

Developing strategies to say No! to drugs!

Aimée Édith Cloutier is currently enrolled in the BEd. TESL program at Concordia University. Her interests are wide-ranging: she works as a production assistant on movie locations and in an Argentinian tango school. In the future, she hopes to work with international agencies in education both in Canada and abroad.

The lesson: The lesson was planned for a Secondary III Core ESL group. The students were quite fluent in English. The lesson is about developing resistance strategies to avoid taking drugs and role-playing some of the strategies.

Broad area of learning: health and well-being.

Cross-curricular competencies: *To exercise critical judgement:* adopt an informed position with regard to life's problems by learning to form an opinion on drugs, and *To know himself/herself:* to accept responsibility for one's own development while seeking to broaden one's horizons, and learn to express one's opinion, perceive the influence of others and affirm one's choices.

ESL competencies: all three from the Secondary Cycle One Core program

Educational aim: to help students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits towards drugs with respect to health, safety and sexuality. The focus is for students to become aware of the impact of their choices on their health and well-being.

Resources: Reasons and Consequences*
My Personal Goals*
Resistance Strategies*
Dictionary
Web site where students can submit scenarios on "Tips for saying no":
<http://www.freevibe.com/share/boards.asp>
Straight Facts About Drugs & Drug Abuse, ISBN 0-662-29208-1, a Health Canada publication available from Publications, Health Canada, Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9 or at <http://www.cds-sca.com>

Procedure:

1. **Brainstorming** - From the class, teacher elicits a few reasons why people take drugs, then instructs students to open their Health Canada publication on pages 4 and 5, read the information, and on the worksheet, list the other reasons found.
2. **Reflection** - From personal knowledge and with the help of the publication pages 8 and 9, students are asked to list 5 harmful consequences of drug use, in the space provided on the worksheet, in point form.

3. Exchanging views - Teacher instructs students to compare their reasons with a partner's and to add more reasons to their individual lists. Together they discuss the "Positive consequences of not using drugs" and take notes on their respective sheets, in point form, listing at least 5 reasons. The results can be shared with the class.

4. My Personal Goals - Each student, individually, fills out the worksheet.

5. Case histories - Teacher gives students real-life scenarios about teens who use various strategies to say no to drugs – resistance strategies – and instructs them to read them on their own.

6. Role-play - Students are then asked to imagine a short scenario where teens, interacting with their peers, would have to rely on resistance strategies to avoid using drugs. Students are then asked to join another pair (or two) of students and role-play their scenario for the others.

Note that no writing is permitted during this activity to insure spontaneity and that the teacher might use this opportunity to evaluate speaking.

7. Wrap-up - Students discuss which strategies they are the most comfortable with or which are easier or harder to use.

8. Follow-up - Students can be asked to put their scenarios in writing for sharing among other groups or asked to write an acrostic poem using words such as *positive* or *strategy*.

A note from the editor:

Although this lesson was planned for a secondary 3 class, it can be adapted for younger or older students. It's important to mix both individual and group work to facilitate management. It is guided by the teacher but is not teacher-centred.

Worksheets for **Developing strategies to say No! to drugs**

1. Reasons and Consequences
2. My personal goals
3. Case histories and Resistance strategies

Name: _____

Group: _____

1. Reasons for taking drugs

My list	My partner's list
---------	-------------------

2. Based on your personal knowledge and with the help of your brochure, complete the **Harmful consequences** section of the chart below.
3. On your teacher's signal, join a partner to discuss and add to your list.
4. With your partner, find at least 5 Positive consequences of not taking drugs and list them in the appropriate section.

- Your teacher will tell you what to do next.

Harmful consequences of using drugs	Positive consequences of not using drugs
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

Name: _____

Group: _____

1. Think about what you hope to accomplish between now and the end of high school.
2. List 2 goals that you want to achieve and find 2 steps that you need to take to reach each goal.
3. Then, complete the sentence you find in each box.

Goal #1

Steps that will help me reach my goal:

1. _____
2. _____

Drugs can interfere with this goal by . . .

Goal #2

Steps that will help me reach my goal:

1. _____
2. _____

Drugs can interfere with this goal by . . .
