

Materials Needed:

- Age-appropriate article or short story about drug awareness, resisting peer pressure, or making healthy choices (Examples can often be found on websites like KidsHealth.org, NIDA for Teens, or through your local library. Ensure the reading level is suitable for 6th grade.)
- Notebook or paper
- Pen or pencil
- Optional: Dictionary
- Optional: Colored pencils or markers

Lesson Activities:

1. Introduction: What Does 'Say No To Drugs' Mean? (5 minutes)

Let's start by talking about making healthy choices for our bodies and minds. One important part of staying healthy is understanding why people say 'No' to drugs. It's about respecting ourselves and aiming for a happy, successful future. Today, we'll use our reading skills to explore this important topic.

2. Reading Time: Exploring the Message (15-20 minutes)

Now, let's read the article/story you have selected. As you read, pay close attention to:

- What is the main message the author wants you to understand?
- What are the reasons given for avoiding drugs?
- Are there any characters facing choices? What happens?
- Are there any words you don't quite understand? (Circle them!)

3. Comprehension Check & Vocabulary Boost (10 minutes)

Let's check our understanding!

- In your own words, what was the reading mainly about?
- Can you list two or three reasons or facts mentioned in the text about why saying 'no' is important?
- Why do you think the author wrote this piece? What was their goal?
- Let's look at those circled words. Can we figure out their meaning from the sentences around them? If not, let's look them up!

4. Discussion: Thinking Critically (10 minutes)

Let's talk about what we read:

- What feelings did the reading bring up for you?
- Why can it sometimes be hard for people (especially young people) to say 'no'? (Think about things like peer pressure).
- Besides saying 'no,' what are other healthy choices people can make every day? (e.g., exercise, hobbies, talking to trusted adults).
- Who are trusted adults you could talk to if you ever felt pressured or confused about something like this?

5. Creative Response: Your Voice! (15 minutes)

Now it's your turn to use your language arts skills! Choose ONE of the following ways to share your understanding of the 'Say No To Drugs' message:

- **Write a Slogan:** Create a catchy slogan or tagline (like for a poster) encouraging healthy choices.
- **Write a Short Poem:** Compose a brief poem (4-8 lines) about staying true to yourself or the benefits of a drug-free life.
- **Write a Pledged Paragraph:** Write a paragraph explaining in your own words why making healthy choices is important to you and your future.
- **Draw & Label:** Draw a symbol representing healthy choices and label it with powerful words related to saying 'no'.

Feel free to use colors if you chose the drawing or want to decorate your writing!

6. Wrap-up (5 minutes)

Great job today using your reading and thinking skills to explore a very important topic! Remember, being informed helps you make smart, healthy choices for yourself. Keep reading, keep thinking, and keep talking to trusted adults.