



Reflect and discuss

Legalize it



Jamaican-born Peter Tosh wrote and released *Legalize it* in 1975 in response to his ongoing victimization by the Jamaican police. It was also meant to be a political statement supporting cannabis legalization for medical purposes in particular.

Legalize it Lyrics

Legalize it, don't criticize it
Legalize it, yeah, yeah, and I will advertise it
Some call it tampee, tampee
Some call it the weed
Some call it marijuana, marijuana
Some of them call it ganja, ganja
Every man got to legalize it, and don't criticize it
Legalize it yeah, yeah, and I will advertise it
Singers smoke it
And players of instrument too
Legalize it, yeah, yeah
That's the best thing you can do
Doctors smoke it, nurses smoke it
Judges smoke it, even the lawyer too
So you've got to legalize it, and don't criticize it
Legalize it, yeah, yeah, and I will advertise it
It's good for the flu, a good for asthma
Good for tuberculosis, even umara compositis
Got to legalize it, don't criticize it
Legalize it, yeah, yeah, I will advertise it
Birds eat it, ants love it
Fowls eat it, goats love to play with it
So you've got to legalize it, don't criticize it
Legalize it, yeah, yeah, and I will advertise it
Keep on telling you, legalize it

Source: Musixmatch

Songwriters: Peter Tosh / Marcelo Peixoto / Rafael Lopes

Activity steps

- Play **Legalize it**.
- Give each participant a **Legalize it handout**. Walk through the handout, and then play the song again.
- Arrange participants into small groups or pairs. Ask them to talk about and write answers to the 'reflect and discuss' questions.
- Debrief with the group.
- Invite participants to 'look into it' and choose a research activity.



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Stigma and racism

*Singers smoke it
And players of instrument too
Legalize it, yeah, yeah
That's the best thing you can do
Doctors smoke it, nurses smoke it
Judges smoke it, even the lawyer too*

- Why do you think the songwriter chose to highlight these professions in the song?
- How do you feel about the idea that people in all types of professions use cannabis? Explain.

Medical use

*It's good for the flu, a good for asthma
Good for tuberculosis, even umara composis*

- What is your understanding of the medical uses of cannabis? Where did you learn about it?
- Today, in Canada, cannabis is advertised and sold in many forms to help with various conditions. Do you think there are some forms of using cannabis better than others for treating health problems? Are there any health conditions that you think would be made worse by using cannabis? Explain your answers.

Let's look into it!

- **Legalize it** was banned when released, but not suppressed. Singer Peter Tosh became famous. In 1977, Tosh said: "*We are the victims of Rasclot circumstances. Victimization, colonialism, gonna lead to bloodbath.*"

To what degree do you think was Tosh right? Explore legalization and explain your answer in an essay.

- Before legalization in Canada in 2018, many people with medical problems accessed cannabis through compassion clubs. The advocates who ran these quasi-legal entities took legal and financial risks to provide medical cannabis to cancer patients and others who needed it. This included marginalized people who did not feel welcome in the mainstream system. Research and explore Canada's history of compassion clubs, and share your findings in writing or an oral presentation.