

Dear Teacher,

The following tools are additional support to enrich the teaching of the *Heads Up* lesson plan and student article “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz”:

- Answer Key for Critical-Thinking Questions and Student Work Sheet
- Academic and Domain-Specific Vocabulary Lists
- Expanded Writing Prompts
- Expanded Paired-Text Reading Suggestions
- Expanded Standards Charts for Grades 6–12

For copies of the Teacher’s Guide and student article, visit:

scholastic.com/headsup/breaking-down-marijuana.

Note on Text Complexity: The “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz” student article has a text level optimized for students in grades 8–10. For readers at a lower reading level, a grades 4–5 version of the article is available at scholastic.com/headsup/breaking-down-marijuana/leveled.

1A Suggested Answers for Lesson Critical-Thinking Questions

scholastic.com/headsup/breaking-down-marijuana

Have students use evidence from the text of the article “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz” when responding to the Critical-Thinking Questions. Suggested answers are provided in *italics* after each question.

Question A (Tiered):

- **Grades 6–8:** What are some similarities and differences between marijuana and tobacco? Consider the scientific understanding and history of both in your response.
- **Grades 9–10:** What are some parallels between marijuana and tobacco? Conversely, how do they differ? Include the scientific understanding and history of both.
- **Grades 11–12:** Develop an argument supporting the claim that the history of tobacco has implications for the unfolding story of marijuana. Describe the parallels and contrasts using both historical and scientific information.

(Both tobacco and marijuana are drugs that have health risks for users. It has been well established that tobacco causes lung cancer and premature death in smokers and in those exposed to secondhand

smoke. The science on marijuana has shown that it may cause long-term changes to the user’s brain, especially if use begins in the teen years. Regular use of marijuana can also result in impaired decision making, reduced educational advancement, and addiction. Frequent marijuana use may also contribute to general life struggles including unemployment and financial difficulties.

Historically, tobacco was once thought of as safe. Use was widespread in the 20th century. It was (and is) legal for adults and easy to access. Even when the link to cancer was discovered, it took decades for use to decline. Marijuana is increasingly perceived by teens as not harmful, and it’s possible that the trend of marijuana legalization may further support the reduced perception of risk. This could lead to increased use, and therefore, an increase in marijuana-related public-health problems. Since scientists don’t yet know all of marijuana’s effects, users are taking on both known and unknown risks, just like people who used tobacco before it had been extensively studied who came to find out that it was more dangerous than understood.)

Question B (Tiered):

- **Grades 6–8:** How do you think people might view marijuana in the next ten years? Explain your reasoning.
- **Grades 9–10:** Predict how attitudes toward marijuana may change over the next ten years. Explain your reasoning.
- **Grades 11–12:** Give your assessment of how people’s opinions toward marijuana may shift in the next decade. Explain your reasoning.

(Scientists will gather more information regarding marijuana’s effects on physical, emotional, and mental health, giving people a better understanding of its risks; if additional harms are found and people recognize these harms [i.e., they think it is dangerous], usage would likely decrease, since there is a relationship between use and perception of risk. In addition, as prevention efforts [or public discussions] around marijuana increase, people will become more aware of the negative health effects that are currently known. That could result in decreased use over time, particularly among adolescents, since the harms are known to be greater for the developing brain.)

1B Suggested Answers for Student Work Sheet

scholastic.com/headsup/breaking-down-marijuana/worksheet

1. a) According to the graph, around what year did high school seniors increasingly start thinking of marijuana

as harmful? (1979.) When did this trend change? (1992.)

b) When did past-year use of marijuana among high school seniors begin to rise? (1993.)

2. According to the graph, how does understanding the harms of marijuana affect use? (*Perceiving marijuana as harmful has an inverse relationship with use. When a greater number of teens perceived marijuana use as harmful, past-year use went down and vice versa.*)

3. Referring to the article “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz,” identify at least two harmful effects marijuana could have on teens. (*When started in the teen years, long-term regular use of marijuana can impair brain development and lower IQ. For teens, frequent use of marijuana is linked to higher school dropout rates.*)

4. Referring again to the article, why might teens today be confused about how safe marijuana is? (*Marijuana is being legalized in some states and for people with some medical conditions. For some people, there is the perception that “legal” for some equals “safe” for all.*)

2 Academic and Domain-Specific Vocabulary Lists

scholastic.com/headsup/breaking-down-marijuana/article

The vocabulary words below are drawn from the “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz” student article and work sheet. This vocabulary can be previewed with students prior to reading or reinforced with students afterward. Encourage students to incorporate these words into their writing and discussion of the “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz” article and work sheet.

Leveled definitions are provided for grades 6–8 and 9–12. Unless otherwise noted, all definitions below are sourced or adapted from:

- **Grades 6–8:** *Wordsmyth Children’s Dictionary*
- **Grades 9–12:** *Merriam-Webster*

Suggested methods of learning and reinforcement:

Students can construct understanding by drawing the words’ definitions; organizing concept maps that include word parts, synonyms, antonyms, and examples; composing memory-aiding songs that explain the words or use them in a meaningful context; and employing the words to create newspaper articles, stories, or poems.

