

Responsible Choices

Recognizing Alcohol Impairment

Grades 9-12

Length 45 minutes

Summary

When students recognize how biological and behavioral factors influence alcohol impairment, they build a foundation for smart decisions like choosing not to drink underage and making responsible alcohol-related choices throughout life. In this lesson, students will learn to identify factors affecting impairment and apply this knowledge to support their future decision making.

Learning Objectives

- Summarize alcohol's impact on the body, including the brain.
- Recognize biological and behavioral factors that can impact levels of impairment.
- Identify information that people of legal drinking age can utilize to help make responsible decisions if they choose to drink alcohol.

Vocabulary

- Alcohol
- Alcohol by volume (ABV)
- Alcohol overdose
- Alcohol use disorder (AUD)
- Binge/hazardous drinking
- Biological and behavioral factors
- Blackout
- Blood alcohol concentration (BAC)
- Central nervous system
- Dehydration
- Fatigue
- Impair
- Inhibitions
- Kidneys
- Legal drinking age
- Liver
- Metabolize
- Sober
- Standard drink

Guiding Question

What information should adults of legal drinking age know to make responsible choices relating to alcohol?

Standards

National Health Education Standards:

- 1.12.3 Evaluate behaviors that reduce or prevent illnesses and injuries.
- 5.12.7 Evaluate the impact of supports and barriers that affect decision making at individual, interpersonal, community, societal, and environmental levels.
- 7.12.2 Evaluate practices, behaviors, and other factors supporting individual and collective health and well-being.

Common Core Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.11-12.9: Synthesize information from a range of sources (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible.

Materials

- [Kahoot: Recognizing Alcohol Impairment](#)
- [Google Doc: Vocabulary List](#)
- [Google Doc: Responsible Choices: Recognizing Alcohol Impairment Pre-assessment handout](#)
- [Google Slides: Responsible Choices: Recognizing Alcohol Impairment Pre-assessment slides](#)
- [Google Slides: BAC Exploration Activity](#)
- [Google Doc: BAC Exploration Activity: Note-taking Handout](#)
- [Google Doc: Alcohol Impairment Predictions: Educator Activity Guide](#)
- [Internet access](#)

PROCEDURES

Preparation

Before class, ensure students can access handouts and activities by printing copies, allowing access to Google Docs and Slides, or by setting up a Kahoot! profile.

Identify any needed lesson modifications based on time limitations, student accommodations, or other factors.

Review content in the pre-assessment, BAC exploration activity, the prediction scenarios, and on the vocabulary list to prepare for any potential questions students might have.

1. Warm-up

5 MINUTES ⌚

- A. Begin class by having students independently complete the following written prompt:
 - i. *How do you think alcohol impacts the body, including the brain?*
- B. Have students share their answers with the class and discuss. Summarize the class's thoughts and address any misconceptions. Emphasize the fact that underage drinking is both illegal and dangerous.

2. Pre-assessment: Recognizing alcohol impairment

15 MINUTES ⌚

- A. Have students complete the pre-assessment either using the **handout** or **Kahoot** to identify what they know about alcohol and how it impairs the body.
- B. Review the correct answers and explanations with the students either using the **Kahoot** or **Google Slide presentation**.

3. BAC exploration activity: Identifying factors impacting alcohol impairment

15 MINUTES ⌚

- A. Depending on students' access to devices, choose between one of the two options for students to complete this BAC activity. The calculations within the activity are based on **Responsibility.org's Virtual Bar** app that simulates how alcohol is processed by the body which provides education of BAC and alcohol impairment. All comparisons in this simulation are for individuals above the legal drinking age.
 - i. *Option 1: Class activity*
 1. Use the **BAC Exploration Activity Google Slides** to provide an overview of BAC levels and present each BAC comparison with the students. For each comparison, students record their responses on the **BAC Exploration Activity: Note-taking Handout**.

