



Preschool Lesson

Firefighters Rescue People and Put Out Fires

Background: Fire is frightening to children and adults. Adults have a responsibility to teach fire safety skills in a non-threatening way. Preschool teachers and parents need to teach children that firefighters are community helpers who can help us in many ways; by putting out fires, teaching fire prevention, rescuing people from fires, and responding to medical emergencies. When preparing to fight a fire, firefighters wear special equipment. Personal protection equipment (PPE) or turnouts consist of the following: a heavy, hard helmet, a flame resistant coat or pants with glow in the dark stripes, rubber boots and leather gloves, and an air tank with an air facial mask. He or she may also carry a variety of tools such as a hose or ax. Young children have very active imaginations and get scared very easily. In an actual fire, small children lack the skills to escape a fire in their home on their own. Yet, in this situation fear and confusion can cause children to run away and hide from firefighters, the actual people who can help save them. We need to teach young children that even in odd-looking gear, a firefighter is a very important friend who could help them to safety. This lesson is designed to lessen children's fear of fire personal in full turnout gear.

Objectives:

1. 100 percent of preschool children will identify firefighters as friendly grown- up community helpers.
2. 100 percent of preschool children will be able to explain the different jobs that a firefighter does such as: put out fires, teach fire prevention, and rescue people from fires, and responds to emergencies.
3. 100 percent of preschool children will recognize the special equipment and different clothing worn by the firefighter when at the scene of a fire.

4. 100 percent of the children will demonstrate knowledge of the proper actions to take when in a fire or rescue situation.

Vocabulary:

firefighter, equipment, turnout gear, protective clothing, air mask, air tank, ax, helmet, boots, glow in the dark stripes on coat and pants

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

Cookie Monster and Grover puppets, “*Strange –looking things*” puppet show from Sesame Street Fire Safety Station

Guest Speaker: Ask the Fire PALS instructor from Waterloo Fire Rescue to come to your class dressed in the station uniform. Ask them to bring along full turnout gear and equipment.

Procedure: This lesson consists of two parts. Part One is the firefighter familiarization part where the Fire PALS instructor meets the class and dresses in full turnout gear. Part Two is the “simulated fire experience” where the students crawl low under the smoke from the portable smoke simulator or while in the smoke house to the Fire PALS instructor who is dressed in fire rescue turnout gear. (Be sure to let parents know ahead of time that this will take place and invite them to participate in the class with their child if they are interested in doing so.)

Part One

For the teacher

1. Present the puppet show “ *Strange Looking Things.* ” After the puppet show, discuss with children what they learned. Before the Fire PALS instructor arrives, prepare the children ahead of time as to what they will see and hear. Say to the children, “Firefighters are normal people from all walks of life. They come in all shapes and sizes just like you, your friends and parents. However to do their job they need to wear special clothes and carry equipment that helps them rescue people

from fires. The clothes are made especially for firefighters so they can help you in case there is a fire in your home or apartment.” Ask the children if they have ever seen a firefighter? Allow time for the children to share. After the children have discussed some of the places and times they have seen firefighters, explain to them that firefighters have different “outfits” or uniforms that they wear for different occasions. Tell the children that the firefighter they saw probably was wearing their station uniform. Say, “ Today a Fire PAL will come to talk to us today about the different clothing they wear. If possible, show them a picture of a firefighter in their station uniform. Then proceed to talk about how they wear special uniforms when they fight fires and rescue people. Show them a picture of a firefighter in full turnout gear.

For the teacher and Fire PALS instructor

2. Upon arrival, introduce the Fire PALS instructor to the class. The Fire PALS instructor should take a little bit of time to get to know the children and talk about themselves, what the Fire PALS instructor’s interests and hobbies are as well as the jobs they do for the fire department.

For the Fire PALS Instructor

Fire PALS instructor discussion and turnout gear demonstration.

Possible discussion questions:

- *What do you know about firefighters?*
- *What do firefighters do to help people in the community?*
- *Do you know that firefighters need to wear special gear to fight fires?*

Turnout gear demonstration:

- Compare the gear to the children’s winter clothes.
- Tell the children that firefighters clothes are designed to help firefighters handle/withstand the heat of a fire.
- Before putting on the gear, say to the students, “ Firefighters are just regular people. We have families and homes just like you do. Being a firefighter is just a job I do. I do it because I like to help people. I am a helper of all people in our community, just like your teacher is a helper in your school and your parents are helpers in your home. What makes us different is that I have been trained to save you in a fire or emergency and I wear

special clothes that can look a little scary. I am going to show you these clothes and explain to you why I wear them. Please don't be afraid. I am here to help you get use to seeing a firefighter in full turnout gear.”

- Proceed to put the gear on and explain to the children how you look different and sound different, and how during a fire it is already a scary and unaccustomed time. Before talking to the students with the mask on explain to them about the sounds they will hear from the breathing apparatus.
- Once the firefighter is fully outfitted they should talk about how it is often dark in a fire and that the firefighter has to listen carefully to the sounds of people to rescue. Stress to the children that if they are ever in a fire they should yell to the firefighter to let them know where they are and that they should never hide from their friend the firefighter.
- As the Fire PALS instructor removes each article of clothing and equipment they should repeat the purpose of each one. Have the students pass around or try on the firefighter gear to see how heavy it is and how it feels. Pick a student to dress up in the junior firefighter gear, either with the firefighter at the same time or together.
- Leave the junior firefighter gear with the teacher.

Part Two

For the Teacher

1. Remind the children of how they played the “Crawl Low to the beep” game in a previous lesson. Ask them to describe what they did and how they felt about it.
2. Say to the children, “*Today we are going to play a similar game with our Fire PALS friend.*”

For the Fire PALS Instructor

3. The Fire PALS instructor should show the kids the smoke machine and briefly show them what it does. Tell them that you are going to pretend that today there is a fire at school and that they need to crawl low under the smoke to the safety of the Fire PALS instructors dressed in full turnout gear. Tell them that when the room starts to fill up with “make believe smoke,” they need to listen and when then the fire alarm goes off, they need to crawl low under the smoke to the safety of the Fire PALS instructor. Remind them that this is just a pretend fire, that there is nothing to be afraid of, that you are trying to

- teach them what it could be like in a real fire so that they have practice in what to do. If there is more than one Fire PALS instructor present have one instructor model how to crawl to the safety of the other instructor. If the children are hesitant to do this on their own, a parent, teacher or Fire PALS instructor could crawl along beside them. Alternate activity: Use the Safety Trailer instead of the classroom to practice the skills the students have been taught.
4. Once all the children and adults are out of the building or safety trailer, praise them for following directions, and making the right choices. Discuss "Once Outside, Stay Outside."

For the Teacher

Extension Activities

1. Play "Firefighter Simon Says."
2. Art project: Prior to class take pictures of each student wearing a red fire hat. Make a copy of each child's picture to use. Have a firefighter pattern cut out and ready for each student. Have them color the pattern and glue their head on the body. You might choose to make a bulletin board in your classroom of all of your firefighter friends.
3. Continue to allow the children to play in the fire station center with all of the dress up clothes and fire equipment.
4. My friend the firefighter game allows the children to practice recognizing firefighters in full gear. This game can be found on the website: www.playsafebesafe.com/firefighter/wearshtm/
5. Have the children send a class thank you note on poster paper to the Fire PALS instructor.