Grades 6–8: Vocabulary From “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz” (article and work sheet)

• **addiction** (*noun*): Addiction is a brain disease because drugs actually change the brain and how it works. People who are addicted can’t stop using drugs even when they really want to and even after it causes terrible consequences to their health and other parts of their lives. Addiction can be treated, but it is common for people to need treatment more than once after relapsing (starting to use again). (*Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse*)

• **hype** (*noun*): shared, often unfounded, excitement about something or someone

• **impair** (*verb*): to harm, to negatively affect

• **intoxication** (*noun*): a drunken or drugged state

• **legalize** (*verb*): to make something legal, or allowed by the law

• **mounting** (*adjective*): building, increasing

• **premature** (*adjective*): happening before it’s supposed to

• **regular** (*adjective*): constant, steady, occurring often

• **resin** (*noun*): a sticky substance that comes from a plant or tree

• **secondhand** (*adjective*): indirect

• **secondhand exposure [to tobacco]** (*noun*): also see secondhand smoke. Inhaling tobacco smoke that has been exhaled by a smoker or given off by burning tobacco.

• **secondhand smoke** (*noun*): also see secondhand exposure. Tobacco smoke that is exhaled by a smoker or is given off by burning tobacco, and is inhaled by others nearby.

Grades 9–12: Vocabulary From “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz” (article and work sheet)

• **addiction** (*noun*): A chronic, relapsing disease characterized by compulsive drug seeking and abuse and by long-lasting chemical changes in the brain (*Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse*)

• **hype** (*noun*): excessive or unsupported publicity about something or someone

- **impair** (*verb*): to render incapable or interfere with normal functioning
- **intoxication** (*noun*): inebriation due to the use of alcohol or mind-altering drugs
- **legalize** (*verb*): to change a behavior’s status from against the law to legal
- **mounting** (*adjective*): escalating, intensifying
- **premature** (*adjective*): occurring earlier than intended
- **regular** (*adjective*): habitual, recurrent
- **resin** (*noun*): a sticky substance derived from a plant or tree
- **secondhand** (*adjective*): indirect, derivative
- **secondhand exposure [to tobacco]** (*noun*): also see secondhand smoke. Inhaling tobacco smoke that has been exhaled by a smoker or given off by burning tobacco.
- **secondhand smoke** (*noun*): also see secondhand exposure. Tobacco smoke that is exhaled by a smoker or is given off by burning tobacco, and is inhaled by others nearby.

3 Expanded Writing Prompts for “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz”

scholastic.com/headsup/breaking-down-marijuana/article

To encourage and assess close reading of the student article “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz,” use the following writing prompts for quick five-minute “freewrites” of a few sentences each. Instruct students to include evidence from the text in their responses.

Grades 6–8

- **[Skill: Comprehension]** Describe the ways in which marijuana use can affect a young person’s brain and life.
- **[Skill: Author’s Purpose]** Analyze the author’s purpose in writing the article “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz.” What impact might the author aim to have on individuals?

Grades 9–10

- **[Skill: Comprehension]** Summarize the reasons why marijuana use has risks for teens.
- **[Skill: Structure]** How does the “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz” time line at the bottom of the

article support and expand on the article’s main message? Use details from both the time line and the article to support your claim.

Think It Through: Why might the author have included this information in a time line rather than in the body of the article?

Grades 11–12

- **[Skill: Argument]** Explain how you would convince a friend to avoid marijuana use.
- **[Skill: Inference]** How might marijuana’s effects on the brain contribute to the outcomes described in the “Life Effects” section of the article “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz”? Choose three effects and trace them to the specific brain changes that might have contributed, inferring the sequence of events that might connect them.

4 Expanded Paired-Text Reading Suggestions for “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz”

scholastic.com/headsup/breaking-down-marijuana/article

Deepen student learning of “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz” with the following paired-text reading suggestions and prompts for writing and discussion.

Informational Text: Marijuana’s Impacts on the Brain

- **Materials:** The article “Marijuana: Mind Over Matter” teens.drugabuse.gov/mindovermatter/marijuana
- **Writing Prompt:**
Grades 6–8
► Using evidence from both “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz” and “Mind Over Matter,” evaluate the truth of this claim: “Because marijuana is natural, it is safe for anyone to use.”

Informational Text: Marijuana FAQs for Teens

- **Materials:** The article “Marijuana: Facts for Teens” drugabuse.gov/marijuana-teens-faqs
- **Writing Prompts:**
Grades 9–10
► How do both “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz” and “Marijuana: Facts for Teens” treat marijuana and its risks? Which approach resonates more with you and why?

Grades 11–12

- Compare and contrast the ways that both “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz” and “Marijuana: Facts for Teens” discuss the harms of marijuana. Include examples of two scientific facts that you learned more about by synthesizing details from both articles.

5 Expanded Grades 6–12 Standards Chart

scholastic.com/headsup/breaking-down-marijuana

The “Marijuana: Breaking Down the Buzz” article, lesson plan, work sheet, and Additional Tools document support higher standards by giving students opportunities to practice key literacy skills while acquiring scientific knowledge relevant to health, life skills, and current events.

Subject	Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts	Next Generation Science Standards	National Science Education Standards	National Council for the Social Studies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science Literacy • English Language Arts • Health/ Life Skills • Current Events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RI.1 Cite textual evidence • RI.2 Central idea and details • W.2 Write informative texts • W.7 Synthesize multiple texts when writing • W.9 Use evidence in analytical writing • RST.4 Domain-specific vocabulary • RST.5 Text structure (time line) • RST.6 Author’s purpose • RST.7 Quantitative data (double line graph) • RST.8 Evaluate a claim • RST.9 Compare and contrast two texts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LS1.A Structure and Function • LS1.D Information Processing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure and Function in Living Things • Personal and Community Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Development and Identity