



Fire PALS Preschool Lesson Matches and Lighters are For Grown-ups

Background: Children under the age of 6 are curious about fires. Often what begins as a natural exploration of the unknown can lead to a tragedy. Children of all ages set over 35,000 fires annually. Approximately 8,000 of those fires are set in homes. Young children have a high risk of burn injuries, plus they are twice as likely to die in a fire as the general population. An important key behavior in avoiding fires and preventing burns is to teach children that matches and lighters are not for children. This lesson stresses that matches and lighters are to only be touched by grown-ups. Parents and caregivers should keep matches and lighters locked up in a cupboard away from children. Preschool students need to understand that there are dangers associated with playing with matches and lighters.

Objectives:

1. 100 percent of preschool children will state that matches and lighters get hot and can hurt them.
2. 100 percent of the preschool children will not touch matches or lighters and they will tell a grown-up whenever they find a match or lighter.

Vocabulary:

matches, lighters, grown-up

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

tongue depressors with red tips to represent matches, copy of story, “*Big Bird Finds a Lighter*,” found on pages 19-21 in Sesame Street Fire Safety Station” activity book, props for story (may include the following: Big Bird hat or Big Bird stuffed toy, straw basket with large handle, toy butterfly net, box of birdseed, blue plastic sunglasses, lighter, pillows to make a large bird nest), an empty matchbook, song, “*Hot Things Burn*,” from Sesame Street Fire Safety Station CD.

Procedure:

This lesson contains two main parts; discussing and playing the game, “Find that match,” and reading and acting out the story, “Big Bird Finds a Lighter.

Part 1: Play “Find that Match” Game.

1. During circle time, hold up a book of matches and a lighter. Ask, “*Does anyone know what these are?*”
2. Discuss positive ways that adults use lighters and matches. (*To light a fire in a fire place, to start a grill, to light birthday candles,*)
3. Tell the students that matches and lighters are hot and can hurt or burn them.
4. Tell the students that children are never to touch or pick up a lighter or matches. Teach them that if they see a match or a lighter the rule is: “Don’t touch, go tell a grown-up.”
5. Show the children your examples of “pretend” matches and empty matchbook. (Never use a matchbook that contains real matches.) Tell the students that you have hidden some in the room and, and that you want them to go looking for match books and matches with a friend. Explain to the children that if they find any, they must not touch them, but come and tell you what they’ve found and you will come and pick them up. Repeat the rule, “Don’t touch, go tell a grown-up.” Have the children repeat the directions and the rule back to you.
6. Pair the children up and have the children play this *hide and seek* game until they have found all of the hidden items. While you play, sing along with the song, *Hot Things Burn*,” from Sesame Street Fire Safety Station CD. (Lyrics can be found on page 11 of Sesame Street Fire Safety Station activity book.) Throughout the week, without telling the children, place the pretend matches in the room. When a child discovers them, use the opportunity to discuss what children should do if they find the real item.

Part 2: Read and act out the story, “Big Bird Finds a Lighter.”

1. Before class, assign children to play the parts of Big Bird and Snuffy. Have a parent volunteer or associate teacher play the part of Luis at the Fix It Shop. Have pillows arranged in a circle to represent Big Bird’s nest, make a large paper nest out of cardboard or tag board, use a small craft store nest, or use a real bird nest that is no longer being used. The student playing Big Bird should put on the yellow hat, or carry the Big Bird stuff toy. The student playing Snuffy should put on the blue sunglasses. Give “Big Bird,” a large woven basket with a handle. Prior to class put a non-working lighter in Big Bird’s nest.
2. Tell the children that you are going to read a story to them about Big Bird. Explain that you have chosen two students and a volunteer to help you act out the story. Say to the students, *“In our story today, Big Bird goes out for a walk and when he returns to his nest he finds something that should not be there. Your purpose for listening to this story is to find out what it is and listen and watch carefully to what Big Bird does.”*
3. Tell the student that is playing the part of Big Bird, *“While I read the story I want you to listen and do the things that Big Bird does.”* You will have to cue the “Snuffy” character at the appropriate moment.
4. Read “Big Bird Finds a Lighter.” This story can be found on pages 19-21 in Sesame Street Fire Safety Station activity book.
5. Post Story Discussion Questions:
 - What are some things that Big Bird puts in his basket?
 - What did Big Bird find in his nest?
 - What did Big Bird do when he found the lighter?
 - Should Big Bird have picked up the lighter? Why or why not?
 - Should kids ever pick up lighters or matches? Why not?
 - What should you do if you ever find matches or lighters?

Extension Activities

1. Sing “Cookie’s Match rap,” which can be found on page 22 of Sesame Street Fire Safety Station activity book.
2. Create a “Fire Station” learning center.
Include items such as: firefighter costumes, hats, toy phone, bell to represent fire bell, pretend cb radio for dispatcher, large fire truck

cardboard cut outs that are easy for student firefighters to get in and out of, fire safety coloring books and crayons.