

DRUGS IN SOCIETY



MODULE 1

◆ National Institute on Drug Abuse ◆

MODULE 1: DRUGS IN SOCIETY

Introduction

This introductory *Brain Power!* mission is designed to encourage the students to think about drugs, and their impact on our society. They will be asked to think about the differences between legal and illegal drugs and to find examples in the media that show how drugs are presented. The students may be surprised to discover that drugs are mentioned often in all types of media. After making this observation, they will have a better understanding of why drug use is a pervasive problem in our society.

Learning Objectives

- ★ Students understand the difference between legal and illegal drugs.
- ★ Students find examples of how drugs are presented in the media.
- ★ Students create a scrapbook identifying how drugs are presented in print media, movies, and electronic media.
- ★ Students draw conclusions about why drug use is a pervasive problem in our culture.

Relationship to the National Science Education Standards

This mission aligns with one standard in the NSES: science in personal and social perspectives. The chart below shows how the mission aligns with this standard.

Science in Personal and Social Perspectives

Levels K-4	How Mission is Aligned
Personal health	The students develop an understanding of what drugs are and how they are used so that they can learn how to make decisions that affect their health.



Background

Drugs can be broadly defined as substances that change the way the brain and body function. One of the key messages that the students learn during this module is that some drugs are legal, while others are not. Legal drugs include medications, caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol. Even though legal for adults, tobacco (which contains nicotine) and alcohol are illegal for children. Drugs that are illegal for everyone, all the time, include marijuana and cocaine. As this list shows, legal drugs can be helpful, but certain legal drugs, such as alcohol, can cause tremendous damage. All drugs can affect the brain and body, and children should only take drugs that are given to them by a trusted adult.

During the second part of the activity, the students will look in magazines, newspapers, on the Internet, and in movies to find out how illegal and legal drugs are presented in our society. They will discover that often drugs are shown as being enticing and appealing. Both men and women shown using drugs are, in many cases, attractive, well dressed, and seem to be having a great time. The fact that drugs are paired with such positive qualities sends a confusing message to kids. Once the students learn how widespread drug use is, they will have a better understanding of why drugs are such a serious problem in our society.

This activity will lay the foundation for the remaining activities in the program, which focus on how drugs affect the brain and the nervous system. By the end of the program, the students will have a better idea of why people are tempted to try drugs, but they will also know why—based on scientific fact—it is so important to resist that temptation.

Materials

- ✓ Paper and pencils
- ✓ Markers
- ✓ Videotape and VCR
- ✓ Trading cards
- ✓ Old newspapers and magazines
- ✓ Computer with Internet access



Preparation

- ★ Decide how you want to conduct this activity. You could have the students develop their scrapbooks individually or in groups of two or three.

Procedure

1. Begin the mission by discussing the difference between legal and illegal drugs. Ask the students if they can name some legal drugs. Write down their responses on a sheet of paper. Next, ask them to name some illegal drugs, and write down those responses as well. Examples of each are listed below:

Legal Drugs

- Caffeine (in coffee, tea, and many soft drinks)
- Medication for headaches, colds, and other illnesses

Legal for Adults

- Alcohol
- Nicotine (in cigarettes)

Illegal Drugs

- Marijuana
- Cocaine

2. After developing the lists, help the students understand the differences between legal and illegal drugs. Many legal drugs, such as medications, are helpful but must be taken carefully, in the right dosage, and under the right circumstances. Some legal drugs, such as cigarettes and alcohol, may be purchased only when individuals reach a certain age (e.g., an individual must be at least 21 to purchase alcohol in the United States). Illegal drugs are all harmful in some way, and illegal for everyone.
3. Have the students watch the video. Stop the tape at the break.
4. Now that the students have an idea of the kinds of drugs commonly used, give them an opportunity to find examples of them in the popular media. First, decide if you want the students to work in pairs or in small groups. Then organize the class accordingly.



