.

If you have access to a compass, you might want to do the following experiment before the discussion. Before class, find some small objects that move the needle away from north and some that don't. Set these aside in case you need to use them during the lesson. As you lead this lesson, allow time for students to answer each question.]

[Say to the students:] In our last lesson, we saw there are hidden or invisible things around us that can influence us. Let's see what influences

our compass? *[Divide the class into several teams.]* Each team needs to find four items. You can find items from your pockets or around the classroom. Make sure each item is small enough to hold close to our compass. You have two minutes to find your items. *[Have a student representative from each team come to the table at the front of the room. Say to each student:]* Place each object next to the compass to see if it affects the needle. If the objects the students have chosen do not clearly demonstrate how some move the needle and some do not, “test” some of the objects you have prepared.

[Discussion:] Some things can pull a compass off course, but many seem to have no influence. Metal objects seem to be the key, but not all metal objects. The same thing is true for us. We can walk right by some things without any consequences, yet other things really pull at us.

Sometimes, it depends on how close the object gets to the compass. Things that might influence the compass don’t have any influence if they are far enough away.

In the last lesson, we read how God put Adam, the first man, into a garden with beautiful trees that gave delicious fruit. God told Adam he could eat any of the fruit he wanted with one exception.

The Lord God warned him, “You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden — except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die” (*Genesis 2:16-17, New Living Translation*).

What did God say Adam could do? What did God tell Adam not to do? What do you think is meant by, “The tree of the knowledge of good and evil?” If Adam obeyed God, he would experience what it meant to be good. If he ate the forbidden fruit, he would experience the results of being evil. So, either way, whether he obeyed or not, Adam would learn the difference between good and evil. Can anyone guess what happens next in the story? Next, God creates a woman named Eve to be Adam’s wife. Eve soon learns about the fruit God says they shouldn’t eat. But she is tempted to try the forbidden fruit.

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“The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and pleasing to the eyes, and could fill the desire of making one wise. So she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave some to her husband, and he ate” (*Genesis 3:6, New Living Translation*).

Why did Eve disobey God and eat the fruit? Can any of you see how Adam’s and Eve’s choice about the forbidden fruit might be like when some young people choose to drink alcohol? Just like Eve, some young people see wine or beer and think it looks good. Many think if they drink it, they will look cool or grown up to their friends. And like Adam, it is often someone you like or you want to impress who leads you to try something forbidden.

Just like a compass can be pulled off course by certain metal objects, we can be pulled off the course toward our dreams by *DreamBreakers* such as alcohol.

PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION

Protecting your child from the dangers of alcohol is a team effort. Together with the school and your child's teacher, you can have a great influence. Children and teenagers often say not wanting to disappoint parents is one of the main reasons they choose to not drink alcohol.

It has become necessary to begin a discussion about alcohol with children at a young age. They need to know the effects of alcohol on their minds and bodies and how alcohol can affect them as well as people they know and love. Elementary students can be easily influenced by peers, older students and the media to participate in drinking alcohol.

Questions you might ask your child:

1. Can you tell me the story your teacher read? Didn't one of the friends drink something that made him sick? (Dugan drank from a pool of alcohol.)
2. What did your teacher say were some of the problems with alcohol that can break your dreams for the future? (Automobile accidents – Don't get into a vehicle if someone who has been drinking alcohol is going to drive; bad behavior – People who have had too much alcohol may become angry and careless; bad verbal behavior – People who drink too much alcohol may say things that are not true, that hurt your feelings or that make you feel ashamed; your health – Alcohol damages and can even destroy many parts of your body when you drink too much.)

Parents, share about someone you know who made a poor choice about the use of alcohol. What was the result?



Appendix 19a

