

TOPPLE THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY: SEPARATE FACT FROM FICTION



Included in this guide:

- Facilitator Instructions and Question Guide
- Branded Printable Sticker Template
- Branded Printable Palm Card Template

Not included:

- [30 Cardboard Boxes \[Dimensions: 4" L x 4" W x 12" H\]](#)
- [Avery 6874 Print to the Edge Sticker Sheets](#)
- Tape and Scissors

Before you play:



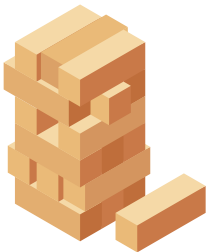
1. Print palm cards:

- Print double-sided palm cards for all participants, or
- Print palm card template on standard paper and post for participants to read



2. Print box stickers:

- Print box stickers on “Avery 6874 Print to the Edge Sticker Sheets”, or
- Print box stickers on standard paper, then cut out and tape to each box



3. Assemble cardboard boxes:

- Tape the ends of each cardboard box closed
- Stack boxes in rows of 3 to create a tower (each row should lay the opposite direction)

FACT or FICTION:

Instructions and Question Guide

1. Invite a young person to remove one box from the tower without it falling over (one per question)
2. Depending on the age of the youth playing the game, select a Younger Audience or General Audience statement
3. Read the **bolded statement** and allow youth to answer if they think it's a "FACT or FICTION"
4. Confirm the answer then share the additional information provided about the fact
5. Allow for reflection from participant, then repeat steps to keep playing

Questions for Younger Audience (Under age 13/9th Grade)

Tobacco and vape companies contribute to climate change: **FACT**

- The growth, production, marketing, and consumption of tobacco is bad for the environment. Tobacco farming causes deforestation and puts harmful chemicals into the soil. Producing tobacco causes a lot of toxic waste. Finally cigarette and vape product packaging pollute our ecosystems.
 - *Tobacco Atlas* | <https://tobaccoatlas.org/topic/environment/>

Cigarette butts decompose: **FICTION**

- Cigarette butts are not biodegradable. The filter is made out of plastic fibers that do not decompose. Animals will eat cigarette butts introducing harmful chemicals into the food chain, affecting several aspects of the environment.
 - *Berkley- Tobacco Facts* | <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/tobaccofacts>

Vaping and/or smoking can hurt your tastebuds in your mouth: **FACT**

- Vaping and smoking can decrease the amount of blood flow that taste buds receive which can weaken one's sense of taste overtime.
 - *Truth Initiative* | <https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/harmful-effects-tobacco/5-unexpected-ways-smoking-affects-your-body>



DON'T GET PLAYED BY THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY
FACT OR FICTION?

Younger Audience Questions (Under age 13/9th Grade)

Vape products are addictive: **FACT**

- Vape products contain nicotine, the same addictive chemical found in traditional cigarettes. Research suggests that not only are electronic vape products just as addictive as traditional cigarettes, but they may be more addictive. Some vape devices contain higher amounts of nicotine than traditional cigarettes.
 - *John Hopkins Medicine* | <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/5-truths-you-need-to-know-about-vaping>

Four out of five youth who vape started with a flavored product: **FACT**

- According to a recent national study, 4 in 5 current youth users reported that they first used a flavored product. Vape companies intentionally target youth with flavored products, with the most popular being candy/desserts, fruit flavors, mint and menthol.
 - *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* | <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28318902>

When teens have parents or other adults they can talk to, they are less likely to vape: **FACT**

- The ability to have open and honest conversations with adults helps young people to seek help and make informed decisions.
 - *American Journal of Public Health* | <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.4278/0890-1171-16.4.198>

Cigarettes sold in stores are natural with no additives or pesticides: **FICTION**

- Cigarettes have a mix of over 7,000 chemicals, many of which can cause cancer and other health problems. Smokeless tobacco products can have as many as 4,000 chemicals with over 30 that can cause cancer.
 - *FDA* | <https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/health-information/chemicals-tobacco-products-and-your-health>

General Audience Questions (Ages 14 and Up)

Nicotine use can impact cognitive function: FACT

- Research studies have found that nicotine use can enhance cognitive functions such as attention, memory, and fine motor skills. This is due to how receptors in the brain react to nicotine. These cognitive effects may contribute to the development of addiction to nicotine.
 - *Current Neuropharmacology* | <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6018192/>

Greenhouse gas emitted from burning cigarettes is equivalent to about 1.5 million vehicles driven annually: FACT

- There are over 1 billion people who smoke and over 5 trillion cigarettes are smoked annually. Second hand smoke contains the greenhouse gasses carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxides.
 - *World Health Organization* | <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/tobacco>

