



Dark Highways

(A lesson on drinking & driving)

Shelly Turk

(Dedicated to the memory of T.S.)

Grade Level: 10-12

Time Allotment: Two 45 minute class periods

Overview: Alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes kill someone every 30 minutes and nonfatally injure someone every two minutes. During 2002, 17,419 people in the U.S. died in alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes, representing 41% of all traffic-related deaths. About 3 in every 10 Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some time in their lives. Using Internet and video, students will discuss drinking and driving, look at statistics for deaths caused by drinking and driving in their state, and take part in a simulation that will give them an idea of how alcohol affects their ability to function. They will also strategize ideas for avoiding drinking and driving or riding in a car with someone who has been drinking.

Subject Matter: Health

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Share their own experiences with drinking and driving.
- Articulate statistics in their state that are results of drinking and driving accidents.
- Explain what it was like using simulator goggles, and how it felt to lose vision and motor skills.
- Prepare strategies for not getting in a car with someone who has been drinking, or for not personally driving impaired.
- Make an informed decision about drinking and driving.

Standards:

From the Montana State Standards for Health:

(Available on-line at www.opi.state.mt.us)



Standard 1: Have a basic knowledge and understanding of concepts that promote comprehensive health.

Standard 5: Demonstrate the ability to use critical thinking and decision making to enhance health.

Standard 6: Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills to enhance health.

Standard 7: Demonstrate health-enhancing behaviors.

Media Components:

VIDEO

The Power of Choice: Drinking and Driving. Featuring Michael Pritchard. Live Wire Video Publishers: San Francisco, CA. (415) 564-9500.

WEB SITES

What's Driving You? 2001. <http://www.whatsdrivingyou.org/>

This site was developed to provide curriculum for the Chicago, IL metro area for court-mandated alcohol education classes for DUI first offenders. It contains virtual parties in which students find out consequences of their choices, resources and information, and state laws.

MADD. Mothers Against Drunk Driving. 2004. <http://www.madd.org/home/>

This excellent site gives statistics and resources, news, a victim page, and how to become active in your local chapter of MADD.

Materials:

For each student:

One *Drinking + Driving = Disaster* worksheet (see attached)

For the class simulation exercise:

One or two pairs of simulation goggles

8 feet of masking tape

5 orange traffic cones

Prep for Teachers:

Prior to teaching this lesson, bookmark the sites used in the lesson on each computer in your classroom. Prep the video so that it is at the desired location for the video portion of the lesson.

Prepare the hands-on elements of the lesson by:

- Copying the *Drinking + Driving = Disaster* worksheet
- Making arrangements for a police officer or sheriff's deputy to bring simulation goggles to your classroom for the 2nd day of the lesson. In Billings, MT and the surrounding area, you can call the Yellowstone County Sheriff's office and ask for Deputy Coroner Keith Montgomery at (406) 256-2929 or toll free at 1-800-877-1082.
- Gathering 5 orange traffic cones. Our P.E. Department has cones in its class equipment room, but you can also call your city traffic department.

- 2nd Day: Clearing an area in your classroom and placing an 8 foot length of masking tape on the floor for students to walk on while wearing the goggles.

When using media, provide students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, a specific task to complete and/or information to identify during or after viewing of video segments, Web sites, or other multimedia elements.

Introductory Activity:

Step 1. Count off groups of 10 students in your classroom. Randomly ask 3 students in every group of 10 to stand. If you have a group left over of less than 10, ask 1 or 2 students in that group to stand. Ask the class to take a good look at the students who are standing. Tell the students that about 3 in every 10 Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some time in their lives. Tell the students to be seated.

Step 2. Tell the students that someone is injured in an alcohol-related motor vehicle crash every two minutes. Ask the students to estimate how many people have been injured since the beginning of class. (*Answers will vary depending on how much class time you have used.*) Tell the students one person is killed in the U.S. every 30 minutes in an alcohol-related motor vehicle crash; so somewhere one person will die due to drinking and driving during this class period.

