

### Up In Smoke

Adapted from "Up In Smoke" by Michelle Sale, The New York Times Learning Network.  
[www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20050112wednesday.html?searchpv=learning\\_lessons](http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20050112wednesday.html?searchpv=learning_lessons)

Subjects: Social Studies

#### Overview:

Students consider their beliefs about antismoking laws before and after examining total smoking bans in various countries and the rationales behind them.

#### Suggested Time:

One Class Session

#### Resources/Materials:

- Four large pieces of paper, each with one of the following statements written in large letters: "Strongly Agree," "Agree Somewhat," "Disagree Somewhat," "Strongly Disagree"
- Copies of the article "Smoking Ban Clears the Air, but It Befogs Italians' Mood," (one per student)
- Resources about countries with total smoking bans (health textbooks, periodicals, computers with Internet access)

### OBJECTIVES:



Students will:

1. Consider their own beliefs about various issues relating to smoking bans.
2. Consider reactions to a new smoking ban in Italy by reading and discussing the article "Smoking Ban Clears the Air, but It Befogs Italians' Mood."
3. Explore smoking bans in various countries, make brief presentations on their findings, and discuss major issues relating to smoking bans.
4. Write position papers supporting or opposing the institution of a total smoking ban.

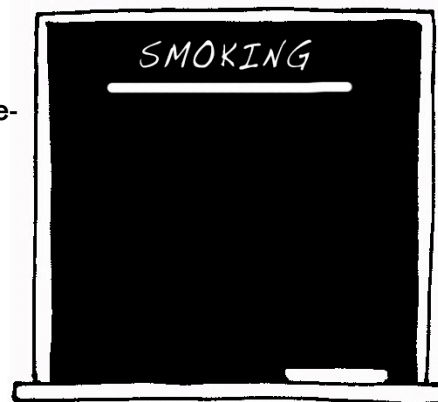
### Preparation:

Before class, hang the four "statement" posters in different corners of the room. Because students will be moving around to stand beneath the statements with which they most agree for different statements related to smoking bans, be sure that students have clear paths in the room to reach the four corners.

### Procedures:

1. WARM-UP: Explain to students that they will be expressing their views on different statements that you will be reading to them regarding laws banning smoking. Point out that each corner of the room has a sign that states to what degree students agree or disagree with a statement. For each of the statements below, read the statement aloud and allow students to move to the corners of the room that best express their views on the statement. As students take their places, write the statement on the board. Then, ask at least one student in each group to share his or her choice.

- Smoking isn't as bad for your health as many other activities.
- Every person has a right to breathe air that is smoke-free.
- If a restaurant has separate smoking and nonsmoking sections, then everyone's needs are met.
- Whether a private business (like a restaurant or bowling alley) allows smoking should be up to the owner, not the government.



2. As a class, read and discuss the article "Smoking Ban Clears the Air, but It Befogs Italians' Mood." Discuss the following questions:

- Over what law are some Italian smokers and restaurant owners upset?
- According to Concetta Gaggiano, how did the new law affect diners' eating experiences?
- What percentage of Italy's population smokes, according to the article?
- Why didn't many of the bars and restaurants make renovations that would allow smoking under the ban?

- What other countries in the European Union have total smoking bans?
- According to the Health Ministry, how many people die of smoking in Italy each year?
- According to Health Minister Girolamo Sirchia, what is the goal of the smoking ban?
- Do you think the Italian law is a good one? Could it be made better? If so, how?

3. Divide students into five or six groups. Explain that each group will be preparing brief presentations about the total smoking bans in a particular country, and that these presentations will be used as a starting point for a class discussion about smoking bans in general. (You may wish to mention that in the United States, some states, such as New York, California and Delaware, already have smoking bans in place.)

Assign each group a country that has a total no-smoking ban or is in the process of implementing one, such as Norway, Sweden, Ireland, Uganda, New Zealand and Italy. (Refer to <http://www.ash.org> for more information.)

To guide their research, encourage students to answer the following questions (written on the board or copied into a handout for easier student access):

- When did, or will, no-smoking legislation take effect?
- What reasons are cited for enacting this legislation? Who has supported it?
- What reasons are cited for disputing this legislation? Who has opposed it?
- What establishments, businesses and people have been or will be directly affected by this ban? How?



