

## **Opioid Awareness High School Lesson**

**Objective:** By creating and writing their own short stories, students will be able to articulate the dangers of opioid usage and express their knowledge about what they can do if they know someone struggling with prescription drug use.

**Bellringer:** (7 minutes) Students will be given a true/false prediction chart to start the class. This sheet will include facts about opioid usage and will be instructed to predict if each fact is true or false. The students will have about two minutes to fill out the chart. The teacher will then review the chart and tell which facts were true or false. The teacher will then explain what it means when he/she is talking about “opioids”.

**Transition One (10 Minutes):** The teacher will begin this transition by showing the “Opioids” video by American Character Builders. He/she will then guide classroom discussion by asking “What did you notice about the characters in the video?” The teacher will call on different students to answer the question, making sure that there is an emphasis on the fact that each character in the video comes from different walks of life and are of different demographics. The teacher will then transition the mood of the discussion from observation to civic action by asking “If you could say one thing to each character in the video, what would you say?” The teacher will instruct students to write their responses in their notebook.

**Transition Two (20 Minutes):** This will be a time where students are able to read real life stories of people who have overdosed on drugs. There will be three stories set up in three stations. Each student should take short notes on each story in their notebooks. The fourth station will be a list of tips on how to help a friend who is addicted to drugs. There should also be notes taken at this station. The teacher will set a timer and inform students that they have five minutes at each station to read the story and take appropriate notes. At the end of each five minutes, the teacher will tell students to rotate to the next station until each group of students has visited every station.

**Transition Three (10 Minutes):** This will be a time of formative assessment to ensure that the students got a grasp on the stories and how to help a friend who is in a similar situation. The students can either work by themselves or with a partner. They are to come up with a similar scenario to the stories they just read. However, instead of the person overdosing, their friends intervened and led the person to get help. The teacher should instruct students to use specific tips from the list that they read in the station. The students should also include specific details about the character in their story like age, gender, hobbies, etc. Because of limited time, the students can write in bullet form instead writing a full narrative. This will demonstrate the students' awareness of how serious the problem is. It will also encourage them to be aware that they have the opportunity to help a friend out of these types of situations.

**Closure (5 Minutes):** The teacher will call on one student/ set of partners to share the story they came up with. The teacher will reiterate the fact that anyone can suffer from opioid addiction and that they do have a way of helping if they know someone addicted.

**True/ False Sheet (with answers marked):**

	<u>True</u>	<u>False</u>
Drug overdose is the leading cause of accidental death in the US.	X	
Because people are more knowledgeable about the dangers of drugs, the overdose death rate has significantly declined since 1999.		X
The prescribing rates for people under the age of 17 have declined in order to help stop people from becoming addicted.		X
Women are more likely to become dependent on prescription pain killers than men.	X	
Four out of five new heroin users started out misusing prescription pain killers.	X	

**Links to the stories:**

<https://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.gov/consequences/true-stories/nick-and-jack-savage-indiana-oxycodone-and-alcohol>

<https://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.gov/consequences/true-stories/jason-surks-19-prescription-drugs>

<https://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.gov/consequences/true-stories/mark-bauer-18-prescription-drugs>

**Links to tips:**

<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/blog/post/how-help-friend-need>

*American Character Builders gratefully acknowledges the efforts of **Josie L. Pehlam**, a Secondary Education Major / Social Studies / School of Education / University of Alabama at Birmingham, for her work in preparing this suggested lesson plan.*