

Instructional Outline

Divergent by Veronica Roth, is the first of a trilogy, a series of dystopian novels set in a post-apocalyptic world. It explores themes related to individual and social identity as well as the use of science, and drugs in particular, as a means of social control. Citizens are divided into five factions based on their dispositions: Abnegation, for the selfless; Amity, for the peaceful; Candor, for the honest; Dauntless, for the brave; and Erudite, for the intellectual. Erudite scientists have designed a number of serums to be used in different ways for different populations for different reasons. At age 16, people must decide whether to stay with their family's faction or join the faction best matching their personal aptitude. But then there are the Divergents.

The prose is fast-paced but also provides a rich foundation for exploring many themes of interest to teens, including aspects of drug use and drug control.

Instructional strategies

1. Provide opportunity for students to think critically and exchange ideas about issues raised in the novel. For example, you might ask:
 - a. How does the use of serums in the story compare and contrast with the way medicines are used (or have been used) in our society?
 - b. How might we ensure that scientific discoveries are available to people for positive use but that they are not used by some people to unjustifiably control others? When, if ever, is it justifiable to control others?
- 2.

Drug Literacy

Big ideas

Drugs can be tremendously helpful and also very harmful

As humans, both individually and as communities, we need to learn how to manage the drugs in our lives

We can learn how to control our drug use by reflecting on the different ways people have thought about drugs, exploring ideas from various cultures and listening to each other

Competencies

Recognize binary constructs (e.g., good vs bad) and assess their limitation in addressing complex social issues like drug use

Recognize how official responses to drugs may have less to do with the drug than with other factors

Develop social and communication skills in addressing discourse and behaviour related to drugs

Develop personal and social strategies to manage the risks and harms related to drugs

For a complete look at the drug literacy competencies, as defined by the Centre for Addictions Research of BC, see: www.uvic.ca/research/centres/cisur/assets/docs/iminds_drug_curriculum.pdf



Links to Curriculum

First Peoples' principles of learning

Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors

Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)

Learning is embedded in memory, history and story

English Language Arts 9

Big Idea

Exploring stories and other texts helps us understand ourselves and make connections to others and the world

Questioning what we hear, read and view contributes to our ability to be educated and engaged citizens

Competencies

Apply appropriate strategies to comprehend written, oral and visual texts, guide inquiry, and extend thinking

Think critically, creatively and reflectively to explore ideas within, between and beyond texts

Construct meaningful personal connections between self, text and world

Respond to text in personal, creative and critical ways

Exchange ideas and viewpoints to build shared understanding and extend thinking