Using nicotine products can help reduce stress levels: FACT

- Immediately after use, nicotine signals a release of chemicals called dopamine and serotonin (often called “happy” chemicals) in the brain. This immediate sense of euphoria reduce levels of stress in that moment, and is part of why nicotine is so addictive. Daily nicotine use can decrease the brain’s ability to naturally release “happy” chemicals on their own. The feeling of relaxation is only temporary and soon gives way to withdrawal symptoms and increased cravings, which worsens baseline stress and anxiety levels over time.
 - *Biochem Pharmacol* | <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4600451/>



**DON'T GET PLAYED BY THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY
FACT OR FICTION?**

General Audience Questions (Ages 14 and Up)

You can safely throw vape pens, cartridges and batteries away without hurting the environment: FICTION

- Vape products can have wide ranging negative effects on the environment and can be considered biohazardous waste. Most vape products contain a lithium ion battery which should not be thrown into the garbage. If the battery gets into a landfill, it will leach heavy metals into the groundwater, contaminating the water we drink and the environment surrounding the landfill.
 - *Physorg* | <https://phys.org/news/2018-10-e-cigarettes-hazardous.html>

In the past, tobacco companies gave away free tobacco products to homeless shelters and mental health facilities: FACT

- Tobacco industry documents show that tobacco companies psychiatric facilities with product promotions and giveaways during the 1980s and 1990s, and that facilities also requested cigarette donations.
 - *Truth Initiative* | <https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/targeted-communities/tobacco-social-justice-issue-mental-health>

Menthol is added to tobacco and vape products to make you inhale more deeply: FACT

- Menthol has a cooling and anesthetic (or pain killing) effect. This also decreases the cough reflex and can soothe the dry throat feeling that many smokers have. As a result, menthol smokers may inhale more deeply, hold the smoke in the lungs longer, and get more exposure to the dangerous chemicals in cigarette smoke.
 - *DOI* | <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12931-023-02410-9>



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General Audience Questions (Ages 14 and Up)

Before commercial sale and production of cigarettes and vapes, tobacco has been used ceremonially for thousands of years: FACT

- In many Indigenous cultures across Turtle Island (North America), tradition and ceremony are based around the four sacred medicines: Sweetgrass, Tobacco, Cedar, and Sage. Each medicine holds a unique purpose and spiritual meaning, with ceremonial tobacco often connected to the East, the spring, and used in ceremonies for communication. Due to intentional targeting of the 19th and 20th centuries (1800-1900s), many Indigenous people were forced to use commercialized tobacco in their spiritual/cultural ceremonies. However, commercialized tobacco's addictive and harmful nature has led to many health disparities that uniquely affect Native Americans.
 - *American Indian Health Services of Chicago* | <https://aihschgo.org/four-sacred-medicines/>

Tobacco companies do not advertise to teens through social media: FICTION

- The four largest tobacco companies paid social media influencers to glamorize vaping to youth and young adults on social media channels. They use paid social influencer content, sponsored parties and events that end up on social media, as well as contests, online promotions, and boosting their own social media page
 - *Tobacco Free Kids* | <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/industry-watch/tobacco-industry-social-media-marketing-tactics>

Young people with certain mental health and learning differences may be at higher risk for nicotine addiction: FACT

- Research has found that young people who have ADHD are at higher risk for nicotine addiction, and are more likely to start using nicotine at a young age. Research also indicates that interventions for young people with ADHD and other learning differences should start at a younger age.
 - *Nature* | <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41386-019-0581-7>

General Audience Questions (Ages 14 and Up)

Living in a community with more tobacco & vape advertising increases the likelihood that a person will start using tobacco: **FACT**

- Youth who are exposed more often to tobacco marketing are more likely to smoke, vape and/or use chew. In African American communities, there are more tobacco retail outlets (gas stations) than in mostly white neighborhoods. In fact, there are up to TEN times more ads for tobacco in gas stations in mostly African American communities compared to mostly white neighborhoods.
 - *Surgeon General's Report: The Tobacco Industry's Influences on the Use of Tobacco Among Youth* | <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK99238/>

Children in Malawi and in the US are involved in farming tobacco: **FACT**

- Children and youth are exploited by the tobacco industry. The big tobacco farms create a system of debt bondage that largely exploits migrant families. Due to lack of childcare in the US, children often work in the fields with their parents.
 - *Labor Rights- Malawi Debt Bondage* | <https://laborrights.org/blog/201505/slavery-debt-bondage-big-tobacco%E2%80%99s-addiction-cheap-labor>

Pets such as cats and dogs are susceptible to health impacts from being in the same room as someone smoking: **FACT**