5. Tell the students that their mission is to create a scrapbook showing how drugs are presented in the media. The scrapbook should include examples from newspapers, magazines, the Internet, television, and movies. Be careful to select media that are appropriate for this age group. Some media may contain images that aren't appropriate for children this age.
6. Give the students class time to work on their scrapbooks. Pass out the magazines and newspapers and have them look for pictures to include in their scrapbooks. The students can also check on the Internet for examples. With their groups, they should brainstorm on how drugs are portrayed in the movies and on television.
7. After the students have completed their scrapbooks, watch the remainder of the video. At the conclusion of the video, have each group make a presentation to the class. During the presentations, ask the students questions, such as: Was it difficult to find pictures of drugs commonly used? Where did you find cigarette ads? Where did you find alcohol ads? Why do you think these kinds of media advertise these substances? Then conclude the activity by discussing the similarities and differences among the scrapbooks. What features do all the scrapbooks share? How are they different?

Tell the students to keep their scrapbooks to use in later modules.

Discussion Questions

- ? Discuss with the class how drug use is portrayed in the media. For example, what do the people drinking or smoking look like? Are they well dressed and attractive? Are they engaged in an appealing activity, such as picnicking in the park, or laying on the beach? Ask the students if they think these images make drug use more attractive to young people. If so, do they think that the media contributes to drug use in our society?
- ? After the students have watched the video, discuss the question that Corty has posed: Why do they think that people take illegal drugs, even when they know that they are bad for them? Tell the students that they will be competing in two groups, one against the other, for some of the activities.
- ? Create a class diagram showing the similarities and differences between how drugs are portrayed in print versus other kinds of media. Does one kind of medium portray drugs more positively or negatively than another kind? What conclusions can the students draw by analyzing the diagram?



Extensions

The activities listed below provide a link to other areas of the curriculum.



Language arts



Math



Drama



Art



Science



Social Studies



Reading

	<p>Design a class mural showing how drugs are portrayed in society. Encourage the students to include as many different examples of drug use as they can.</p>
	<p>Have each student write a summary of what they have learned about how drugs are portrayed in society. Ask for volunteers to read their essays to the class, and ask the students to note on what characteristics each student is focusing. What aspects of this issue have made an impression on the class?</p>
	<p>Have the students write a short play showing how drugs are portrayed in society. Students can then perform the play for other classes in the school.</p>






Assessment

1. View this module as a pre-assessment of what the students already know about drug use. Consider the following questions:
 - How much prior knowledge do the students have of the topic?
 - Do the students have misconceptions about drug use?
2. Keep a record of questions the students raised while working on the module to refer to as they work on subsequent modules in the program.

Additional Activities

Below are some additional activities that can be used after the students complete the first mission. These activities are extensions to many other areas of the curriculum.

	<p>Have the students make a list of the different contexts in which they find drugs mentioned. Possibilities include for medical use, as part of a criminal investigation, and in advertisements.</p>
	<p>Ask the students to take a poll of the adults they know, asking them what their opinion is of both legal and illegal drugs. Have them ask the adults to consider when they think drugs are helpful and when they are harmful. Finally, have the students ask the adults about both legal and illegal drugs, and their impact on society.</p>
	<p>Have the students write letters introducing themselves to the other group working on the activities in this program. Even though a competition is being set up between the two groups, encourage them to be polite and considerate in their letters.</p>



Notes:



Resources for Teachers

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)

301-443-1124

www.drugabuse.gov

This Web site contains information about drug abuse and a section designed specifically for parents, teachers, and students. Publications and other materials are available free of charge.

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI)

1-800-729-6686

www.health.org

NCADI is the world's largest resource for information and materials concerning substance abuse. Many free publications are available here.

Eisenhower National Clearinghouse (ENC)

www.enc.org

This Web site provides useful information and products to improve mathematics and science teaching and learning.

Drugs and Society: Behavioral Medicines and Abusable Drugs. [Leccese, A. P.] Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall College Division, 1991.

Covering a range of drugs, this book addresses the societal views of medicines and abused drugs, and the motivation theories for their use and abuse.



Resources for Students

Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP): Step Up: A Guide for Teens

www.freevibe.com/Drug_Facts/media_hype.asp

This Web site provides information directed at teens about how the media influences perceptions of drugs and drug use.

Why Do People Take Drugs? [Westcott, P.] Chicago, IL: Raintree Publishers, 2001.

The students will find this book to be a good starting point when answering the question of why people take drugs. It covers the various cultural and individual perceptions people have about drug use and how laws governing it differ around the world.

Drugs and the Media. [Lee, M. P.] New York, NY: The Rosen Publishers, 1994.

In a straightforward, concise manner, this book presents a variety of propaganda techniques in the media, including advertising, entertainment, and news.



