



Bushfire Safety

Off to the Tip – Lower Primary

Introduction

The ‘Off to the Tip’ safety message explores the importance of preparing for bushfire season by managing (e.g. relocating, disposing of, or dispersing) flammable materials close to your home or sheds. This could include piled up branches, bark, leaves, twigs, heavy mulch and other wood piles.

This lesson should ideally be completed after the ‘Raking up Twigs and Leaves’ and ‘What is a Spot Fire?’ lessons.

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

Links to Australian Curriculum

Geography

- Understanding that environments are special to people and animals and we need to look after them.
- Recognising the impact that bushfires and other natural disasters have on families, 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 learn how they can help protect their home from bushfire damage.
- Students will learn about potential bushfire hazards around the home and how to manage/ dispose of them correctly.

Resources

You will need:

- ‘Off to the Tip’ safety message video <http://vimeo.com/31114269> (running time: 30 sec)
- interactive whiteboard (IWB)
- ‘Yard Tidy Up!’ activity sheet
- ‘Yard Tidy Up!’ solutions
- coloured pencils.

Lesson steps

As a class, watch the video, ‘Off to the Tip’ <http://vimeo.com/31114269>

Ask students to discuss the safety message, record their responses. Questions could include:

- What was Amy’s job?
- How was Maddie helping?
- Why were they taking the branches to the tip?

With a partner, students discuss what things around their yard could be a problem in a fire. Record these ideas. Discuss how each could be addressed. Explain to students that not every hazard needs to be disposed of. Some items can be moved or tidied to address the hazard.

Explain that having a tidy yard helps to reduce potential fire hazards (such as branches, bark, leaves, twigs, rubbish, heavy mulch and other wood piles). Ask students why they think having these things lying around close to buildings may be dangerous. Explain to students that hazards as small as leaves and twigs, which are sometimes referred to as ‘fine fuel’ can turn into embers (which can lead to fires).



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Give students the ‘Yard Tidy Up!’ activity sheet to colour in. Ask them to circle any hazards they can find in the picture and label how they might ‘manage’ the hazard (e.g. organics or compost bin, move to a safer area, tidy, recycle, take to the tip, etc.). If students are having difficulty with the labelling, replace it with a class discussion and write ideas on the board.

Once completed, ask students:

- Other than piled up branches, what else can catch fire easily?
- Why is it important to prepare for bushfire season?
- What can you do to help keep your yard tidy at home?

Further activities

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

- Invite someone from your local bushfire service to speak to the class about ways to prepare for bushfire season.
- Students to collect small twigs and leaves to use in a fire-themed creative arts project.
- Organise a trip to a local tip or recycling centre. Find out how it operates.

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/



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- Tasmania Fire Service
<http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/>
- WA Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES)
www.dfes.wa.gov.au/