

# Tobacco (Ages 8-9)



## Safeguarding considerations

Use the ground rules on PowerPoint Slide 1 to create an emotionally safe learning environment. The learning intentions for this lesson aim to help children make informed decisions about safer, healthy lifestyle choices. Children may have family members or carers who use tobacco or have had health issues. This could be through smoking, or in some communities, chewing tobacco, or the use of snuff. Children may feel concerned about people they know when discussing the potential impacts of tobacco use. It may be helpful to use a 'Tell me Anything' box where children can post any concerns for you to follow up. You cannot shield children from the facts that tobacco is harmful. Emphasise that using tobacco is a personal choice, and even though they may be worried about someone else, they can encourage but not necessarily make someone stop. Advise children there are health services that can help someone stop using tobacco e.g., doctors, stop-smoking services etc.



## Learning intentions

- I know that tobacco causes harm.
- I know why there are laws about using tobacco.

## Resources you will need

- Flipchart paper or a floor book
- PowerPoint Slides
- Individual whiteboards and pens
- Word bank (Slide 18 or see end of lesson plan)

## Activity notes

These activities should take approximately 60 minutes, depending on the amount of discussion.

Begin by sharing the ground rules on PowerPoint Slide 1, and the learning intentions on Slide 2.

**Activity 1 (15 minutes)** : It would be helpful to start this lesson by ascertaining what children already know about tobacco. Gaining an understanding of this now, will help you focus your input to spend more time on misconceptions / knowledge the children need, and less time on information they already know. Share PowerPoint Slide 3 and ask the children to discuss the prompt questions for around 5 minutes. The third picture on the slide is a shisha pipe which is used in some communities. Collect feedback and jot down the children's ideas on the whiteboard, or a piece of flipchart paper, under the following three headings: Harms; Why people use it: Laws. Children may consider e-cigarettes or vapes as tobacco. Explain these are different. Vapes/e-cigarettes contain the same drug as tobacco (nicotine), but tobacco has more harmful ingredients. Adults who want to give up smoking are encouraged (by health professionals) to switch to vapes, as they are less harmful. **However, vapes are not harm-free and we don't yet know the long-term harms.** They are not designed for young people. The next activity will help you clarify any of the children's misconceptions.

**Activity 2 (25 minutes)** : Explain to the class you are going to share lots of information about tobacco with them. They will need to listen carefully because afterwards there is going to be a quiz (in groups). Go through the information on PowerPoint Slides 4 to 7. Children can ask questions

## Links to Chameleon Themes

- Keeping safe
- Online life & media
- Emotional & mental health
- Relationships
- Sex education & puberty
- Future choices & money
- Health & fitness
- Personal skills development
- Sensitive issues
- Values, rights, responsibilities



during this phase of the task if there is anything they don't understand or that needs clarifying. Note, on Slide 5 there is a simplified diagram of the human body. Children can be fascinated by this, so you can use the diagram to show where the main body organs are. Try not to get distracted by lots of questions about the diagram. Just say the information they need is there for now, and they will learn more about the body when they are older (or you can come back to their questions at another time). Slide 6 discusses vaping. You could explain that many 100s of years ago people believed that tobacco was healthy, because there wasn't enough scientific evidence to show that it wasn't. Scientists already know that vapes are not a healthy choice but don't yet know what the long-term health problems of using vapes could be. Explain that if vapes contain nicotine they are still addictive. Vapes are also designed for adult bodies, so if younger people use them, they could be causing their bodies damage. Slide 7 contains information about the laws in the UK. It is illegal for under 18s to buy tobacco and vapes. If your school is in a different country, you can edit this slide to reflect your local laws.

Keep the children in their groups from Activity 1, and hand each group a mini-whiteboard and pen. Everyone is now going to do the quiz, and the groups should write down, true, false or don't know, for each statement you will show. Ask the children to reveal their answer each time, before moving on to the next statement. The quiz statements are on PowerPoint Slides 8-16, and you can also reveal the correct answer on each slide. Discuss as necessary and correct any misconceptions. You can choose to keep a tally of the children's scores or not.