Introductory Story for Module 1: DRUGS IN SOCIETY

Beth and Juan are members of the *Brain Power! Club*. They are hanging out in the club house reading magazines. Beth is looking at an ad for alcohol, showing happy people drinking.

Beth says, "You know, Juan, I just can't believe magazines are allowed to run ads like this after all we've learned about how bad drinking alcohol is for you."

Juan says, "Let me see," and he takes a look at the ad. He replies, "Yeah, I've seen ads like that, too, with people drinking and looking all happy and smiling. Don't they know that alcohol can kill brain cells if they drink enough?"

Beth jokes, "And some of us need every brain cell we have!" as she bounces a large soft rubber ball off of Juan's head.

Juan rubs his head and says, "Speak for yourself."

"But it bugs me that the advertisers make it seem like drinking is cool," Beth says.

"Maybe they're a little short on brain cells!" Juan says.

They go back to thumbing through the magazines when Corty, the animated brain, pops out of the pages, startling the kids. "Hi Kids!" Corty says. "I brought some friends." Corty introduces Latisha and Jay from the *Spectacular Scientists Club*.

"Uh-oh, I feel a mission coming on!" Corty says all excited. "Mission alert! Mission alert!"

Jay and Latisha look at Corty like he's crazy. "Wow! What's wrong with him?!" asks Jay.

"Oh, he just loves missions," says Juan. "I'm Juan and this is my friend Beth. We're Junior Scientists and what we're studying is the problem of drugs in our society."

Juan chimes in, "And when we say 'drugs,' we mean things like alcohol and cigarettes, too."

"Hey, that's what we've been working on, too," says Jay. "Have you learned about the difference between legal and illegal drugs?"

Beth replies, "Yeah, medications for headaches and colds are legal, but they should only be given by a trusted adult."

Juan adds, "Cigarettes and alcohol are legal for adults, but they can still do a lot of damage. And they're always illegal for kids! But drugs like marijuana and cocaine are illegal for everyone."

Beth picks up the magazine that she and Juan were reading before and says, "Before you came in, we were talking about all the ads you see for liquor, wine, and beer, and how the people in the ads always seem so cool and happy."



Corty chimes in, "That has a lot to do with your mission. Your mission is to find out why people keep taking drugs that are bad for them. I hope you will all work together on this challenge."

The kids settle down to work. Juan says, "There are ads that make smoking and drinking look cool, but why do people use illegal drugs? And where do they find out about them, anyway?"

Latisha says, "We get information about drugs in newspapers, magazines, and on TV. I have an idea. Let's make a scrapbook showing all the different places you can get information on illegal drugs."

The kids get busy building a scrapbook. When they are done, they begin flipping through it. When they turn the page, there's Corty, flattened inside the plastic photo sleeve. The kids are surprised to see him in there.

Corty laughs, comes out of the scrapbook, and says, "Well, how did you do?"

Juan replies, "We've gathered a lot of information on how advertisers and the media sell things that really aren't very good for people."

Jay adds, "They make drinking and smoking look fun and cool, even though they can be harmful."

Latisha says, "And in movies, you see people using illegal drugs, and sometimes it seems like they're having a really good time, too. So that's almost like an advertisement, although it's not supposed to be."

Beth says, "So in a way, we understand why people might start using them, but what we still don't understand is why they keep using drugs."

Juan says, "Yeah. They must know they can get really sick."

"I'd also like to know why some TV commercials and advertisements make bad things look good," says Juan.

Corty replies, "Those are really good points. So what can you do about it?"

Juan says, "Well, we can tell our friends about what we've learned: that just because something looks good doesn't mean it is."

Jay says, "And we can control what we put in our bodies, so we can serve as good examples to others."

Corty says, "Those are all really great ideas. Next time, we're going to learn about how drugs and alcohol affect our brains—a subject near and dear to me."



Brain Power!



NIDA

Junior Scientists

Brain Power!



NIDA

Junior Scientists

Corty

NIDA



Corty is the *Brain Power!* Club's trusty partner. Corty knows all about science and scientific inquiry, which helps the *Brain Power!* Club solve problems. Corty receives instructions from the NIDA Mission Control Center and sends the kids to complete their missions.