Step 3. Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever known someone who has driven under the influence of alcohol. (*You should reassure students at this point that their responses are confidential and will not be met with judgment. You may wish to share a personal experience at this point to put them at ease; I tell my students about my best friend who was killed in a car accident after attending a party in high school. Your best response during this step is to really listen to your students' responses without a lot of comment.*) Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever ridden in a car driven by a person under the influence of alcohol. Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever personally driven a car while under the influence of alcohol. Ask them how those experiences made them feel. (*Answers may range from "no problem" to uneasy, scared, out of control, etc.*)

Learning Activity:

Step 1. Ask students to go to their computers and log on to *What's Driving You?* At <http://www.whatsdrivingyou.org/>. Tell the students that they are going to attend a "virtual party" with either Liza or Michael. They will be responsible for making decisions as the party progresses. Provide your students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, asking them to be prepared to discuss the outcome of their virtual decisions with the class. Instruct the students to click on "Virtual Party", then either Liza or Michael. Tell them you are focusing on students under the age of 20, so to limit their choices to those two characters. If a student finishes early, encourage him or her to click on the other character and go through the process again. After students have had time to complete the virtual party, ask them the outcome of their decisions. (*Answers will range from getting home safely to dying.*) Ask the students to discuss whether or not their decisions throughout the party contributed to the end result and how. (*Answers should be*

yes and will then vary by decision.) Ask the students if their own decisions have consequences. (*Answer should be yes.*)

Step 2. Ask students to log on to MADD's Homepage at <http://www.madd.org/home/>. Tell your students that MADD stands for Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Ask your students to guess which one holiday has the highest number of deaths due to drinking and driving. (*Answers will vary.*) Ask your students to guess what particular period of time during the year has the highest deaths due to drinking and driving. (*Answers will vary.*) Tell the students to click on "Stats and Resources" at the top of MADD's Homepage, then on "By Holiday" on the left. Provide your students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, asking them to check their predictions on the 2002 Holiday Chart. (*Answers should be Fourth of July and Thanksgiving to New Years, respectively.*)

Step 3. Ask your students to predict the answers to the following questions. (*Answers will vary. PLEASE NOTE: answers in this step will be geared toward Montana, but the instructions will work for any state.*) Write the following on your whiteboard or overhead. As the students make their predictions, write their answers next to the questions.

- Is Montana's average of alcohol-related crashes vs. the national average higher or lower?
- Is the Montana average of deaths in ages 15-20 vs. the national average higher or lower?
- What is the most common alcoholic drink consumed in Montana?
- What was Montana's rank in the year 2000 for alcohol-related deaths in the state per 100,000 residents (1 being worst, 50 being best)?
- What was Montana's rank in death rates where at least one of the drivers was legally drunk (1-50)?
- In 1999, how did the state rank in alcohol-related death rates per 100 million miles traveled (1-50)?
- Where do Montana's youth rank nationally in rate of alcohol use (1-50)?
- In 1999, was the state's percentage of high school students driving after drinking higher or lower than the national average?

After students have made their predictions and you have written them down, ask them to click on "By State" and MT (or whatever state you live in). Provide your students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, asking them to check their predictions against the correct answers on this page. Using a different color, write the correct answers next to their predictions as they find them.

(Answers for Montana should be:

- *Higher. In 2000, the national average was 41%; Montana's was 47%.*
- *Higher. In 2001, the national average was 38.1%; Montana's was 51%.*
- *Beer.*
- *2nd in the nation.*
- *1st—the nation's worst.*
- *1st—the nation's highest.*
- *Montana's youth have the 4th highest rate of alcohol use in the nation.*

- *Higher. In 1999, 23% of Montana’s high school students drove after drinking vs. 13% nationwide.)*

Ask your students if Montana has a big problem with drinking and driving, especially in comparison with other states. (*Answer should be yes.*)

Step 4. Give each student one *Drinking + Driving = Disaster* worksheet. Tell them to stay in the MADD “Stats & Resources” section and follow the instructions on the worksheet for where to find the answers. Provide your students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, asking them to fill out the answers on their worksheets. When students are finished, have them turn in their worksheets to you. Ask them if any of the facts they learned surprised them. (*Answers will vary.*)

