

Name _____

Drinking and Driving: A Dangerous Mix

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Driving under the influence of alcohol can lead to severe consequences, including accidents and injuries to the driver and other road users. Impaired judgment, coordination, and reaction time make it difficult to make safe decisions while driving. Legal penalties may include fines, license suspension, mandatory alcohol education programs, probation, and even jail time, depending on the severity of the offense. Additionally, a DUI conviction can have long-term consequences, such as increased insurance rates and difficulties in obtaining employment.
2. Statistics play a vital role in understanding the problem of drunk driving because they provide evidence of the extent of the issue. Accurate data on alcohol-impaired driving accidents help policymakers, law enforcement, and organizations develop effective strategies for prevention and enforcement. It highlights the seriousness of the problem and allows for the allocation of resources to address it. Without accurate data, it's challenging to assess the impact of drunk driving and implement measures to reduce it.
3. Individuals can take several steps to prevent drunk driving. Firstly, they can designate a sober driver before going out with friends. This ensures that at least one person in the group is responsible for driving safely. Secondly, they can use public transportation or ridesharing services if they've been drinking. This eliminates the temptation to drive under the influence and provides a safe way to get home. Responsible choices and planning ahead are essential to avoid the dangers of drunk driving.
4. Alcohol impairs a driver's ability to make safe decisions on the road by affecting cognitive functions such as judgment, coordination, and reaction time. When a person consumes alcohol, it affects their brain's ability to process information effectively. This impairment leads to poor decision-making, slower reaction times, and reduced coordination. For example, an impaired driver may not be able to assess the distance between their vehicle and the one in front, leading to rear-end collisions. Additionally, their impaired judgment may lead them to take unnecessary risks on the road, further increasing the likelihood of accidents.