Beth

NIDA



Beth is a Junior Scientist in the *Brain Power!* Club. She receives missions about the brain and drugs from the NIDA Mission Control Center. More than anything, Beth wants to be a scientist one day so she can help people.

Brain Power!



NIDA

Junior Scientists

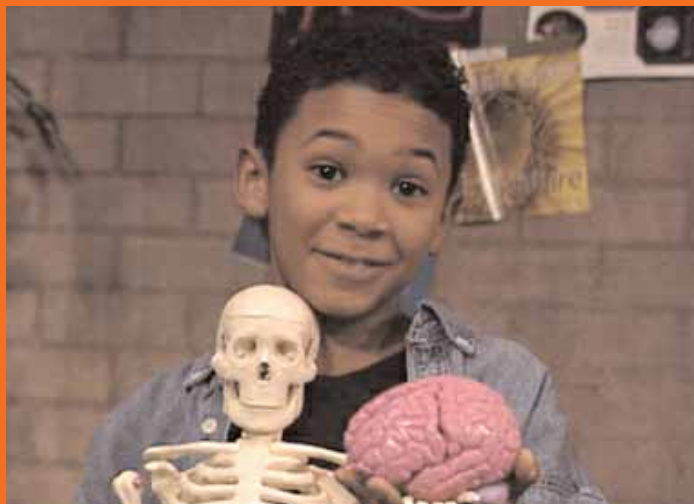
Brain Power!



NIDA

Junior Scientists

★ Juan ★ NIDA



Juan is a Junior Scientist in the *Brain Power!* Club. Juan loves science and is always ready for a challenge from the NIDA Mission Control Center. He is always looking for ways to learn new things and try out fun activities and experiments.

★ Brain Power! Club ★ NIDA



The *Brain Power!* Club is a group of smart Junior Scientists who want to learn about the brain and how to stay healthy. They meet in the *Brain Power!* Club house and receive missions from the NIDA Mission Control Center about how drugs affect the brain.

Brain Power!



NIDA

Junior Scientists

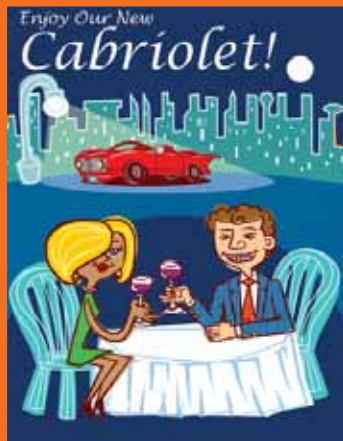
Brain Power!



NIDA

Junior Scientists

Media Matters NIDA



Media are ways of communicating to the general public (television, radio, newspapers, magazines, Internet, and billboards). These forms of media may contain messages in the form of advertisements, commercials, or stories that try to get people to buy products. Not all of these messages are healthy. Think twice before you believe everything you see and hear!

Spectacular Scientists Club NIDA



The *Spectacular Scientists Club (SSC)* is a group of kids who are learning about science. The kids in the *SSC* are visiting from out of town and want to help solve missions with the *Brain Power!* kids. The two groups will learn the importance of working as a team.

Corty

N/DA



Corty is the *Brain Power!* Club's trusty partner. Corty knows all about science and scientific inquiry, which helps the *Brain Power!* Club solve problems. Corty receives instructions from the NIDA Mission Control Center and sends the kids to complete their missions.

Beth

N/DA



Beth is a Junior Scientist in the *Brain Power!* Club. She receives missions about the brain and drugs from the NIDA Mission Control Center. More than anything, Beth wants to be a scientist one day so she can help people.

Juan

NIDA



Juan is a Junior Scientist in the *Brain Power!* Club. Juan loves science and is always ready for a challenge from the NIDA Mission Control Center. He is always looking for ways to learn new things and try out fun activities and experiments.

Brain Power! Club

NIDA



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N/DA



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BRAIN POWER NEWS

PARENT NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1

Introducing the NIDA Junior Scientists Program

Your child is working on the first module of the *National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Junior Scientists Program*. NIDA is a component of the National Institutes of Health, the largest supporter of health research in the world. Geared to students in fourth and fifth grades, the program discusses the following topics:

- Impact of illegal and legal drugs on our society;
- Different functions of the brain;
- Process of neurotransmission;
- Effects of stimulants on the brain and body;
- Effects of alcohol, marijuana, and inhalants on the brain and body; and
- Addiction.

