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TEACHER'S GUIDE

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Many Images (Model posed for illustrative purposes only)



*Is lowering the drinking age to 18 a good idea?
Ask your students what they think.*

► This Week's Focus:

Lowering the Drinking Age

In France, Germany and Italy, you can drink at 16. In Australia or Brazil, you need to be 18. Everywhere in the U.S., you must be 21. Now a representative in the Vermont legislature wants to change the drinking age in his state to 18. Is that a good idea? Ask your students to decide. Another lesson plan this week focuses on Steven Spielberg's new movie, "The War of the Worlds," and the story's very intriguing history. And finally, as summer draws near, we consider how to get the safest tan. Have a great recess!

Everyday Newspaper Activity

Activity #40: Creative Writing. Have students imagine that they've just landed on Earth from another planet. They must report back to their superiors on life in America and in your town. Their only information source is your paper. What impressions do they get of teen life? What roles do teens have? How do they look, behave and dress?

Have a Good Summer!

This is the last PARADE Classroom of the school year. We hope you have enjoyed using it with your students. Look for us again in early September, when we'll be back with more news-oriented teaching guides. In the meantime, if you have questions or comments, please write to us at paradeclassroom@parade.com. We appreciate your feedback and wish you a wonderful summer.

► **In the News:**
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Should We Drop the Drinking Age?

Curriculum links: Current events, law, social studies, family and consumer science

Briefing: Since 1984, the legal drinking age everywhere in the U.S. has been 21. But Vermont Rep. Richard Marron (R., Stowe) wants to change it to 18 in his state. After all, you can vote and serve in the military at 18. A higher drinking age is a form of age discrimination, he says. What's more, he believes, it can lead to underground and dangerous binge drinking. But his proposal has no chance of passing. Why? The answer lies in history. Before 1984, states set their own drinking age. It was usually 21, although some states allowed beer purchases at 18. But from 1970 to 1975, many states lowered the age to 18. The Vietnam War convinced them that if young people were old enough to fight and die, they were old enough to drink. Then in 1984, spurred largely by Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the U.S. Congress passed the National Minimum Drinking Age Act. Under this act, states that did not raise the drinking age to 21 would lose some of their funding for highways. So 21 became the national drinking age. While some legislators support Marron's proposal, no one wants Vermont to lose \$9.7 million in highway aid. Others worry that a lower drinking age would result in more drunk driving and highway deaths.

Classroom Debates

- **What should be the legal drinking age—18 or 21?** What are the pros and cons of each alternative? Is a drinking age of 21 a form of age discrimination? Does the law actually prevent younger people from drinking? Since those under 21 can't drink in public, does the law encourage them to binge drink? College students 21 and older often buy liquor for younger classmates. If the drinking age were lowered, would 18-year-old high school students buy liquor for their younger classmates? Would this cause more drinking and driving problems? Could alcohol-education programs help younger people drink more responsibly? Should there be learner's permits for drinking?

Magazine activity: Take a look at magazine alcohol ads. At what age groups do they seem to be aimed? Do the target groups seem to vary based on the particular liquor? How many involve students? How many occur at school?

Resources: Books: James Torr's *Teens and Alcohol* (Rebound, 2001) and Scott Barbour's *Alcohol: Opposing Viewpoints* (Greenhaven, 2005). Web sites: Learn about the Vermont proposal. Read different viewpoints on the controversy.*

"The War of the Worlds" Returns

Curriculum links: Language arts, current events, history, media literacy, science

Briefing: On June 29, Steven Spielberg's new movie, *War of the Worlds*, will arrive in theaters. Tom Cruise will star. The film is a remake of a story with a long, interesting history. In 1898, British author H.G. Wells wrote the classic novel in which Martians invade Earth. It was one of the first science fiction novels. On October 30, 1938—the day before Halloween—actor/director Orson Welles aired a radio play based on the novel on CBS radio. He had adapted it so that it was no longer set in London. Instead, it took place in New Jersey. Presented as a news broadcast, with minute-by-minute reports of a Martian invasion, the report used names of real towns, hospitals, roads and rivers. It included special bulletins, commentary by famous astronomers and terrified announcements by government officials. All over the U.S., people panicked, cried and prayed. Thousands had tuned in late, believed the report was true and fled their homes, trying to escape the horror.

Classroom Debates

- **Why do you think so many people believed the radio broadcast?** What qualities made it so convincing? Can you think of other successful hoaxes in U.S. history? Do you think that there is life on other planets? Why or why not? Might there be life on Mars itself? Explain.

Newspaper activity: Choose a well-known story. It can be anything from Frankenstein to Little Red Riding Hood. Change all the names and places to ones in your own area. Then rewrite the story as if it were a news article. How believable is it?

Resources: Books: H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds* (Signet, 1996). Web sites: Visit the film's official Web site. Read or hear the 1938 radio script. You even can read the novel online.*

*Visit www.paradeclassroom.com/links for links to all mentioned Web sites.

