



Bushfire Safety



Accidents Happen – Upper Primary

Introduction

The 'Accidents Happen' safety message explores the fact that fires can start by accident, so you should always be cautious and think before you act. People are often unaware that barbecues, campfires, fire pits or anything that causes sparks can be a bushfire threat, particularly on Total Fire Ban days. For more information, see the 'Total Fire Ban' lesson and video.

There are three options for presenting this lesson. The activity is similar, but it can be focused on barbecues, campfires or a combination of both. Select the option that best suits your location and students. There are accompanying activity sheets for all three options.

It is recommended that you read the 'Background Information For Teachers' before undertaking this lesson.

Links to Australian Curriculum

Geography

- Understanding that environments are important to people and animals and that we have a responsibility to look after them.
- Recognising the impact that bushfires and other natural disasters have on environments and communities.
- Developing ideas about how to prepare and respond to natural disaster events.

Health and Physical Education

- Identify, plan and practise strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing of self and others in various situations.

English

- Accessing relevant prior knowledge or personal experiences to make meaningful connections to events, issues and ideas in a text.
- Sharing ideas and points of view relating to a text.



Bushfire Safety



Learning outcomes

Participating in this lesson will help students to achieve the following learning outcomes:

- Students will identify dangers around barbecue and/or campfire areas and devise ways of making these areas safer.
- Students will understand the importance of thinking before acting and how failure to do this can lead to emergency events.

Resources

You will need:

- 'Accidents Happen' safety message video <http://vimeo.com/31061958> (running time: 30 sec)
- interactive whiteboard
- 'Find the Barbecue Dangers' IWB picture
- 'Find the Barbecue Dangers Solutions'
- 'Find the Campfire Dangers' IWB picture
- 'Find the Campfire Dangers Solutions'
- 'Campfire Safety Tips'.

Lesson steps

As a class, watch the video 'Accidents Happen' <http://vimeo.com/31061958>

Discuss:

- Why did Trev's Mum want the area cleared before she lit the barbecue?
- What sorts of things did they find around the barbecue?
- Do you think Trev understood why the area needed to be cleared?
- What other things are important to consider when lighting fires?



Bushfire Safety



Barbecue focused lesson

Ask students to discuss how often they have barbecues at home and why (e.g. on weekends, in the holidays, for lunch, when friends come over, for birthdays, in summer, etc). Now ask students if they ever clear the area around the barbecue before it is lit. Why or why not?

Display the '**Find the Barbecue Dangers**' picture on an IWB. In pairs or small groups, ask students to find and explain the items/areas in the picture that may be unsafe. Share ideas and discuss ways that the dangers could be rectified.

Students to create a scale drawing of their barbecue area at home (or a fictitious area if they do not have one) and indicate:

- areas that are unsafe and note how these can be managed; or
- why their barbecue area is already safe (in this case they should make note of what they do or have done to make the area safe).

Consider other times that a bushfire may start as a result of an accident (i.e. not related to a barbecue). Brainstorm a list of ideas (your state or territory fire agency website will have a list of activities that can lead to a fire starting in certain conditions). Discuss what individuals can do to ensure a bushfire does not start as a result of irresponsible behaviour.

Campfire focused lesson

Ask students to discuss when they have campfires and why. Some responses may include when they are camping, during winter to keep warm, when they want to cook some food over an open flame, during a celebration etc.

Now ask students if they ever consider the surrounding area before lighting a campfire. Why or why not? Students to discuss what they think makes a campfire and surrounding area safe.

Display the '**Find the Campfire Dangers**' picture on an IWB. In pairs or small groups, ask students to find and explain the items/areas in the picture that may be unsafe. Make sure students also consider what is missing from the picture that could make it unsafe (e.g. the fire is not in a trench). Share ideas and discuss ways that the dangers could be rectified.

Display the '**Campfire Safety Tips**' on an IWB and discuss each of them. Would students add any to this list?

Organise students into small groups and assign each group one or two of the campfire safety tips. Each group is to plan and create a community awareness announcement promoting the tip/s. Ideas could include a print announcement for the paper, a sign for a national park, a social media campaign or a radio advertisement. Students must decide on and consider their target audience.

As a class brainstorm a list of ways that a bushfire could start from a campfire. Discuss what individuals can do to ensure that a bushfire does not start as a result of irresponsible behaviour. Students may wish to focus on, or include, information from this discussion in their community awareness announcement



Bushfire Safety



Further activities

Here are some suggested extra activities to extend the students' learning.

- Students to design a safety poster to display near a barbecue or campfire area.
- Students to design and construct a 'Safe Barbecue' prototype – what features make it safe?
- Students to conduct an internet search to research further barbecue or campfire safety tips.
- Invite someone from your local bushfire service to speak to the class about ways to prevent fire accidents and prepare for bushfire season.

Extra resources

For more information visit your state or territory fire agency website:

- ACT Rural Fire Service
<https://esa.act.gov.au/actrfs/>
- Country Fire Authority (CFA)
<http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/>
- Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service
www.pfes.nt.gov.au/Fire-and-Rescue.aspx
- NSW Rural Fire Service
www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/
- Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES)
www.qfes.qld.gov.au/
- South Australian Country Fire Service
www.cfs.sa.gov.au/
- Tasmania Fire Service
<http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/>
- WA Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES)
www.dfes.wa.gov.au/