



NEW FRONTIERS IN THE WAR ON DRUGS



Scan to review worksheet

Expemo code:
1A5P-H1LE-XK3N



1

Warm up

Discuss the questions in pairs or small groups.

1. How strict are drug laws in your country? Do you think they should be changed?
2. Do you think that private pharmaceutical companies have too much power?
3. Are prison sentences more effective than rehabilitation in relation to drugs?





2 Vocabulary

Match the word with the correct definition below. Check your answers with a partner.

Group 1

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. <u>opioid</u> (n) | a. doing something dangerous and not worrying about the risks |
| 2. <u>downplay</u> (v) | b. make something seem less important or less bad than it really is |
| 3. <u>red flag</u> (n) | c. a type of drug that includes prescription pain relievers |
| 4. <u>trafficking</u> (n) | d. a sign of danger |
| 5. <u>dispense</u> (v) | e. the act of buying or selling goods illegally |
| 6. <u>reckless</u> (adj.) | f. prepare and give out medicine |

Group 2

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. <u>combat</u> (v) | a. for the benefit of (sb) |
| 2. in (sb) best <u>interests</u> (idiom) | b. existing or reaching over a large area |
| 3. <u>lawsuit</u> (n) | c. finish discussing or focusing on something |
| 4. <u>pending</u> (adj.) | d. about to happen or waiting to happen |
| 5. put (sth) to rest (idiom) | e. fight, reduce, or prevent something |
| 6. <u>sprawling</u> (adj.) | f. a problem taken to a law court by an ordinary person or an organisation |

3 Listening for specific information

Listen to the report about the role of pharmacies in the US opioid epidemic. Write what the items below relate to.



1. 13.8 billion
-

2. 3,300
-

3. 650,000
-



4 Listening comprehension

Part A: Look at the sentence halves and see if you can predict which ones go together. Then watch the video again and complete the exercise.

1. The three biggest retail pharmacies in the US
2. State and local governments
3. If the settlements become final it will
4. The opioid epidemic is
5. Profit-driven practices
6. Pharmacies can now play a role
 - a. agreed to pay a combined \$13.8 billion to settle lawsuits.
 - b. accused drugmakers of downplaying the risks of their opioid medicines.
 - c. continuing to get worse.
 - d. put an end to the litigation over opioids.
 - e. in reducing drug abuse and saving lives.
 - f. fuelled the crisis.

Part B: Now, in pairs discuss the following questions.

1. Why do you think pharmaceutical companies were allowed to sell medicine in a way that was potentially dangerous?
2. What could be done legally to prevent this type of situation from happening again in the future?
3. Should governments play a bigger role in preventing drug addiction?





5 Reading: general vocabulary

Match the words and phrases in bold with the correct definitions.

1. The trial will **culminate** in the defendant being found guilty or not guilty.
 2. He sued her company and claimed **punitive** damages.
 3. Courts can **confiscate** assets from people who have committed offences.
 4. He said he was a **law-abiding** citizen and would never break the law.
 5. In some countries, public opinion is **polarised** on the death penalty.
 6. If the new law is to be fair it must be applied **equitably**.
 7. The man had made a lot of money through **illicit** drug trafficking.
 8. She complained to her boss because she was earning less money than her male **counterpart**.
- a. (adj.) divided into two completely opposing groups
 - b. (adj.) intended as a punishment
 - c. (adv.) in a way that treats everyone fairly and in the same way
 - d. (n) a person or thing that has the same purpose as another one
 - e. (adj.) illegal or disapproved of by society
 - f. (adj.) respecting the law
 - g. (v) take possession away from someone when you have the right to do so
 - h. (v) reach a climax or point of highest development

6 Reading for general understanding

You are going to read a text about plans to introduce stricter drug laws in the UK (page five). Scan the text quickly and match the headings with the correct paragraph.

- More harm caused by legal substances
- The UK outlines plans to bring down drug use
- Discriminatory policies
- Other countries are more progressive
- The UK takes an old-fashioned approach
- Convictions damage life chances



Stricter drug laws in the UK

Severe punishments to be introduced for marijuana users

A. _____

In an attempt to clamp down on drug use, the British government recently set out a new system for dealing with people caught in possession of illegal substances. Punishments would be introduced for those caught in possession once, twice, or three times. These would begin with a fine and culminate in a variety of deeply punitive options such as tagging offenders, suspending their driving licence, and even confiscating their passport. All this is being promoted as part of a government plan, which aims to bring overall drug use down to "a historic 30-year low" by "delivering a generational shift in demand."