Getting the Safest Tan

Curriculum links: Health, science, family and consumer science

Briefing: Lots of Americans want a tan, says Dr. Isadore Rosenfeld in this week's PARADE. But too much sun can cause skin cancer, including deadly melanoma, as well as wrinkling and other signs of aging. Protecting yourself is really important for teens. Most sun damage occurs before the age of 18, although it may not show up until years later. Those who have severe sunburns when they're young are more likely to develop skin cancer later on. To save your skin: 1) Avoid sun exposure between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.; 2) Dress in loose, lightly-colored, tightly-woven clothes; 3) Wear a wide-brimmed hat, long-sleeved shirt and sunglasses with UV filters; 4) Put on a broad spectrum sunscreen, protective against both UVA and UVB rays half an hour before going outside. The lotion should have an SPF of at least 30 and contain Parsal 1789. Reapply it every two to three hours, as well as after you swim or perspire. Be sure to use it on your hands, ears, feet, shoulders and the back of your neck. 5) Be especially careful at high altitudes; 6) Stay away from tanning machines—they're even more harmful than the sun. Tanning beds double the risk of melanoma.

Classroom Debates

- **Why do so many teenagers and adults like to tan?** Is having a "healthy"-looking tan worth the consequences? What might the consequences be? Are there safe alternatives to tanning? What can you do to avoid the harmful effects of too much sun exposure? Imagine that you are in charge of a campaign to prevent skin cancer. How could you get the message across to people in your age group? A person born today is 12 times more likely to get skin cancer than a person born 50 years ago. What changes in the past 50 years may have led to the huge increase in skin cancer? What can be done to turn the tide?

Media activity: What messages does the media give you about having a tan? Ask students to take notes on how having a tan is portrayed on TV, in the movies, in magazines and in newspapers. Do the images make having a tan seem glamorous and attractive—or dangerous? What's the truth?

Resources: Books: *What You Really Need to Know About Moles and Melanoma* by Jill Schofield, MD (Johns Hopkins, 2000) and Wendy Long's *Coping with Melanoma and Other Skin Cancers* (Rosen, 1999). Web sites: Get more advice from the CDC, the American Academy of Dermatology and others.*

ASK MARILYN

Brainteaser

Question: What do these word-triplets have in common: 1) mews, quick, yoga; 2) gay, meows, quick; 3) gay, mosque, wick? Hint: An unlucky number.

Answer: Each triplet comprises the 13-odd numbered letters of the alphabet (e.g., a, c, e).

Interact: Do students have questions or comments for Marilyn? Send them to Ask Marilyn, PARADE, 711 Third Ave. N.Y., N.Y. 10017, or e-mail marilyn@parade.com.

FRESH VOICES

School Food

For classroom discussion or writing assignment: Vishal, 15, wishes the food at his school was healthier. Another student wishes there were larger portions. What would you change about your school's food? Why?

Interact: Ask your students, "What's your pet peeve?" Send students' comments to Fresh Voices, Box 5103, Grand Central Station, N.Y., N.Y. 10163-5103. Or send e-mail to freshvoices@parade.com. Students whose letters are published in PARADE will receive Fresh Voices T-shirts.

Answer Key:

The School Year's Top Story p. 4: Answers will vary.

Summer Goals p. 5: Answers will vary.

The School Year's Top Story

If you could name just one world event as the most important of the school year, what would it be?

What event will people look back on 100 years from now and see as a significant occurrence or turning point—either positive or negative? What will be written about it in the history books? Choose any event you'd like and then write a newspaper editorial explaining why it is the most important thing that happened during this school year. Use the questions below as writing guides.

1. An editorial expresses the writer's opinion. In your opinion, what was the most significant event, or series of events, of the past year? Why?

2. Editorial writers use facts to back up their opinions. Give at least three facts that support your choice for the most significant event.

Fact 1: _____

Fact 2: _____

Fact 3: _____

3. Editorial writers often make predictions or analyze the importance of particular events. What do you think will be the positive or negative impact of the event you chose? How will it affect people today? How will it change the world? In the next 10 years? In the next 100 years? Try to be as specific as possible.

4. Use your answers to write a clear, persuasive editorial on another sheet of paper. See your local newspaper for examples of editorials that you can use as models.

EXTRA CREDIT: Answer the same questions about the most important event that occurred at your school, in your city or in your life. Then write an editorial about that.

Summer Goals

Summer is almost here, so it's a good time to think about setting new goals. What would you really like to accomplish this summer? Maybe you'd like to learn to drive, earn some money for college, visit a friend who lives in another city or get in great shape before you try out for the football team next fall.

On the lines below, write down three goals that are important to you personally. Then divide each goal into smaller goals or steps. This will make your goals easier to accomplish—one step at a time.

For example, let's say you want to learn to play the guitar.

Goal: Learn to play the guitar.

Divide your goal into smaller goals or steps.

- A. Trade skateboard for guitar.
- B. Work two hours a day at music shop in exchange for lessons.
- C. Practice two hours a day.

What are your goals? Pick three and divide each one into steps.

Goal # 1 _____

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

Goal # 2 _____

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

Goal # 3 _____

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____

Extra credit: Pick out a person featured in a newspaper story. What goals do you think this person should make for the summer? Break the goals into steps.