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### Writing Prompts

- Use evidence to explain why using cannabis may pose risks for teens that are different than those for adults.
- Write a paragraph explaining the best sources of information to trust when trying to understand if using a drug is a good idea or not. What are the motivations that lead companies and people to share information in certain ways? Consider the motivations and reliability of different sources of information—such as friends, doctors, teachers, parents, or companies or people that sell cannabis.
- How do you think using cannabis might affect a person's relationships with other people? Use facts about the drug's effects to support your answer.

### Answers to the Student Activity

1. The **cerebrum** controls how the brain processes sensory information and controls higher-level thinking skills like problem-solving. When THC attaches to receptors in this area, it changes the way information is processed, which can impair thinking, sensory perception, attention, problem-solving, and decision-making.
2. The **limbic system**—including the hippocampus—is involved in learning new information and recording memories. THC can impair memory and emotion processing by changing the way cells communicate in this area.
3. THC can impact the way cells communicate in the **cerebellum**. This area of the brain is involved in coordination and balance and perception of time.
4. The **brain stem** is in charge of all the functions our body needs to stay alive—breathing, moving blood, and digesting food. It also links the brain with the spinal cord, which runs down the back and moves muscles. High doses of THC can cause an increase in heart rate.
5. The **limbic system**—including the amygdala—is involved in the processing of emotions, such as fear and anxiety. In some individuals, cannabis use can cause extreme feelings of fear and anxiety.
6. The **basal ganglia** are a group of structures deep within the brain that are strongly interconnected to other brain areas and involved in many processes, including motor function, cognition, and emotion. The basal ganglia also play an important role in regulating how the brain processes reward and reinforcement. Cannabis causes dopamine levels in the basal ganglia to increase. With regular use, this process can be linked to the development of addiction.

# Help Spread the Facts About Cannabis

Knowing the facts about how drugs can affect your health is critical to being able to make healthy decisions. Read the article “Cannabis: The Facts You Need to Know” and explore the interactive “Cannabis and the Brain” to learn how cannabis products can affect how your brain functions. Use the information to answer the questions below.

## PART 1: EXPLAIN THE EFFECTS

All regions of the brain are interconnected and work together to perform functions. The table below describes some actions or behaviors that might occur as a result of a person using cannabis. Match each action to the part of the brain that is most involved. In the right-hand column, explain how exposure to the chemical THC found in cannabis might influence this action or behavior.

Action or Behavior	Primary Brain Area	Explanation of the Effect of THC
1. Having difficulty concentrating or thinking clearly		
2. Forgetting an answer to a test question even after studying well		
3. Dropping the ball on an easy catch		
4. Feeling extremely anxious for no obvious reason		
5. Heart feels as though it's “racing”		
6. Struggling to stop taking a drug, even though it has negative effects on your life		

## PART 2: SHARE THE FACTS

► Think about what you have learned about the effects of cannabis. What did you find most surprising? Write down two to three facts that you think would be most convincing if you were talking to a peer about the risks of cannabis.

1.

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2.

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3.

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► Social media is one place where inaccurate information about cannabis may be spread. Use what you have learned to create a social media post, such as a meme or short video, that explains to other teens the facts they should know about cannabis.

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