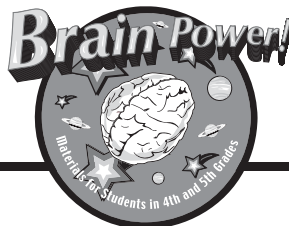
The overall purpose of the program is to lay a foundation for students to make better decisions about their own health in the future. This newsletter is designed to provide you with information so that you can reinforce at home what your child has been learning in school. Each module has a parent newsletter that includes the following:

- The content of the module;
- Activities you can do at home with your child; and
- Additional resources for more information.

We hope that you and your child enjoy working on the program together and that the knowledge gained now will serve your family well in the future.

Drugs in Society

Module 1 is designed to encourage students to think about what drugs are, and the impact they have on our society. For this module, we define a drug as any substance that changes the way the body and brain work; examples include medicines, alcohol, caffeine, nicotine, and illegal drugs like marijuana and cocaine. Students will learn the differences between legal and illegal drugs and find examples in the media that show how information about drugs is presented. Students may be surprised to discover that drugs are mentioned often in all types of media. After making this observation, students will have a better understanding of why drug use is such a serious problem to our society.



During *Module 1*, students will look in magazines, newspapers, on the Internet, and in movies to find out how drugs are portrayed in our society. Students will discover that often drugs are shown as being enticing and appealing. Both men and women shown using drugs are, in many cases, attractive, well dressed, and look successful. The fact that drugs are paired with such positive qualities sends a confusing message to kids. Once the students learn how widespread drug abuse is, they will have a better understanding of why drugs pose such a serious problem to our society.

This activity aligns with a standard identified in the National Science Education Standards, guidelines developed in 1996 by the National Academy of Sciences to help schools know what information should be covered in kindergarten through high school. This standard, science in personal and social perspectives, stresses the importance of understanding what drugs are and how they are used so that the students can learn how to make decisions that affect their health.

Science at Home

Ask your child to help you find examples in the media that show how drugs are portrayed. Watch TV or a movie with your child, look through magazines and newspaper articles, listen to music, or surf the Internet. Discuss how the drugs are portrayed, and how the people look who are using these drugs. Talk to your child about these drugs and the confusion that can happen when the media portrays them in a positive manner.

Additional Resources

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) — www.drugabuse.gov
301-443-1124

This Web site contains information about drug abuse and a section designed specifically for parents, teachers, and students. Publications and other materials are available free of charge.

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI) — www.health.org
1-800-729-6686

NCADI is the world's largest resource for information and materials concerning substance abuse. Many free publications are available here.

Why Do People Take Drugs? [Westcott, P.] Chicago, IL: Raintree Publishers, 2001. Students will find this book to be a good starting point when beginning to answer the question of why people take drugs. It covers the various cultural and individual perceptions people have about drug use and how laws governing it differ around the world.

Drugs and the Media. [Lee, M. P.] New York, NY: The Rosen Publishers, 1994. In a straightforward, concise manner, this book presents a variety of propaganda techniques in the media, including advertising, entertainment, and news.

NOTICIAS SOBRE EL PODER DEL CEREBRO

BOLETÍN INFORMATIVO PARA PADRES

VOLUMEN 1, NÚMERO 1

Introducción al Programa Pequeños Científicos del Instituto Nacional sobre el Abuso de Drogas

Su hijo está trabajando en el primer módulo del Programa Pequeños Científicos (*Junior Scientists Program*) del Instituto Nacional sobre el Abuso de Drogas (*National Institute on Drug Abuse o NIDA*). El NIDA es un componente de los Institutos Nacionales de la Salud (*National Institutes of Health*), el mayor partidario de la investigación sobre la salud en el mundo. Dirigido a estudiantes de cuarto y quinto grado, el programa explica los siguientes temas:

- El impacto de las drogas ilegales y legales en nuestra sociedad;
- Las diferentes funciones del cerebro;
- Los procesos de neurotransmisión;
- Los efectos de los estimulantes en el cerebro y el cuerpo;
- Los efectos del alcohol, la marihuana y los inhalantes en el cerebro y el cuerpo; y
- La adicción.

