

Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives

Overview

Task Context

Students need to be able to identify the importance of smoke alarms in the home. They need to recognize the sound of a smoke alarm and know what to do if they hear it. They should be able to identify what to do to keep smoke alarms in working order.

Expectations

Grade 2	Grade 3
2e47 • communicate messages, and follow instructions and directions;	3e50 • communicate messages, and follow and give directions for a variety of activities and events;
2e60 • participate in group discussions, demonstrating a sense of when to speak, when to listen, and how much to say;	3e51 • listen to discussions and ask questions to clarify meaning;
2p3 • outline safety rules and safe practices;	3e63 • contribute ideas appropriate to the topic in group discussion and listen to the ideas of others;
2p11 • identify safety rules to be followed in the home, school, and community (e.g., electrical safety, schoolyard rules, bus safety);	3p3 • list safety procedures and practices in the home, school, and community
	3p10 • explain relevant safety procedures (e.g., fire drills, railway-crossing and crosswalk procedures);

Groupings

Students Working As Whole Class

Students Work in Small Groups

Students Working Individually

Notes to Teacher

The following materials will be needed:

- an approved smoke alarm and battery
- masking tape
- 30 index cards with an "X" on them

Teaching / Learning

Discussion

1. Teachers and students discuss why smoke alarms are needed.
2. Teachers demonstrate what a smoke alarm looks like and the sound it makes when it detects smoke.
3. Teachers lead a class discussion about what students should do if they hear a smoke alarm sound.
4. Teachers and students discuss proper installation of smoke alarms. Allow students to measure 15-30 centimetres to get an idea of proper location.
5. Teachers lead a class discussion of smoke alarm batteries (i.e., how often they should be tested, how often they should be changed). Teachers also indicate that some smoke alarms plug in and run on household current.
6. Teachers show students where the batteries go in a smoke alarm. Press the test button to demonstrate it is working properly. Remind students that alarms need to be kept clean from dust. This can be done by running a vacuum cleaner attachment over and around them.
7. Teachers allow students to touch the smoke alarm and push the test button.

Sample Floor Plans

1. Teachers use masking tape to outline five different sample floor plans on the classroom or gym floor.
2. Teachers divide students into groups of 5 or 6 and give each group several "X " cards to be placed where smoke alarms should be installed.
3. Students are asked to explain the locations chosen.
4. Students are given a sample floor plan worksheet and individually put an "X" on the spots where smoke alarms should be installed.

Home Connection

1. Teachers ask students to go home and ask mom or dad to help them draw a floor plan of their house. They are instructed to use an "X" to indicate where smoke alarms are installed.

OR

2. Students take home the Home Connection Activity sheet and complete it with their parents. They bring it back for discussion.

Note: The "Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives" information could be sent home to parents/caregivers along with this assignment.

3. Students have an opportunity to share their floor plans and the number and location of smoke alarms or their Home Connection Activity information.
4. Teachers collect and display the floor plans returned by students.
4. Teachers conclude the lesson by telling students they can keep their homes safe from fire by helping grown-ups remember to:

- put smoke alarms in the home, especially near bedrooms
- test smoke alarms monthly to make sure they are working
- replace with brand new batteries at least once a year
- keep smoke alarms clean from dust

Song: Fire Safety Hop

1. Teachers teach students this song about smoke alarms.

Resources

Teacher and parent/caregiver information "Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives"

Song: Fire Safety Hop

Home Connection Activity

Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives

All seasoned firefighters have heard the explanation, “The smoke alarm woke me up. I was able to wake the rest of the family and get them out just ahead of the fire.” A smoke alarm is the best early fire detection device available to the average homeowner. Here are some answers to questions commonly asked about smoke alarms.

Why are smoke alarms needed?

Fire spreads very quickly. A fire which burns for one minute in a house will grow to three times original size; eleven times its original size in four minutes; and fifty times its size in only six minutes.

90-95% of people who die in fires are killed by the smoke. Smoke is full of carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide replaces the oxygen in our bodies and suffocates us. Many people think they will smell smoke and wake up. Actually, smoke puts you into a deeper sleep. People who are awakened by a fire have inhaled enough smoke that they can't think clearly. In their stupor, they make wrong decisions as they try to escape and are killed.

What kind of smoke alarm should I buy?

Both battery-powered and house current-powered smoke alarms do a good job. Make sure the one you choose has been tested by a nationally-recognized testing laboratory.

How many smoke alarms do I need?

There should be at least one alarm on every floor of the house except attics, unless the attic space is used for sleeping. Additional alarms will increase the chance of early detection.

Where should I place a alarm?

Smoke alarms should be placed near bedrooms either on the ceiling—at least 15 to 30 centimetres away from the wall—or on the wall, 15 to 30 centimetres down from the ceiling. This allows the alarm to sense the smoke as it approaches the sleeping area.

What maintenance do smoke alarms require?

Test the alarm at least monthly by pushing the test button. Once a year vacuum the dust from alarm air vents. Battery operated alarms should have the battery replaced each year or when the low-battery warning sounds. Select a memorable date such as a holiday or family birthday to remind you to replace the batteries in your smoke alarms at that time.

Is there anything else I should do to make my home or cottage safer?

Yes! Hold practice drills with your whole family so they will know what to do if your alarm ever alerts you of an emergency.

Install a carbon monoxide alarm as well and keep a fire extinguisher handy.

Fire Safety Hop

(to the tune of: The Bunny Hop)

Fire Safety is important.
It can save my life.
This song will help me remember
What to do! (everyone hop)

If I am sleeping
And the smoke alarm wails
Remember my escape plan
Crawl! Crawl! Crawl! (everyone crawl)

Smoke alarms are needed.
One on every floor.
Make sure they are working
Beep! Beep! Beep! (everyone hop)

I need to tell my parents
The batteries should be new.
So when they change their clocks
Change batteries, too!

Now I know the drill
The things that I must do.
I know fire safety
You can too! (everyone point)

Home Connection Activity

Smoke Alarms

Take this checklist home and fill it out with your parents. Bring it back to school for discussion.

1. There are ____ floors in our house. We have a smoke alarm on each one. _____ yes _____no
2. There is also a smoke detector nearby, and outside of each bedroom. _____ yes _____ no
3. We checked the batteries while doing this activity and we plan to check them every month from now on. _____ yes _____ no
4. We understand that in order to be safe, we should change those batteries at least once a year. _____ yes _____ no
5. We checked to make sure that there was no dust or dirt on or near the smoke alarm. _____ yes _____ no

Good Job!!