END DAY ONE

Step 5. Tell your students that the class will be doing an exercise using goggles that simulate how things might look after drinking. Have the visiting officer explain how the simulation goggles work. Ask the students to line up on one end of the 8-foot strip of tape. The students should don the goggles, then try to touch their noses with their index fingers and walk the straight line of tape. Ask waiting students to take turns being spotters on both sides of the line in case a student stumbles or starts to fall. After the students have each had a turn, place the 5 orange cones at intervals along the tape and have the students take turns walking in and out and around the cones. When the simulation activity is finished, ask the students how it felt physically. (*Answers will vary, but should include dizziness, loss of depth perception, couldn’t see well, loss of balance, etc.*) Ask the students if they could drive wearing the goggles. (*Most will say no.*) Ask the students if it is then logical to drive after drinking if alcohol affects perception like the goggles do. (*Most will say no.*)

Culminating Activity:

Step 1. Ask the students to return to their seats. Insert the video *The Power of Choice: Drinking and Driving* into the VCR. Tell your students that having a plan in advance helps make the decision about drinking and driving—or getting into a car with someone who has been driving—to be easier. Provide your students with a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION, asking them to be ready to list the strategies the students on the film suggest. START the tape right after you see a group of students and a close-up of a brown-haired boy in a teal shirt who says, “...and maybe you, uh, you, uh, go along with ‘em just so that next time, you can try to talk ‘em out of it.” STOP the tape after the longhaired girl in the white shirt says, “Cuz I don’t wanna live with that kind of guilt all my life.” Ask the students to list strategies offered on the tape.

(*Answers should include:*

- *You have homework to do*
- *Going on an errand*
- *“I’m gonna get sick or puke”*
- *Tell them you have to go to the bathroom*
- *Take their keys*
- *Call your mom*

- *Address the driver with humor*
- *Don't put yourself in that situation*
- *Think about it ahead of time*
- *Call home or safe rides to come get you*
- *Don't get drunk*
- *Pop the driver's tires or take their spark plugs)*

Ask the students if they think the strategies would work and why or why not. (*Answers will vary, but the students will agree with some and not others.*) Ask your students to add some strategies of their own. (*Answers may include having a designated driver, taking a cell phone, walking, not going to parties, staying at the house overnight, etc.*)

Step 2. Tell your students that their attitudes and decisions concerning drinking and driving could directly impact their lives—and the lives of their friends and families. Urge them to give serious thought to the risks involved and to strategize ahead of time. Remind them that 3 in 10 will be affected and ask them if they want to be one of the three. (*If there is time remaining, students may want to talk more—especially if they have lost a classmate in an alcohol-related crash.*)

Cross-Curricular Extensions:

MEDIA

Examine the role advertising plays in affecting youths' decisions to drink. The MADD website offers a section on alcohol advertising to get you started.

Script and film a public service announcement against drinking and driving.

ENGLISH

Write a letter to your best friend, telling him or her what he or she means to you, and how it would feel to lose him or her to an alcohol-related crash.

GOVERNMENT

Examine your state laws and punishments for DUI infractions for various age groups. The MADD website offers sections on this topic.

MATH

Calculate BAC (blood alcohol content) ratios for various body types and scenarios. *The Drink Wheel* at <http://www.intox.com/wheel/drinkwheel.asp> may be helpful for this project.

Community Connections:

- Ask a member of MADD to speak to your class. MADD also has multi-media programs that can be shown to your school.
- Ask a convicted DUI offender to visit your class and talk about what he or she has learned.
- Arrange for a DARE simulated crash scene to be enacted at your school.

- Develop a simulation involving the community and your school. See the website *Every 15 Minutes* at <http://warren.dusd.net/~e15/index.htm> for a prototype for a program like this.

