

LESSON PLAN - JUST A FEW DRINKS

'Just a few drinks' four short films on the physical, social and medical effects of too much alcohol on the immature body.

Here you will find four 7 minute films commissioned by BBC2 Learning Zone about how too much alcohol affected the lives of four teenagers. The clips feature real people, not actors.

Learning objectives

The films explore how four normally sensible teenagers ended up drinking too much and the different unforeseen consequences that occurred.

The objectives to explore:

- o **How much is too much?** Making the right choices in the future if you do try alcohol and exploring the differences between moderate social drinking and excess.
- o **Alcohol and risk taking** How risk escalates the more you drink, with the main priority to highlight harms to health and wellbeing.
- o **Alcohol and the location of drinking** The added danger of drinking in unsupervised environments such as parks and unsupervised parties.
- o **Alcohol and the law** Understanding the possible consequences of drinking in public places, asking older friends to buy alcohol for you, attempting to buy from shops or clubs yourself.
- o **Alcohol and its physical effects on your body** Each clip clearly explains in a scientifically but understandable way, the effects that alcohol has on the brain and why your behaviour changes, you feel sick, or pass out.

Social norms

The films are careful not to suggest that the scenarios are typical of teenage behaviour. It is made clear that most 11 - 15 year-olds do not drink alcohol (62% of 11 - 15 year-olds have not consumed a whole drink) and that regular underage drinking has decreased (from 26% of 11 - 15 year-olds drinking weekly in 2001 to 4% in 2014).

The aim of the lesson plans are to explore what students could do to avoid the situation happening to themselves, or to reduce the risk before things got out of hand and how they would look after a friend if they saw signs of risk taking emerging.

Before you show the films:

If this is a stand alone session we suggest you set the context by beginning with 'The decision whether to drink or not' activity (alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/staying-safe-avoiding-risk-taking/ or [pages 10 and 11](#)) which explores why teenagers may choose to drink or not.

An alternative is to use a **Diamond Nine activity**, where you ask pupils to list nine reasons why young people drink (highest risk first) and to rank them in order of risk – see the example **blank sheet** and **completed sheet** for suggestions. You can also use the same activity to list nine reasons why teenagers don't drink, by order of importance to them. It is always good practice to explore motivation for any kind of substance use / misuse. Visit the **Just a Few Drinks activity** in the Challenge Zone of our Online Learning Zone, talkaboutalcohol.com.

Lesson guidance

We have put together lesson notes for each of the films individually highlighting issues that can be discussed and suggesting that you pause the films and ask pupils to develop their own outcomes both positive and negative.

The other suggested lesson format is that you show the four clips over two PSHE lessons, putting together Alan and Emily and then Jordan and Anna. Pupils should watch the films and consider how they would help the young people in question to have a really good night out without getting into the harmful situations they ended up in.

At the end of each film they could get into groups and have 10 minutes to think of what different decisions could be made at key points in the film, followed by a whole class discussion.

Activities post films at end of lesson 2**High risk / Low risk continuum activity**

The aim of this activity is to identify risk and strategies to reduce risk.

Try and avoid a diet of negativity and explore how the situation could be avoided or made better so pupils learn how to avoid riskier situations.

Put up a **low risk sheet** at one end of the classroom and a **high risk sheet** at the other end. Ask pupils to come up with statements about the film, to hand them to you and then you read them out. Ask pupils to place themselves on the scale of low to high risk in the room for each statement and then explore with them why they have chosen that level of risk, what would make it lower risk etc.

Suggestions....

- o drinking when skateboarding
- o trying to buy alcohol when you're under age
- o going home on your own
- o drinking neat spirits
- o drinking fast without food
- o drinking in a public place when underage.

As you read out each one of the statements. Pupils move to a place on the continuum according to the amount of risk they think is involved.

Get them to briefly discuss with a person near to them before a whole group discussion. If the group is too big or if classroom management is an issue pupils can be asked to place the statements along the continuum – these can then be challenged and moved by other pupils – giving reasons why. It's important to ask questions like "What would make it higher risk, lower risk?"

You could end the session by either spending time on our interactive body (talkaboutalcohol.com/interactive-body/) exploring the effects of too much alcohol on different parts of the body or use the worksheet [How much is too much - getting the balance right, pages 70 - 71](#).

The **Alcohol and you** leaflet can be downloaded free of charge via our website home page alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/ or email kate@alcoholeducationtrust.org if you would like hard copies to be posted to you.

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LESSON PLAN INDICATORS FOR BBC 'JUST A FEW DRINKS'

Before you begin, we suggest you download our **Alcohol and you** leaflet for teenagers or order hard copies via kate@alcoholeducationtrust.org



Alan

At 14, Alan's drinking boosted his self-confidence, giving him the 'dutch' courage to challenge a group of lads who were insulting his friend. They threw Alan into a bus shelter, shattering his collar-bone, and putting an abrupt end to all his hopes of making it as a goalkeeper. Two years after the incident, Alan's sleep is still disrupted by the pain.

