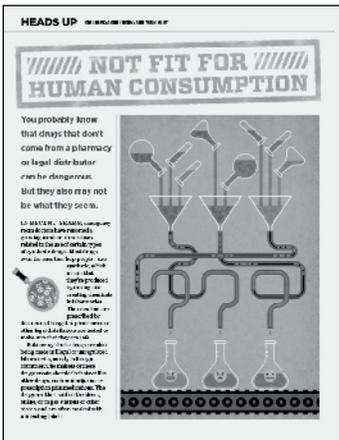


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**Subjects**

- Science Literacy
- English Language Arts
- Health/Life Skills

**Common Core State Standards**

- RST.6-8.1 / RST.9-10.1
- Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts
- W.6-8.1 / W.9-10.1
- Write arguments to support claims, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence

**Next Generation Science Standards**

- MS-PS1.A / HS-PS1.A
- Structure and Properties of Matter
- MS-LS3.B / HS-LS3.B
- Information Processing

**National Science Education Standards**

- Properties and Changes of Properties in Matter/ Structure and Properties of Matter
- Personal Health

**National Council for the Social Studies**

- 4. Individual Development and Identity
- 8. Science, Technology, and Society

# Not Fit for Human Consumption

In recent years, there has been a rise in the number of health emergencies and overdoses related to drugs that are made illegally in laboratories. Synthetic drugs are created in these labs to mimic the effects of other, more commonly known substances, such as marijuana and prescription pain medications. But these unregulated drugs can be even more dangerous than their counterparts. In “Not Fit for Human Consumption” students will learn what synthetic drugs are and why they are dangerous. You can help students stay safe from synthetic drugs by sharing the article and paired worksheet (see reverse side), and teaching the lesson below.



## Critical-Thinking Questions

- 1) Why might a synthetic drug pose more health risks than its more familiar counterpart? Use evidence from the text to support your answer. *(Answers may include: Synthetic drugs made in illegal laboratories may have different chemicals that make them more powerful. There is no way to know what chemicals the drugs contain and in what amounts. The chemicals in synthetic drugs can have different or stronger effects on the body. For example, synthetic cannabinoids have a stronger effect on the brain than THC, the main active ingredient in marijuana.)*
- 2) Officials try to reduce the misuse of drugs by regulating their use and making them illegal. Why is this approach difficult with synthetic drugs? *(Answers may include that the makers of synthetic drugs can add misleading labels to products, such as “Not Fit for Human Consumption.”)*
- 3) Why is it important to use only prescription medications that have been prescribed by a doctor and bought directly from a pharmacy? *(Answers may include that medications such as pills bought on the street or online may be counterfeit. The effects of these medications can be unpredictable and may be deadly because they may contain hidden chemicals such as fentanyl.)*

## Writing Prompts

- **Grades 6–8:** Explain what a synthetic drug is and how it is different from the drug it is designed to mimic.
- **Grades 9–10:** The article states that the effect of synthetic drugs is unpredictable. Use evidence from the text to support this statement.
- **Grades 11–12:** The U.S. is currently experiencing an overdose crisis related to opioids. How might synthetic drugs play

a role in this crisis? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

## Student Worksheet

The worksheet on the reverse side includes fill-in-the-blank questions to reinforce comprehension of the article. It also includes a prompt for students to use the information they have learned to create a poster warning teens about the dangers of synthetic drugs.

**Answers—Part 1:**

1. laboratories; designed. 2. powerful.
3. Spice; K2; cannabinoids. 4. THC.
5. “bath salts.” 6. Counterfeit; fentanyl.
7. misleading. 8. addiction; overdose.

**Part 2:** Each student poster, flyer, or meme should include elements that grab the reader’s attention, such as startling facts or statistics or eye-catching visuals. It should include facts about why synthetic drugs are dangerous and advice about how to stay safe.

## Tiered Vocabulary Tools

Visit [scholastic.com/headsup/not\\_fit\\_for\\_human\\_consumption](https://scholastic.com/headsup/not_fit_for_human_consumption) for a tiered vocabulary list to support this article.

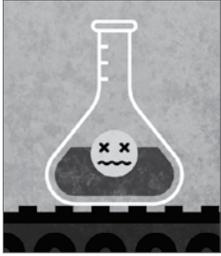
## Paired Reading

- “Drug Facts: Spice” (<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/spice>)
- **Writing Prompt:** Explain the dangers of the synthetic drug Spice. Include why it may affect a person’s body differently than marijuana. Use text evidence from “Not Fit for Human Consumption” and “Drug Facts: Spice” to support your answer.

## Additional Teaching Resources

- [headsup.scholastic.com/teachers](https://headsup.scholastic.com/teachers)
- [teens.drugabuse.gov](https://teens.drugabuse.gov)

# HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT SYNTHETIC DRUGS?



**Part 1:** Use the information from the article “Not Fit for Human Consumption” to answer the questions below about synthetic drugs and their effects.

<b>THC</b>	<b>cannabinoids</b>	<b>laboratories</b>	<b>stimulant</b>	<b>counterfeit</b>	<b>designed</b>
<b>K2</b>	<b>addiction</b>	<b>misleading</b>	<b>overdose</b>	<b>cathinones</b>	<b>powerful</b>
<b>Spice</b>	<b>synthetic</b>	<b>natural</b>	<b>“bath salts”</b>	<b>fentanyl</b>	<b>reduce</b>

- Synthetic drugs made in illegal \_\_\_\_\_ can contain chemicals \_\_\_\_\_ to act like other drugs.
- One reason synthetic drugs are dangerous is they often have added chemicals that make them more \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are drugs made of dried plant leaves sprayed with synthetic \_\_\_\_\_ that can cause dangerous health problems, including heart attacks.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is the main active ingredient in marijuana.
- Like the stimulant drugs they mimic, \_\_\_\_\_ contain chemicals called cathinones, which can cause hallucinations, paranoia, and a dangerous increase in heart rate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ prescription medications sold on the street have been found to contain hidden amounts of the powerful synthetic opioid \_\_\_\_\_.
- The producers of illegal synthetic drugs sometimes package the drugs with labels that are \_\_\_\_\_.
- Both legitimate and illegal synthetic opioids can pose a high risk for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**Part 2:** Use the information in the article and your own Internet research from reliable sources to create a poster, flyer, or meme warning other teens about the dangers of synthetic drugs.

**Points to consider:** What images can you use to grab the reader’s attention? What important facts do you think people need to know? What advice would you give teens about synthetic drugs?