**Activity 3 (20 minutes) :** This activity explores why some people choose to use tobacco. It also considers some of the common myths and misperceptions about using tobacco. Show the children the reasons on PowerPoint Slide 17, and briefly ask them to discuss in their groups if they feel that any of the reasons shown are an acceptable reason to use tobacco. Bring the class together and ask the children for their opinions. You may want to conduct this feedback session as a circle time. One or more of the following prompt questions might be helpful:

- Have you ever heard someone say they use tobacco for any of the reasons on the slide?
- Do you feel that some of the reasons are weak excuses for using tobacco?
- Do you think that any of the reasons are myths or fake news?
- Is it ever worth risking health by choosing to use tobacco?
- What are your thoughts about tobacco?
- Is using tobacco a choice?

In the discussion ensure you include the following 'myth-busting' :

- Tobacco does not eliminate long-term stress or provide calm. There is a short-term effect because of the addictive quality of nicotine. When this ends, the body craves more, so actually goes into a heightened state of stress/anxiety, until the next nicotine hit.
- Being addicted is challenging, but with the right help even the most challenging addictions can be managed.
- There are better ways to feel accepted and included, and someone shouldn't feel they have to risk their health to 'join in'.
- Just because family members/ friends use tobacco doesn't mean that everyone should. It's an individual's choice to make.
- When considering taking an unsafe risk, it's always wise to stop and think, and weigh up the pros and cons before making the choice. Can the children suggest any ideas of how to do this? E.g walk away, research facts, calming strategies, things someone might say or do?

If any child asks about the link between smoking and weight loss, you can explain that some people do gain weight after quitting smoking, but this is often because they have replaced the tobacco with unhealthy snacking to manage the nicotine withdrawal. Giving up smoking is the best thing someone can do for their health. Worrying about weight gain should not be something that stops an individual trying to give up tobacco.

Conclude the lesson by revisiting the learning intentions on Slide 2. Can the children answer the questions now? What new information have they learned? You may want them to write something down in response to the challenge questions. Remind children where they can access support if anything in today's lesson has made them feel worried.

You can use the word bank on Slide 18 (or print copies - see end of lesson plan), to support children's writing.

## Extension activity

We have not yet considered the financial implications of smoking. Challenge the children to calculate how much a person would spend on cigarettes if they smoked one packet per day. How much would they spend in a week? How about a month (30 days)? What about a year? How much in 10 years? Ask children to research what items could be purchased instead, for the same amounts of money.

## Adaptive teaching

During discussion tasks you could display the word bank on Slide 18 (or print copies - see end of lesson plan). The calculations for children during the extension activity may be challenging for some. You could do the calculations with the class, and then ask them to research the 'alternative items to purchase' independently. Take note of the safeguarding information at the start of this lesson plan, and have a mechanism for children to share worries, or anything that has upset them as a result of this learning.

## Assessment

You can assess the children's grasp of the learning intentions through:

- Their contributions to class and group discussions (you could record a sample of these in a floor book).
- The quiz
- The assessment at the end of the plenary.

## Connected learning

Discuss rights and responsibilities with the children. What rights do we have as individuals when it comes to someone choosing to use tobacco around us? If people choose to use tobacco, what responsibilities do they have in regard to others? You can extend this discussion beyond health, for example, by discussing the impact on the environment and/or the litter created by some smokers. Do the children feel that smoking should be banned?



# Tobacco word bank



nicotine

drug

choice

healthy

unhealthy

passive

addicted

laws

unfair

pressure

risky

smoking

chewed

sniffed

impress

age-limit

harmful

tar

substances

chemicals

body

lungs

heart

brain

disease

cancer

illness

cigarettes

breathe

illegal