Once research is completed, students should take a few minutes to review their notes and share their information with the class.

4. In round-table discussion format, students explore the idea of smoking bans using the information they have learned through their research. Though the discussion will likely be driven by student comments, some guiding questions are offered below. Because the discussion may become heated, the teacher may want to maintain a "speaker's list." Students who wish to add to the discussion raise their hands, and the teacher writes their names on a list. Students are called on in the order that their names appear on the list.

- Should tobacco companies' interests (and the interests of other industries, such as restaurants and bars) matter when it comes to making legislation that may improve the health of the general population? Why or why not?
- How can a smoking ban affect the culture of a country both positively and negatively?
- Who should be responsible for creating legislation that bans smoking? Should it be the national or local government?
- What does the phrase "preventable deaths" mean to you? What impact will a ban on smoking have on statistics relating to "preventable deaths"?
- How important is it to protect the air we breathe? How does this need compare with the need to protect other natural resources such as water and rainforests?
- If tobacco is so harmful, why not ban it altogether?

4. WRAP-UP: Individually, students write position papers supporting or opposing a total ban on smoking in indoor public places.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- How might a monetary fine prevent people from smoking in designated areas or outside?
- How does smoking affect a nation as a whole?
- Why should smokers be considerate of nonsmokers? Should nonsmokers be considerate of smokers? If there is a conflict, whose interests should prevail?
- Why might a person begin smoking?
- If a smoker gets cancer from smoking, is the smoker the only one to suffer?
- Is smoking just a matter of personal choice? Does society have a right to try to curb smoking among citizens?



### Method of Evaluation:

Students can be evaluated based on participation in initial opinion activity, group research and presentations, class and group discussions, and thoughtfully written position papers.

### Extension/Reinforcement:

1. Prepare a poster highlighting countries that do not have national no-smoking laws, but have bans on smoking in specific establishments and buildings. Consider Thailand, Canada, the United States, etc.
2. Create a "How It Works" poster illustrating the various ways cigarette smoke affects the human body.



## **Smoking Ban Clears the Air, But It Befogs Italians' Mood**

By Elisabetta Povoledo

MILAN, Jan. 10 - Smokers and restaurant owners in Italy were fuming in a rather different way on Monday after a tough new law that bans smoking in public places - one of the strictest in Europe - went into effect.

As undercover health inspectors and police officers began patrolling cafes and bars, smokers huddled on sidewalks outside restaurants at lunchtime, while those inside enjoyed what would be for many their first smoke-free meal.

"It's a disaster - my clients all complained," said Concetta Gaggiano, owner of the Nico Bar, a usually bustling cafe in central Milan. "People just ate their sandwiches and left. They didn't even have coffee. You could tell that they couldn't wait to light up a cigarette."

Getting people not to smoke in a country where around a quarter of the population does has been a major headache for the Health Ministry, which pushed the law through more than a year ago, giving restaurants and bars 12 months to create sealed-off smoking areas. The new law bans smoking in indoor spaces, including offices, unless they have a separate smoking area with continuous floor-to-ceiling walls and a ventilation system.

Many bars and cafes in Italy are simply too small to accommodate such a space and still turn a profit.

In the countdown to the midnight deadline on Sunday, only a small percentage of restaurant and bar owners complied with the restrictions, complaining of the high costs of renovations and the difficulties of restoring historical venues regulated by tough building codes.

Ireland, Italy and Norway are the only three countries in the European Union to have total smoking bans in public spaces, while partial bans are imposed in some other union nations. Smokers can still breathe easily in half a dozen union countries, including Britain, Spain and Portugal.

Citing the 80,000 deaths each year that can be traced to smoking-related causes, Health Minister Girolamo Sirchia made the new law a main priority despite the opposition of some members of his the cabinet.

"This law is not a prohibitionist law; we don't prohibit smokers from smoking, we just ask for the protection of nonsmokers," Mr. Sirchia said in an interview. "There are a number of changes in the air."