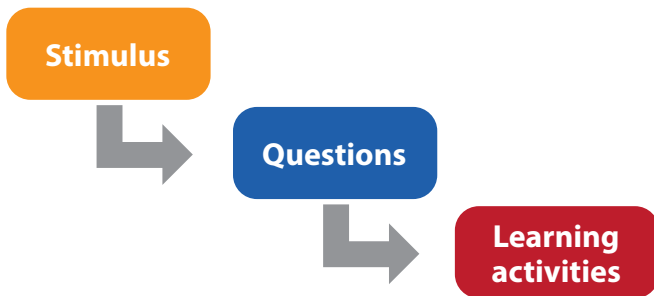


CONSTRUCTING AN iMINDS LESSON



WHAT IS AND ISN'T iMINDS?

- iMinds is a “way of thinking” about health education. It encourages students to develop drug and gambling literacy—the ability to navigate the real world in a way that promotes well-being.
- iMinds is also a collection of resources for schools related to substance use and gambling. The lesson ideas fit well within the scope of BC’s K-12 curriculum with its emphasis

on core and curricular competencies. The collection includes specific competencies for drug literacy and gambling literacy.

- iMinds is not a program that teachers are expected to implement in a rigid fashion. There is no pre-set group of lessons through which to teach drug or gambling literacy. The provided lessons are samples designed to help teachers see multiple possibilities and opportunities to address health and well-being within the scope of various curricular subjects.
- iMinds lessons are inquiry-based and encourage open, honest, and non-judgmental dialogue. It supports teachers in creating the conditions for interactive situations and facilitating dialogue in the classroom where connections are made and real learning can take place.



HOW TO CONSTRUCT AN iMINDS LESSON

To create an iMinds lesson, start by identifying a concept where drugs or gambling might intersect with a curricular interest or focus (e.g., drug/gambling-related topics such as stress, mental health, risk-taking, or identity). Then, follow the steps outlined below:

1. Find a stimulus: The stimulus

- Must engage students
- Can be almost anything (e.g. a storybook, a video, a song or poem, a current event or news article, an excerpt from a novel, and the like)
- Provides a jumping off point for reflection, dialogue, creative and critical thinking about drug use/ gambling

Example: A newspaper article on how pets reduce stress or a video on managing stress can serve as a stimulus to engage students.

2. Craft good questions

The next step is, based on the stimulus, to craft some dialogic questions related to the topic. A dialogic question encourages:

- curiosity
- reflective conversation
- creativity/possibilities
- multiple perspectives
- examination of assumptions
- more questions

Asking good questions is an important element of dialogue and is critical for fostering reflection and deep thinking. Good, powerful questions are typically 'open,' such as 'how' and 'why' questions. Start your questions with something students can reflect on personally to gain a sense of what the concept is about or how they can relate it to themselves or others.

Example:

- *What does stress mean to you? Can you think of a recent situation where you felt stressed?*
- *Based on the article (or the video/the stimulus), what are some common reasons people get stressed out?*
- *Do you think stress can ever be helpful? If so, how might it help? If not, why not?*
- *How can we support each other in managing stress in school or in our personal lives?*

3. Design interactive and reflective 'activities'

Engage students with a variety of activities to deepen learning and reflection. Here are some key approaches:

- **Narrative:** Storytelling allows students to explore possibilities, reflect on characters' decisions, and see their own life as a story they shape through conversation with others.
Example: Students create fictional stories or scripts where a character faces a stressful situation and decides how to manage their emotions. They can then discuss how their character's coping strategies compare to their own real-life methods.
- **Art:** Engaging students in producing and reflecting on art connects them with the world both emotionally and intellectually. It provides a different entry point and allows students to explore through a medium less controlled by strict conventions of rationality.

Example: Students create drawings or collages that represent their emotions when stressed or design a "Stress Relief" poster. Afterward, they reflect on their creations and discuss what they've learned.

- **Play:** Through play, students can "lose their self" and engage with the world in a way that allows for new ways of thinking and being, explores possibilities, and opens them to learning.

Example: Students role-play stressful situations, such as giving a presentation, practicing calming techniques or positive self-talk. This helps them think about how they might handle stress in real-life scenarios.

The important note here is that employing multiple learning activities has the potential to reach a wider range of students and deepen the learning for all.

