

# Sarah's Story

My name is Sarah

I am 16 and a half. I have known Sam my boyfriend for 9 months now. We have just had a fantastic weekend at Glastonbury pop festival. Whilst we were there we met up with some friends of Sam's from college. They both had part time jobs with Sam at a bar in a town not far from us. They were older than Sam and he seemed to think they were really cool

When I met Sam I thought he was fantastic, really great looking, musical, he was part of a band and clever too: studying for A levels at college.

However, since that weekend at Glastonbury everything is falling apart. Sam has started hanging around with Jo and Mark all the time; he even stood me up at couple of times. He has now told me that he is leaving college and working in the bar full time.

Things have got so bad that I decided if I wasn't going to lose him I had to go out with Sam and his mates. We went to Mark's flat. He was kicked out of home a fortnight ago.

We all started drinking, I have no problem with that and knew Sam and the others often smoked dope too. I have always said no to drugs. My friend got caught with some skunk and had to cancel his holiday to Disneyland in Florida and now has a criminal record. However, I was not prepared for what happened last night and now I don't know what to do.

We were all in the flat and Jo went out of the room. He came back with a small white bag that had some white powder in it. He emptied the powder on to the table got a razor blade and cuts some lines of the powder. Using a rolled up note he then snorted the powder. I knew at once that this was either speed or cocaine but judging by the state of Mark who had been fidgety and agitated all evening I guessed it was cocaine. To my horror Sam took a line and just looked at me as much to say well if you don't like it you know what you can do don't you? The others tried to persuade me to have a go. I was really tempted I love Sam and want to be with him. Could it really be that bad. He seems his normal self. What harm would trying something once do? I can't bear the thought of losing him.

So, with my heart thumping and knees I took the line. For about 30 minutes I felt great. I was laughing and chatting with the others. I felt they were looking at me with a new respect and really thought what I was saying was important. Later Sam took me home. By then the shock of what I had done began to hit home. I ran into the house and said I would ring him

Oh my god what have I done!

## Sarah's story questions

Teachers should encourage students to consider a range of responses to the story and possibly come up with several endings

1. What kind of relationship did Sarah and Sam have?
2. What sort of person is Sarah
3. How did Sam's personality and attitude start to change and why?
4. Why do you think Sam became defensive about his drug use?
5. Why do you think Sarah went to the flat and took the drug?
6. What kind of risks was she taking?
7. What was going through her mind?
8. What was going through Sam's mind?
9. Do you think Sarah will take the drug again and what might be the consequences for her, Sam and their relationship if she does or if she doesn't?
10. What would your advice be?

## Cocaine Quiz

1. Cocaine is generally a white powder True/False
2. Cocaine can be injected but this is not more risky True/False
3. A slang name for cocaine is Charlie True/False
4. The effects of cocaine can last up to 10 hours True/False
5. Taking cocaine can help weight loss True/False
6. You can feel tired and depressed after taking cocaine. True/False
7. Cocaine is quite an inexpensive drug to get hold of. True/False
8. If you buy cocaine from someone it is always the pure form of the drug True/False
9. Cocaine is a class B drug True/False
10. Crack looks like small lumps of rock True/False

# Cocaine Quiz

## Answers

1. Cocaine is generally a white powder. True/False

**True.** In Britain and America the most common form of cocaine is as a white crystalline powder. Most users sniff it up the nose, often through a rolled banknote or straw, but it also sometimes made into a solution and injected.

2. Cocaine can be injected but this is not more risky True / False

**False.** Cocaine may be adulterated with other substances and this may make it particularly dangerous to inject. Injecting any drug can cause vein damage, ulcers and gangrene, particularly with dirty equipment. Sharing of needles and other injecting works can help the spread of HIV and hepatitis virus infections.

3. A slang name for cocaine is Charlie True/False

**True.** Other slang names include coke, C, white, Percy, snow, toot

4. The effects of cocaine can last up to 10 hours. True/False

**False.** The effects from snorting cocaine start quickly but only last for up to 30 minutes without repeating the dose

5. Taking cocaine can help weight loss. True/False

**True.** Cocaine is a stimulant which means that it speeds up the system and suppresses the normal needs of the body like tiredness and hunger. Long-term use will therefore affect the user's weight.

6. You can feel tired and depressed after taking cocaine. True/False.

**False.** Cocaine is a strong but short acting stimulant drug. It tends to make users feel more alert and energetic. Many users say they feel very confident and physically strong and believe they have great mental capacities. Common physical effects include dry mouth, sweating, loss of appetite and increased heart and pulse rate. At higher dose levels users may feel very anxious and panicky. Coke is very addictive. It can be difficult to resist the craving and strong psychological dependence due to changes in the brain. Recent evidence suggests possible long-term changes to the nervous system.

Although psychological dependence is more of a problem than physical withdrawal symptoms - low moods and feeling very rough soon after stopping can tempt people to take more coke

7. Cocaine is quite an inexpensive drug to get hold of. True/False

**False.** Cocaine is to some an expensive drug and closely associated with the rich lifestyle enjoyed by rock and film stars. This is largely true, though things appear to be changing. The price of cocaine has seen a drop, particularly in the South East and London, where a gram that cost £70 seven years ago, can now be bought for £40. There also appears to be more of it about, with seizures increasing year on year.

8. If you buy cocaine from someone it is always the pure form of the drug. True/False

**False.** A wrap of cocaine powder can be cut with, for example, sugar or starch. Recent police seizures of cocaine had an average purity of 15%.

The purity of crack depends on the purity of the cocaine used originally to produce the crack. However, recent police seizures had an average purity of 23%

9. Cocaine is a class B drug. True/False

**False.** Cocaine is a Class A drug - illegal to have, give away or sell. Possession can get you up to seven years in jail. Supplying someone else, could get a fourteen year jail sentence.

10. Crack looks like small lumps of rock.

True/False

**True.** *'Crack' is a form of cocaine made into small lumps or rocks (which makes a cracking noise when burnt). A rock of crack is about the size of a raisin. It's usually smoked in a pipe, glass tube, plastic bottle or in foil. You can smoke either 'crack' or 'freebase' forms of cocaine in this way.*

**TRUE**

**FALSE**