Drinking + Driving = Disaster

Name: _____



In the “Stats & Resources” section of the MADD website, click on “General Statistics” on the left and answer the following questions:

1. On average, how often does one person die in an alcohol-related traffic crash?
2. Do motorcyclists or truck drivers have more accidents? How about car drivers vs. light truck drivers?
3. What age has the highest prevalence of binge drinking?
4. Is impairment determined by the type of drink or amount of alcohol consumed in a certain period of time?
5. What is the percentage of crimes committed under the influence of alcohol?
6. What is the beverage most commonly consumed by people stopped for alcohol-impaired driving?
7. Is the intoxication rate (for those over .08 BAC) higher for male or female drivers?
8. Will drinking strong coffee, exercising, or taking a cold shower cause a person to sober up? If not, what does?
9. What age group is **least** likely to drive while intoxicated?
10. Is the rate of alcohol involvement in fatal crashes higher during the day or at night?

11. Does the speed of alcohol consumption affect the rate at which one becomes drunk? How?
12. What is the standard definition for a drink of beer? Wine? Distilled spirits?
13. In 2002, what was the leading cause of death for people aged 2 to 33?
14. In 2002, were fatal crashes higher during the week or on the weekend?
15. Where do young drivers prefer to drink vs. older, more educated drivers?

Now click on “Youth Statistics” on the left for the answers to the remaining questions.

1. What racial group has the highest percentage of youth drinkers?
2. What racial group has the highest percentage of youths who drive after drinking?
3. Whose drinking behavior most affects youths’ starting and continuing drinking habits?
4. Youth who drink before the age of 15 are four times more likely to do what than those who begin drinking at age 21?
5. The total cost attributable to the consequences of underage drinking was more than what amount in 1998?
6. In 2002, what percent of 15 to 20 year olds were killed in motor vehicle crashes after drinking?
7. What age group is more often involved in alcohol-related crashes than any other comparable age group?
8. In 2002, were young male drivers more likely to be drinking or driving, or young females?
9. What is the leading cause of death for people from 15 to 20 years old?
10. What was the percentage of young drivers aged 15-20 involved in fatal crashes that were not wearing their seat belts? What was the percentage for those who had been drinking and were killed?
11. Name three other secondhand effects at schools where students are involved in heavy drinking:

12. Define binge drinking for males and females:
13. Does high school binge drinking affect college binge drinking?
14. What is the median age at which children begin drinking?
15. Does the presence of passengers increase the crash risk for teenage drivers?
16. What days of the week do 54% of teenage motor vehicle deaths occur on?
17. Underage drinkers are responsible for what percentage of all alcohol consumption in the U.S.? How much money did they spend on alcohol?
18. What percentage of individuals who start drinking before the age of 13 will develop alcohol abuse or alcohol dependence at some point in their lives?

Drinking + Driving = Disaster Answer Sheet

1. *Every 30 minutes.*
 2. *Motorcyclists. Light truck drivers.*
 3. *Young adults aged 18 to 25.*
 4. *No. It is determined by the amount of alcohol ingested over a specific period of time.*
 5. *40 percent of crimes.*
 6. *Beer.*
 7. *Male—25 % compared to 12%.*
 8. *No. Only time will sober a person up.*
 9. *Drivers over the age of 70.*
 10. *Night.*
 11. *Yes. Alcohol does not have to be slowly digested. Rather, as a person drinks faster than the alcohol can be eliminated, the drug accumulates in the body, resulting in higher and higher levels of alcohol in the blood.*
 12. *Beer: 12 ounces. Wine: 5 ounces. Distilled spirits: 1.5 ounces. These three contain the same amount of alcohol.*
 13. *Motor vehicle crashes.*
 14. *Weekend.*
 15. *At private parties vs. bars and taverns.*
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1. *Hispanic.*
 2. *Caucasian.*
 3. *Parents.*
 4. *Develop alcohol dependence.*
 5. *\$53 billion per year.*
 6. *29%. 24% were intoxicated.*
 7. *Drivers between ages 15 and 20.*
 8. *Male. 27% compared to 11% female.*
 9. *Motor vehicle crashes.*
 10. *69%. 77%.*
 11. *Disruption of sleep and studies; property damage; verbal, physical, or sexual violence.*
 12. *Males: 5 drinks in a row. Females: 4 drinks in a row.*
 13. *Yes.*

14. 15.7 years old.

15. Yes. The more passengers, the greater the risk.

16. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

17. 20% of all alcohol consumption. Spent \$22.5 billion on alcohol.

18. 40 %.