- Cats and dogs are very susceptible to secondhand smoke from being in the same room as someone who is smoking. Inhaling smoke can cause irritation of their nose and throat, and coughing or sneezing. Over a long period of time they are also at risk of more serious respiratory illnesses and cancers.
 - *VCA Hospitals* | <https://vcahospitals.com/know-your-pet/the-effects-of-second-hand-smoke-on-pets>



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General Audience Questions (Ages 14 and Up)

Tobacco and vape usage can positively impact sports performance: FICTION

- Vaping can increase coughing and wheezing, and may make asthma worse. Athletes who vape find that they get out of breath more quickly. These cardiovascular effects can harm athletic performance. Smoking and vaping both have immediate impacts to athletic ability and endurance due to less oxygen being delivered to your blood, and these impacts can worsen over time.
 - *Team USA* | <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Volleyball/Features/2019/May/01/The-Dangers-of-Vaping>

Having friends who use tobacco products does not increase a person's likelihood of using tobacco products: FICTION

- Research has found that when a young person has friends who use tobacco products they are more likely to use tobacco products as well because of community norms and acceptance around tobacco usage. Peer usage is also related to adult usage in the community, as the more common tobacco use is among adults in the community the more likely it is that young people will also smoke or vape due to community norms.
 - *Pub Med* | <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24241785/>

The tobacco and vape industry have long targeted people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender: FACT

- Tobacco and vape companies hold special promotions at bars and clubs serving LGBT people, have specific marketing campaigns aimed at LGBT people, and have sponsored LGBT-specific events like Pride festivals.
 - *Truth Initiative* | <https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/targeted-communities/tobacco-use-lgbt-communities>

General Audience Questions (Ages 14 and Up)

School policies such as suspension and vape detectors have been shown to decrease vaping in schools: FICTION

- Punitive discipline approaches, such as the use of vape detectors and suspension as a punishment when students use vape products at school do not decrease vaping in schools. Vape detectors are not an evidence-based strategy for reducing or preventing vaping, and can contribute to an unsafe and unsupportive school environment, which is linked with higher rates of youth substance use. Further, suspension, policing, and other punitive measures have also been linked with higher rates of youth substance use.
 - *Sage Pub* | <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epdf/10.4278/0890-1171-16.4.198>

School policies that aim to create an increased sense of belonging at school and dedicate staff time to supporting students' wellbeing can help reduce vaping in schools: FACT

- Research demonstrates that when young people feel safe and supported at school, they are less likely to vape or use other substances. Having trusting relationships with adults at their school is also linked with lower rates of vaping. Further, research has indicated that students want to have trusted adults at school that they can go to with concerns about vaping and addiction.
 - *National Library of Medicine* | <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4439201/>

School staff can prevent tobacco use by dedicating their time, interest, attention, and emotional support to students: FACT

- Creating a sense of belonging at school can reduce the likelihood of risky behaviors among adolescents.
 - *Smoking Susceptibility* | <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23322767/>



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General Audience Questions (Ages 14 and Up)

There is no relationship between youth tobacco use and stress, depression, and anxiety: FICTION

- Research indicates that struggles with mental health including stress, depression, and anxiety are reasons why young people may start vaping. While initially the sense of euphoria created by nicotine use may reduce stress and sadness, continued use decreases the brain's response to natural stimuli and can worsen baseline symptoms of anxiety and depression overtime.
 - *Jama Network* | <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/193251>

When a person exhales a vape cloud, they are only exhaling water vapor: FICTION

- Vapes, or "e-cigarettes" use an "e-juice" which usually contains nicotine, propylene glycol (which is a common additive in food and also used in products like antifreeze, paint solvent, and fog machines), flavors, and other chemicals. Researchers have found heavy metals, such as nickel, tin, and lead in e-cigarettes, along with carcinogens in e-juice as well. This means that when someone exhales after using a vape device, they are exhaling all of these chemicals.
 - *Lung* | <https://www.lung.org/quit-smoking/e-cigarettes-vaping/whats-in-an-e-cigarette>

When we increase the price of tobacco/nicotine products it does NOT impact smoking rates: FICTION

- Increasing the price of tobacco products by increasing taxes is a proven way to decrease tobacco use and decrease deaths related to tobacco.
 - *American Journal of Public Health* | <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6291770/>



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COLORADO'S SOCIAL JUSTICE
YOUTH TOBACCO CONTROL MOVEMENT

**To create health
equity, youth can:**

Resist the tobacco & vape
industry's influence

Inform friends about the ways the
tobacco & vape industry abuses power

Step-Up by getting involved


Empower others to create positive
change in your community

"We have never marketed to youth and never will."

~ Juul Executive, 2018

FACT OR FICTION?

FICTION



In fact, 4 in 5 current youth who use nicotine reported that they first used a flavored product.

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