Divide the film into two segments and freeze before any negative consequences have happened. Set the scene, the lads were skateboarding and having a good time. Then what happens?.. you decide:

Divide the class into + and - groups. The + group develop positive outcomes to the scenario, the - group imagines what happens next that is negative.

Decide when you want to pause the film and give the pupils the opportunity to present their ongoing outcomes at this point. Alternatively, you can watch the films the whole way through and then the pupils develop their own positive or negative outcomes.

For example: If you've got an engaged group of students, we suggest you let them come up with their own outcomes, if you need prompts, then you can consider the below:

Negative group scenarios:

- o Alan or one of his friends passed out, was sick or got alcohol poisoning (trigger to discuss alcohol and its effects alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/effects-physical-and-social/ and alcohol and staying safe alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/staying-safe-avoiding-risk-taking/) see page 11 of our **Alcohol and you** leaflet for what to do if you suspect someone has alcohol poisoning and how to spot the signs.
- o Alan's friends piled in and there was a big fight
- o The police were called and Alan ended up with a caution or criminal record (discuss long term effects of this – can't go to US, getting car insurance, applying for jobs etc. alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/the-law/)
- o Alan's parents were called and school informed (social embarrassment, how the school would handle this incident, being grounded by parents etc.).
- o Alan's injuries were much worse (facial scarring from glass, a common drink related injury).

Positive scenarios:

- o After getting bored skateboarding the lads had a game of football, got a take away and went back to Alan's house to play on the PlayStation/ Xbox.
- o After obtaining alcohol and drinking some, Alan was feeling rough and fell off his skateboard, his best mate took him home, gave him some water and made some toast and stayed with him until he felt better (trigger to talk about how long alcohol stays in your blood stream. It takes one hour for your liver to break down a unit. Food and water will help you feel better, but only time will eliminate the alcohol in your blood stream alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/effects-physical-and-social/).

- o Once he is at the bus shelter and the other lads are approaching: Alan just ignores their comments and keeps his cool. His mates come out with some food and they go home and sleep off the alcohol's effects.

Once the clip has been viewed, questions to raise:

Were any laws broken?

Drinking in a public place

Buying alcohol when underage

Buying by proxy

(have a copy of the alcohol and the law worksheet alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/the-law/)

What would you have done differently?



Emily

Emily, now 17, was so drunk after leaving a bar that she agreed to the offer of help to find a taxi from a guy she barely knew, with devastating consequences. Everyone tells you about the good times, she says, but "... you never actually hear how ill they were the next day. No one ever discusses the worse stuff."

Divide the film into segments and freeze before any negative consequences have happened. Set the scene.

Emily has had a bad week and arranges to meet her friends, some of whom are 18 and they start drinking in the park...she wants to 'drown her sorrows' and thought alcohol would help her feel better.

Divide the class into + and - groups. The + group develop positive outcomes to the scenario, the - group imagines what happens next that is negative.

Decide when you want to pause the film and give the pupils the opportunity to present their ongoing outcomes at this point. Alternatively, you can watch the films the whole way through and then the pupils develop their own positive or negative outcomes.

For example: If you've got an engaged group of students, we suggest you let them come up with their own outcomes, if you need prompts, then you can consider the below:

Negative group scenarios and how to turn the situation around:

They are all pretty much in the film! Use as triggers:

- o Alcohol and its effects (volume, pacing, alcoholic strength, eating before drinking –see the [Alcohol and you](#) leaflet).
- o Drinking for the wrong reasons – alcohol acts as a depressant as you drink more.
- o Asking those over the age of 18 to buy alcohol on your behalf (you risk them facing criminal charges or a fine see alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/the-law/).
- o Looking after your friends (never go home with a stranger or on your own).
- o Planning how you get home before you go out (charged mobile, money for taxi, parents to pick you up or public transport).

Positive group scenarios:

Knowing that it's against the law to drink in a public space if you're under 18 and that the police can confiscate your alcohol, therefore you don't drink.

- o Emily bought some sandwiches and snacks for everyone to share and they sat around in the sun and chatted.
- o Once they'd finished at the park, she realised she hadn't had anything to eat and invited one of her mates home to watch a DVD and have supper.
- o Once she was at the club she switched to soft drinks as she knew she could get her mates into trouble if she was caught under age drinking. She also wants to stay healthy and take care of herself so she decided to have a 'mocktail' followed by a slimline tonic and no-one knew any different.
- o When she was being sick her best friend called her parents and they both got a lift home. Although she felt awful the next day.

Once the clip has been viewed, questions to raise:

Have any laws been broken? (See 'Alcohol and the law' sheets [pages 58-59](#) or alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/the-law/)

Drinking in a public place

Buying by proxy

Drinking alcohol in a licensed premises when under age

Emily could have brought charges of sexual assault
Discussion around consent

What would you have done differently?



Anna

Anna, now 17, fell out with her friends after drunkenly kissing her best friend's ex-boyfriend at a party, and they haven't spoken since.

