

Name: Exam - San Francisco Drug Problems

Name:	Date:
BE:	Grade:

- ① **List** two statistics about drug use in San Francisco. **1 BE**

- ② **Decide** whether the following statements are true (t), false (f) or not mentioned in the text (n). If they are mentioned in the text, **add where you found the information** and **correct** the statements, if they are wrong. **4 BE**

Statements	t/f/n
The new mayor is trying to solve the homelessness and mental health problems in San Francisco.	
The number of overdose-related deaths is growing every year.	
Fentanyl is the deadliest drug in all of California.	
The mayor's new decision might lead to an increase in diseases like hepatitis or HIV.	
Nonprofits can only hand out harm reduction kits on the streets of San Francisco, if they offer counseling and connect people to treatment.	
The mayor is against harm reduction, because it leads to more people taking drugs.	

For the following questions, use your own sheet of paper, give lines, and paraphrase or quote from the text!

- ③ **Explain** the concept of "harm reduction". **3 BE**

- ④ **Argue**, whether you agree or disagree with the mayor's decision. **Refer to the arguments from the text** in your argumentation! **8 BE**

Big Changes in San Francisco's Drug Policy

On Wednesday, April 2, 2025, the mayor of San Francisco announced a big change: non-profit groups will no longer be allowed to hand out needles and other drug-related items to people on the streets. These supplies were meant to help reduce the harm

5 from drug use. This change is part of Mayor Lurie's new plan, called „Breaking the Cycle,“ which aims to address the city's homelessness and mental health problems.

The free kits usually include items like foil, pipes, and needles needed for consuming drugs. Many local nonprofits have been giving them out on the streets to reduce the risk for diseases like AIDS or Hepatitis that come from sharing needles or using dirty ones.

10 After many years of using this harm reduction approach, the mayor is ending the policy. Mayor Daniel Lurie said, „The facts show that what we're doing isn't working. Two people die from overdoses every day in San Francisco. People can talk about numbers, but two years ago, 810 people died from overdoses.“

While there has been small decline after the record high numbers in 2023, drug use and
15 overdoses still remain a big problem. Most people who died from accidental overdoses in 2024 were men, especially those between 35 and 64 years old. Fentanyl was involved in over 70% of these deaths, usually mixed with other drugs. Fentanyl is a man-made opioid that's very strong. It's often added to other drugs making them cheaper, stronger, more addictive, and more dangerous.

20 People who disagree with Mayor Lurie's decision say that focusing only on stopping drug use can push away people who aren't ready to quit. "Harm reduction doesn't kill anyone," they said. "People die in traditional treatment programs that require quitting drugs because they're often left out or removed if they can't stay drug-free. We fear that this will lead to an increase in overdoses, HIV and hepatitis, since people lose their support."

25 People who agree with the decision argue that harm reduction can't last forever and that people need a strong but caring push to get treatment. "We can't keep allowing drug use again and again. The harm reduction approach has not been working," they said.

Even with the new policy, nonprofits can give out free harm reduction kits. However
30 when doing so, they have to offer counseling and try to connect the person to treatment. The kits can also no longer be given out in public places.