B. _____

Other nations, including the US, Jamaica, and Thailand, are modernising their drug policies and moving away from criminalisation. The UK, meanwhile, seems determined to disregard the evidence that has for decades contradicted the idea that ever-tougher responses are needed. Research has long shown that corrective measures are not a deterrent. Furthermore, most illegal drug use is recreational, more commonly associated with leisure and pleasure than criminality. Research shows that occasional drug use rarely leads to addiction or requires treatment.

C. _____

The government seems far from understanding this, as is evident when it calls drugs the "root of untold harm and misery across our society" in its reform proposals. Evidence shows criminalising otherwise law-abiding citizens for their drug use does not deter them from doing it. In fact, it merely serves to damage their life chances. We know that a conviction makes it harder for people to find housing, get a job, and travel. It also makes them more likely to continue offending. The government however, is keen to position themselves as being 'tough on drugs', it has even been put forward that cannabis should become a Class A drug, placing it alongside heroin, cocaine and crystal meth.

D. _____

According to Katya Kowalski, Head of Operations at drug policy think-tank Volteface, said, "The Home Secretary coming out strongly against cannabis reform...is a clear demonstration of how polarised the UK is on drugs, and an indication that things are unlikely to get better anytime soon." Drug laws and their punishments are not applied equitably and tend to discriminate along the lines of class and gender. And when it comes to race, they discriminate too. In London, black people, often from deprived areas, are nine times more likely to be stopped and searched for drugs than white people.

E. _____

Law enforcement measures are being used to deter recreational drug use, while more harmful substances such as alcohol and tobacco remain legal and socially acceptable. This is despite clear research on how such substances cause more harm than many of their illicit counterparts. A truly evidence-based approach to drugs would look very different.

F. _____

Niamh Eastwood, Executive Director of Release, a centre of expertise on drugs laws said, "Only days ago, President Biden announced the expungement of criminal records for historic cannabis offences. Given the increased number of countries moving away from criminalising drug possession offences, and the rise in jurisdictions legalising and regulating cannabis, the UK looks archaic in its approach – this is the opposite of the supposed 'Global Britain'." Heavy policing doesn't end drug use, as decades of the same approach have proved. Ultimately, this remains a law enforcement approach that has already been shown to be ineffective; it will not bring overall drug use down. We also need to support those drug users who want support, rather than inflicting punishments that will disproportionately criminalise certain groups.

Sources: *The Conversation*, *Dazed digital*



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Reading: comprehension questions

Read the following statements and decide if they are true (T), false (F), or not given (NG)

1. The plan put forward states that people caught in possession of drugs could have their passports suspended. _____
2. The UK government aims to decrease the demand for illegal substances. _____
3. Some other nations, such as the US, want to maintain current drug policies. _____
4. Recreational use of cannabis is usually the first step towards a more serious habit. _____
5. Criminalising recreational drug users does not discourage them from using drugs again in the future. _____
6. Decriminalisation of drug use was first suggested in the 1970s. _____
7. Minorities are disproportionately targeted by the police. _____
8. President Biden has removed the criminal records of all people with drugs offences. _____

8

Language point: focus on phrasal verbs

The article contains two phrasal verbs that use "down". Look at the expressions below.

"In an attempt to *clamp down* on drug use..."

"...which aims to *bring* overall drug use *down*..."

Part A: Discuss with a partner what these phrasal verbs mean, then match the following phrasal verbs with their definitions.

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. break down | a. begin to live a steady life by getting a regular job, getting married, etc. |
| 2. cut down on | b. stop working or functioning as it should |
| 3. settle down | c. stop feeling upset, angry, or excited |
| 4. calm down | d. reduce the size, amount, or number of something |
| 5. knuckle down | e. admit that you were wrong or that you have been defeated |
| 6. back down | f. begin to work hard at something |



Part B: Now put the vocabulary from Part A into the correct gaps in the following sentences. You may need to change the form of the word.

1. After years of travelling, they finally decided to _____.
2. I have to _____ and do my homework.
3. She refused to _____ because she knew she was right.
4. I'm so angry at the moment, I should _____ before I speak to him.
5. His car _____ because he hadn't looked after it.
6. I'm trying to _____ on unhealthy food.

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Extended activity/homework

Read the essay question.

"Drugs ruin lives, there can be no debate about it. Drug users are less likely to be functioning members of society, and often their habits can lead to lost opportunities, physical harm, and even death. This is why we need strict drug laws."

To what extent do you agree with the statement above?

You should:

- write at least 250 words,
- check your grammar, spelling and punctuation

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