

## Learning Activity

### What you see versus what you get

#### Materials

- SMART board
- Examples of substance use in media (images or video clips)
- Chart paper or white board and markers

#### Prepare Ahead

- Search online for examples of substance use in media, especially in movies, music, and TV shows that are popular among students in the class
- [IMDB](#) includes information about substance use in movies/shows (Parents Guide)
- Examples from movies:
  - Alcohol consumption in Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince
  - Alcohol consumption in Beauty and the Beast
  - Alcohol consumption in Guardians of the Galaxy (video game and film)
  - Alcohol consumption in The Hunger Games series (one of the main characters is an alcoholic and shown drinking on screen repeatedly)
  - Tobacco and alcohol in Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them
  - Tobacco and alcohol in Snatched (14A)
  - Tobacco and alcohol in Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children
  - Tobacco and alcohol in Suicide Squad (PG-13)
  - Drugs and alcohol in Mike and Dave Need Wedding Dates (14A; R in USA)
  - Drugs, tobacco, and alcohol in Bad Moms (14A; R in USA)
  - Drugs and tobacco in Dirty Grandpa (14A; R in USA)
- Examples from TV shows:
  - Drugs, alcohol and caffeine pill addiction in Pretty Little Liars (14A)
  - Drugs, alcohol and tobacco in Teen Wolf
  - Drugs and alcohol in The Vampire Diaries (14A)
  - Alcohol and tobacco in Modern Family
- Examples from songs:
  - Tobacco and alcohol in *Castle on the Hill* by Ed Sheeran
  - Drugs and alcohol in *Here* by Alessia Cara
  - Alcohol consumption in *Royals* by Lorde (commentary on alcohol in music)
  - Alcohol consumption in *Say You Won't Let Go* by James Arthur

# Teaching Tool

## Grade 8: Substance Use

- Alcohol consumption in *It Ain't Me* by Selena Gomez
- Alcohol consumption in *Shape of You* by Ed Sheeran

### Instructions

- Organize students into small groups (3-4 students)
- Play a short clip of a popular song (including a reference to alcohol, drugs, or tobacco) and have students discuss what they heard
- Ask students to think about the TV shows and movies they watch and whether they have noticed any substance use. Ask them to discuss how substance use is depicted in their favourite shows, movies, songs, etc.
- Present images or video clips of examples and ask students to discuss how the use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco are depicted in the clip
- Ask students to discuss other places they might see substance use in the media (e.g. beer commercials) and how these depict substance use
- Move on to a whole class discussion about their perception of substance use in the media. Ask students what kinds of things they notice about how substance use is portrayed in ads, movies, TV shows, and songs.
- On chart paper or a whiteboard, create a t-chart and in the left column (Media) write down some of the students' reflections on the examples shown, using key words or phrases (e.g. "cool", "rich", "fun", "sick", "peer pressure", "gross", etc.)
- Ask students to discuss briefly with their groups what they know about the effects of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco (e.g. physical health, mental health, relationships, behaviours, etc.)
- Move on to a whole class discussion about the effects of substance use
- In the right column (Reality) of the t-chart, write down the effects identified by the students
- Ask the students to discuss with their groups the similarities and differences between media depictions and the real effects of substance use
- Ask students to discuss why media depictions glamorize substance use (i.e. what purposes and audience media creators are trying to reach, what messages they are trying to portray, and what factors, such as advertising dollars, influence the representations of substance use in media)

### Variations/Additions

- Students can find examples of depictions as homework and bring them in to present them to the class
- Students can complete their own t-charts using a graphic organizer worksheet when presented a video clip or image

# Teaching Tool

## Grade 8: Substance Use

- Students can demonstrate learning by creating an illustration contrasting media depictions of substance use and the reality of its effects
- This can be made into a group project in which small groups contrast depictions of one of the substances discussed and create some visual or textual comparison between media and reality. This can become a presentation to the whole class.