Divide the film into segments and freeze before any negative consequences have happened. Set the scene, Anna is quite shy and felt alcohol made her more confident, her Mum provided her with the large bottle of cider...

Divide the class into + and - groups. The + group develop positive outcomes to the scenario, the – group imagines what happens next that is negative.

Decide when you want to pause the film and give the pupils the opportunity to present their ongoing outcomes at this point. Alternatively, you can watch the films the whole way through and then the pupils develop their own positive or negative outcomes.

For example: If you've got an engaged group of students, we suggest you let them come up with their own outcomes, if you need prompts, then you can consider the below:

Negative group scenarios:

- o After the first kiss Anna drank more and continued kissing him, agreed to go outside? (regret, would you have done this if you were sober? facing him and friends back at school).
- o Anna then felt ill and was sick (see Alcohol and its effects via alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/effects-physical-and-social/ or page 35).
- o After going upstairs when her friends left, things went much further with her friend's ex (protection, STD's, friends knowing).
- o Her friend confronted her and they had a big row at the party spoiling it for everyone (long term effects on friendships, acting out of character).
- o Really embarrassing photos of her kissing her friends ex are uploaded on facebook and everyone starts on twitter about what a bad friend she is, some really nasty stuff (conversation trigger about social media, tagging photos, everyone knowing when you embarrass yourself, cyber bullying etc.)

Positive group scenarios:

- o On arriving at the party Anna had something to eat and made sure she drank plenty of water (trigger to discuss pacing yourself, lining your stomach before drinking slowing down alcohol getting into your blood stream. (See our [Top tips for staying safe if you plan to drink](#) or pages 89-90).
- o After her kiss with the first boy, Anna feels really embarrassed, realises she needs to stop drinking and hangs out with her girl friends for the rest of the evening having fun.
- o After going upstairs with her friends, she goes out of the room when the others do and resists the temptation to kiss her friend's ex.
- o Her friends tell her to come downstairs and they look after her (looking out for your mates etc).

Once the clip has been viewed:

Were any laws broken?

Those under 18 can drink legally on private premises but you may want to use this as a prompt to discuss the issues surrounding parents buying alcohol for their underage children – still a legal issue (buying by proxy) / also not all parents are doing this / challenging parent condoned drinking.

What would you have done differently?



Jordan

When Jordan was 16, he drank over half a bottle of neat brandy, just to look cool – “You don't think about any of the medical effects. You just think about how fun it's going to be when you get drunk. ... It sounds a bit extreme but I could have died that night”. Jordan, now 18, was left outside on his own while throwing up and barely conscious.

Divide the film into segments and freeze before any negative consequences have happened. Set the scene. Jordan had never been drunk before, he and his friend decided to spend £70 on expensive brandy and get hammered.

Divide the class into + and - groups. The + group develop positive outcomes to the scenario, the – group imagines what happens next that is negative.

Decide when you want to pause the film and give the pupils the opportunity to present their predicted outcomes at this point. Alternatively, you can watch the films the whole way through and then the pupils develop their own positive or negative outcomes.

For example: If you've got an engaged group of students, we suggest you let them come up with their own outcomes, if you need prompts, then you can consider the below:

Negative group scenarios:

- o The police stopped Jordan in the street and confiscated his alcohol – he lost £70 of booze as he was under 18 (see alcohol and the law via alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/the-law/ or [page 57](#)).
- o Jordan got aggressive and picked a fight at the party, the friends who invited him haven't spoken to him since (risk of alcohol and violence, assault).
- o Jordan wandered off on his own, collapsed and passed out (he is rushed into A and E) you can download our leaflet **If it all goes wrong**.
- o Jordan passes out and no-one helps (risk of hyperthermia, choking on his own vomit, going into an alcoholic coma and dying – see page 11 of **Alcohol and you** leaflet).
- o Jordan staggers out, trying to find his way home and his hit by a car (number of drunk pedestrian accidents at night).

Positive group scenarios:

- o Jordan eats a takeaway with his friend, buys a lot of soft mixers and puts his bottle on the drinks table for everyone to share. He has a couple of drinks and has a great time. (See our **Top tips for staying safe if you plan to drink** or [pages 89-90](#)).
- o Jordan realises after a few swigs from the bottle that the neat brandy (40% ABV) is not a good idea and so switches to drinking a beer slowly (see information on units and guidelines via: alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/units-and-guidelines or [page 21](#)).
- o He leaves early and gets something to eat.
- o Once he is taken outside his mates stay with him, put him in the recovery position, check his airways are clear when he is sick and cover him up with a warm blanket. (**If it all goes wrong** as above).
- o They keep him walking round and call an ambulance.
- o They stay with him and call his parents.

Once the clip has been viewed, questions to raise:

Have any laws been broken?

(See 'Alcohol and the law' sheets [pages 58-59](#) or alcoholeducationtrust.org/teacher-area/the-law/)

Possession of alcohol in a public place when under 18

Buying alcohol when under the age of 18

What would you have done differently?