- ii. *Option 2: Individual/group activity*

1. Have students work individually or in pairs. Share a digital copy of the **BAC Exploration Activity Google Slides** with each student or group. Each student or group will review the overview of BAC levels, go through each BAC comparison and record their responses on the **BAC Exploration**

Activity: Note-taking Handout.

- B. Based on the students' learning in the BAC Exploration, have them make four statements relating to biological and/or behavioral factors that impact alcohol impairment, and a list of unhealthy outcomes of poor alcohol-related decision making on the note-taking chart.

- i. *Examples of statements might include:*

1. *"Females are impacted more by alcohol than males."*
 2. *"People who weigh less are impacted more by alcohol than people who weigh more."*
 3. *"Drinking slower can limit impairment."*
 4. *"Eating food before drinking can limit impairment."*

- C. Discuss answers and address any misconceptions.

4. What happens next: Making predictions about alcohol impairment

5 MINUTES ⌚

- A. As a class, read each of the scenarios included in the **Alcohol Impairment Predictions: Educator Activity Guide**. Using a think-pair-share approach, students can apply what they've learned about alcohol impairment to make predictions about what might happen next in each situation. Predictions might involve how impaired the person will be, their safety, and any other consequences that might occur because of their behavior. Additional information about the scenarios and strategies for discussing the scenarios are provided in the Activity Guide.

5. Closing

5 MINUTES ⌚

- A. Ask students the following questions to discuss their individual work:
 - i. *Based on what you learned, list and explain five things that adults need to know about alcohol impairment to make responsible choices if they choose to drink.*
- B. Review student responses and identify any topics need to be readdressed later.



For more information about the dangers of underage drinking, visit

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Assessments

Formative:

- Written responses to the BAC Exploration Activity
- Exit ticket on alcohol impairment and responsible choices
- Optional post-assessment using the questions from the pre-assessment

Possible Modifications

Throughout the lesson:

- Provide students with a list of vocabulary words and definitions used within the lesson.
- Provide students with copies of the Google Slides presentations to review.

Warm-up activity:

Use sentence starters: "Alcohol impacts the body/brain by..."

BAC Exploration:

- Complete note-taking handout as a class discussion instead of individually or in pairs.
- Limit the number of comparison scenarios or statements required.
- Provide students guidance on topics for each statement such as pace of drinking, sex, height and weight, etc.

Making predictions:

- Have students make predictions individually.
- Reduce the number of scenarios.

Extension/School-to-home Connection Options

Post-Assessment

- Use the same assessment provided at the beginning of the class as a post-assessment to evaluate students' mastery of the content.

Exploration of the Virtual Bar: BAC Calculator

- Have students visit the [Virtual Bar website](#) to further explore the factors that impact BAC. Have students use the food, drink, and comparison functions to answer the following questions:
 1. What information from the Virtual Bar was new or surprised you?
 2. What risks increase as BAC rises?
 3. What behaviors should be used to keep BAC levels lower?
 4. How can understanding BAC help people avoid dangerous or risky situations?

LESSON

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Recognizing Alcohol Impairment

Recognizing Impairment Poster/Social Media Post

- Create a poster or social media post and graphic that educates people on the following:
 - Signs of impairment
 - How that person might be a danger to themselves and others
 - What other people can do to prevent harm if they recognize these signs

Take the Lesson Home

- Have students identify a trusted adult in their lives (i.e. parent, family member, coach, community leader, etc.) to have a conversation with about responsible choices and alcohol impairment.
- Ways to start the conversation might include:
 - Talking about what was learned in class and what was surprising.
 - Having them share information people should know to make responsible choices relating to alcohol.
 - Asking them questions from the pre-assessment.

Additional discussion/writing prompts

PROMPT

Why does eating food and drinking water before and while consuming alcohol slow alcohol impairment?

PROMPT

How can recognizing BAC help people of legal drinking age understand their limits?

PROMPT

How can knowledge of alcohol impairment and BAC support people of legal drinking age in planning ahead if they choose to drink alcohol?



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SOURCES

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