

HIGH: Everything You Want to Know About Drugs, Alcohol, and Addiction
Discussion Questions for High School Students

1. Go to page 168 and take the addiction questionnaire. How did it make you feel? Do you know anyone who might have scored higher? What resources would you use to help either yourself or someone else who might be struggling?
2. Does it seem like “everyone” drinks, vapes or smokes weed? How does that impact you?
3. What was your initial reaction to Nic’s relationship with his parents and siblings?
4. What was something you learned from “HIGH?” How would you teach it to someone else?
5. Did the extent to which Nic was willing to go for substances surprise you? In what way?
6. Why did Nic continually relapse? What helped him recover?
7. Is the expression “Just Say Know” helpful? Does it change how you think about substance use?
8. When does “use” become “misuse” or “abuse”? Do you think you would be able to tell if you were addicted to a substance?
9. What was the underlying lesson of the book?
10. Do you think reading this book was effective? Would you recommend it to other students? If not, what do you think would be a more effective method?
11. Do you know anyone who thinks doing drugs is “cool?” If so, why do you think that is the perception? If not, why not?
12. Why do you think teens start using drugs?
13. How do mental health and substance abuse intersect?
14. What do you consider binge drinking? On page 89, “HIGH” describes binge drinking as “four alcoholic drinks for women and five for men.” Do you agree with the definition?
15. How does cannabis affect the user? Do you know anyone who uses heavily and how has it affected them?

16. The book states, “No one who tries drugs expects to become addicted, but about one in ten or so people will” (p. 160). Is it worth it to take the risk? Why would someone take the risk in the first place?
17. Chapter 11 is called “Addiction is a Family Problem.” Do you think that’s accurate? How does this affect your view of addicts?
18. In his aside on page 198, Nic talks about the disadvantages of programs centered around punishment. Why do you think treatment for dual diagnosis ended up working for him?
19. On page 196, Nic mentions seeing a psychiatrist and getting a diagnosis of bipolar disorder and depression. For Nic, the diagnosis “was a huge relief.” Why do you think getting treatment for these diagnoses helped him stay sober?
20. What were your thoughts on David and Nic’s conversation at the end?
21. Out of all the substances outlined in “HIGH,” which drug do you think is the most dangerous? Which one do you think is the most common among your age group?
22. Is there a substance you are aware of that’s not covered in “HIGH”? If so, what are the effects and dangers of that substance?