El propósito general del programa es establecer un cimiento para que los estudiantes tomen mejores decisiones acerca de su propia salud en el futuro. Este boletín informativo está diseñado para brindarle información a fin de que usted refuerce en el hogar lo que su hijo está aprendiendo en la escuela. A cada módulo le corresponde un boletín informativo para padres que incluye lo siguiente:

- El contenido del módulo;
- Actividades que puede realizar en el hogar con su hijo; y
- Recursos adicionales para más información.

Esperamos que usted y su hijo disfruten trabajando juntos en el programa y que en el futuro su familia pueda beneficiarse del conocimiento adquirido ahora.

Las drogas en la sociedad

El *Módulo 1* está diseñado para animar a los estudiantes a pensar en lo que son las drogas y el impacto que tienen en nuestra sociedad. Para este módulo definimos una droga como una sustancia que altera la forma en que funcionan el cuerpo y el cerebro; los ejemplos incluyen medicamentos, alcohol, cafeína, nicotina y drogas ilegales como la marihuana y la cocaína. Los estudiantes aprenderán las diferencias entre drogas legales e ilegales, y encontrarán ejemplos en los medios de comunicación que muestren el modo en que se presenta información sobre las drogas. Los estudiantes se podrían sorprender al descubrir que las drogas se mencionan a menudo en todas las formas de medios de comunicación. Después de observar esto, los estudiantes tendrán una mejor comprensión de por qué el uso de drogas es un problema tan grave para nuestra sociedad.



Durante el *Módulo 1*, los estudiantes buscarán en revistas, periódicos, la Internet y películas las maneras en que se representan las drogas en nuestra sociedad. Los estudiantes descubrirán que a menudo las drogas se muestran como seductoras y atractivas. Tanto los hombres como las mujeres que se muestran usando drogas son, en muchos casos, atractivos, están bien vestidos y parecen exitosos. El hecho de que las drogas se vinculen con tales cualidades positivas envía un mensaje confuso a los niños. Una vez que los estudiantes aprendan lo difundido que es el abuso de las drogas, comprenderán mejor por qué éstas representan un problema tan grave para nuestra sociedad.

Esta actividad cumple con un estándar identificado en los Estándares Nacionales de Educación Científica (National Science Education Standards), pautas desarrolladas en 1996 por la Academia Nacional de Ciencias (National Academy of Sciences) para ayudar a las escuelas a saber qué información se debe cubrir desde el kindergarten hasta la escuela secundaria. Este estándar, ciencia en perspectivas personales y sociales, enfatiza la importancia de comprender qué son las drogas y cómo se usan para que puedan aprender a tomar decisiones que afectan su salud.

La ciencia en el hogar

Pida a su hijo que le ayude a buscar ejemplos en los medios de comunicación que muestren cómo se representan las drogas. Mire televisión o una película con su hijo, busquen en revistas y artículos de periódico, escuchen música o naveguen en Internet. Conversen acerca de cómo se representan las drogas y cómo se ven las personas que están usando estas drogas. Hable con su hijo sobre estas drogas y la confusión que puede ocurrir cuando los medios de comunicación las representan de manera positiva.

Recursos adicionales

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA): www.drugabuse.gov
301-443-1124

Este sitio Web tiene información acerca del abuso de drogas y una sección destinada específicamente a padres, maestros y estudiantes. Hay publicaciones y otros materiales disponibles sin costo. Muchas publicaciones están disponibles en español.

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI): www.health.org
1-800-729-6686

El NCADI es el recurso mundial más grande para encontrar información y materiales relacionados con el abuso de sustancias. Aquí se pueden obtener muchas publicaciones gratuitas.

Why Do People Take Drugs? [Westcott, P.] Chicago, IL: Raintree Publishers, 2001. Los estudiantes considerarán este libro un buen punto de partida para comenzar a responder la pregunta sobre por qué la gente consume drogas. Cubre las varias percepciones culturales e individuales que la gente tiene sobre el uso de drogas y cómo difiere el modo en que la ley lo regula en el mundo.

Drugs and the Media. [Lee, M. P.] New York, NY: The Rosen Publishers, 1994. De manera directa y concisa, este libro presenta una variedad de técnicas de propaganda en los medios de comunicación, incluyendo publicidad, entretenimiento y noticias.

Drugs In Society



INFORMATION ABOUT DRUGS IS ALL OVER THE MEDIA.
WHAT ARE THEY REALLY SAYING?