



Bushfire Safety



Preparing for an Emergency – Upper Primary

Introduction

The 'Preparing for an Emergency' safety message explores the importance of having a box or bag prepared with items of significant or emotional value in case of a bushfire threat. It does not have to contain emergency items, rather things such as photos, baby clothes and anything else of sentimental value to take if it is no longer safe to stay in your home. It can be packed and kept somewhere that is easy to access in the event that you need to leave your home due to a bushfire threat. This lesson provides an excellent opportunity to discuss why it is important to leave early.

It is recommended that you read the 'Background Information For Teachers' before undertaking this lesson and that you complete the 'Emergency Batteries' lesson after this one.

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.



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Learning outcomes

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

- Students will identify important items to take with them in case of a bushfire emergency.
- Students will learn the importance of being prepared in a bushfire emergency.
- Students will discuss why it is important to leave early.

Resources

You will need:

- 'Preparing for an Emergency' safety message video <http://vimeo.com/31114183> (running time: 30 sec)
- interactive whiteboard (IWB)
- **'What Should I Pack?'** activity sheet.

Lesson steps

Students to brainstorm things that they prepare for (such as tests, oral presentations, sports games, coming to school, etc). Ask students why preparing for these things is important. Emphasise that being organised, knowing what to do and being prepared to act is essential for everyday tasks as well as in emergencies.

As a class, watch the video 'Preparing for an Emergency' <http://vimeo.com/31114183>.

Discuss:

- What did Trev call his box?
- What did Trev pack in his box?
- Why did the children have their 'important stuff' packed away in a box?
- When would you take a box like this with you? For what reason/s?

Ask students to discuss how the video made them feel. Allow time to share feelings.

In the video, Trev and Amy were getting prepared to leave 'just in case'. What do students think they meant by this? Explain to students that there are times during emergencies (such as bushfires) that people must leave their homes. Ask students to brainstorm when they should leave and why it is important (leaving as early as possible is very important, as if you wait too long your escape route may be compromised by smoke, fire or strong winds or you and your family may be in danger from the fire).



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Ask students if anyone has a bushfire survival plan. Does it include discussion or triggers around when to leave? If so, what are they, who decided what they should be, what has the family decided about leaving early? If not, suggest that they speak to their families about it and create a 'leaving early' plan.

Write the words 'want' and 'need' on the board. Ask students what the difference is and perhaps list a few examples of wants and needs. Amy and Trev prepared some boxes of items that were important to them and they *wanted* to keep safe in the event of a bushfire. Ask students to think about what they would *want* to include in their 'box'. Record responses on the board. Explain that there are no wrong answers and what may be important to one person, may not be of equal importance to another.

Students to complete the '**What Should I Pack?**' activity sheet to indicate what items they think are important and not important for their box, and items that they are unsure of.

Once completed, students to share with the class. Were there items that every student thought were important? Were there items that students couldn't decide whether or not to include? Discuss and debate these items.

Each student should select up to five items from their sheet and justify these choices to the rest of the class in a two-minute presentation. Students to peer assess their classmates on how convincing they are. Alternatively, place students into small groups, provide them with a number of items and have them debate the pros and cons of including these in the pack.

Briefly explain to students that the items that they are considering in this lesson are those of sentimental value. These are different to the items that would be packed in an 'Emergency Kit' (which is designed to contain *essential* items for during, and the days following, a bushfire). It is suggested that you follow this lesson with the 'Emergency Batteries' lesson as this covers items to be included in an 'Emergency Kit'.

Further activities

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

- Using card and tape, students to construct their own box.
- Discuss what materials an emergency kit should be made out of. Students to design their own 'fire resistant' box.
- Students to record what important items members of their family may include in their box.
- Invite someone from your local bushfire service to speak to the class about ways to prepare for bushfire season.



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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/