



'The Government Should Lower the Age at Which People Are Allowed to Buy Alcohol'

Discuss

Learning Objective: To understand the main effects of, and laws relating to, alcohol.

- Success Criteria:**
- To consider how culture, religion, experience, influence of others, values and attitudes may guide your opinions and viewpoints.
 - To practise the skill of debate and discussion.
 - To consider the physical and mental health impact of alcohol use.

Context: This is a daily debate lesson, ideal for use in tutor time or in a PSHE lesson. The topic up for debate is 'The government should lower the age at which people are allowed to buy alcohol.' Discuss. You might want to check with pastoral staff whether any child in the class might be particularly affected by this lesson, depending on circumstances at home.

Starter

A-Z

Ask students to work in pairs to write out the alphabet out and try to think of a type of alcohol or alcoholic drink starting with each letter. Reassure students that they might not know any at all, and that that is completely fine!

This activity will allow you to assess which students have knowledge and/or experience of alcohol and which students have very little awareness of alcohol.

Main Activities

Alcohol and the Law

Inform students about the law in relation to alcohol using the information on the slide. These facts and questions will get students to consider whether 18 is the correct legal age for buying alcohol and to begin thinking of reasons why.

Students may need help with the reasoning so you might want to discuss the influence of culture, religion, personal experience, friends and family, and personal values and attitudes. Encourage students to think about the dangers of underage drinking.

Put students in groups to develop more in-depth discussion about whether the age limit is correct and to consider any other factors that guide their opinions.

Effects of Alcohol

By asking students to list all of the effects of alcohol that they know about you can get a good understanding of their base level of knowledge and build upon this.

Working in pairs or small groups, students should complete [The Government Should Lower the Age at Which People are Allowed to Buy Alcohol - Activity Sheet](#). Through this activity, they should become aware of the long term physical and mental effects of alcohol as well as the short term physical effects. They may need help understanding what is meant by long and short term and the difference between physical and mental health effects. The purpose of the activity is to extend their knowledge from their base level at the beginning of the exercise. There is an extension activity and an answer sheet.

Alcohol and Age

This slide contains some different opinions about the legal age restriction on the purchase of alcohol. It is intended to provoke debate and give students some ideas and arguments to think about.

Class Debate

Print off a list of the numbers: 15, 16, 17, 18, 21. You could, alternatively, write these on sticky notes. Put students into groups and give one number to each group. Tell the students that they will now be debating the main statement: 'The government should lower the age at which people are allowed to buy alcohol.' Explain to the students that the reason their group has been given a number is for them to argue that their number is the appropriate age at which young people should be allowed to buy alcohol.

Get students to prepare their main arguments for the debate and to consider what others might say and develop counter arguments.

Can the class come to an age on which they all agree?

Plenary

Ask the students to list one thing that they already knew before today's lesson, two things that surprised them and three ways to discourage young people from drinking. Their answers could include restricting advertising, increasing the prices of alcohol, increasing the choice of non-alcoholic drinks in bars and pubs, giving free drinks to those who choose not to drink alcohol etc.
