



Bushfire Safety

What's a Spot Fire? – Lower Primary

Introduction

The 'What's a Spot Fire?' safety message explores the issue of spot fires being created by flying embers and sparks. Spot fires can cause major damage to properties. It is important to protect your home from this risk by covering gaps and drainpipes where embers or sparks might cause a fire.

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.

Science

- Daily and seasonal changes can affect everyday life.



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Learning outcomes

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

- Students will learn what a spot fire is and how they start.
- Students will identify areas in their school that may be spot fire hazards.

Resources

You will need:

- 'What's a Spot Fire?' safety message video <http://vimeo.com/31114061> (running time: 30 sec)
- interactive whiteboard (IWB)
- '**Spot Fire Audit**' activity sheet (optional).

Lesson steps

As a class, watch the video, 'What's a Spot Fire?' <http://vimeo.com/31114061>

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

- What was Amy's Mum doing?
- Why do the gaps need to be covered?
- What was she using to cover the gaps?
- What is a spot fire?
- What other gap did Trev say needed to be covered?

In the video, Amy's Mum said spot fires can start from flying embers or sparks. This happens when they land on fire fuel (such as dry vegetation) or they get caught in gaps or crevices.

In small groups, students to walk around the school grounds and find areas that may be spot fire hazards. Look for areas with lots of dry vegetation, areas where sparks could be created (consider work sheds, garden equipment, etc.) and places where there are gaps for embers or sparks to land and/or catch. Students to take photographs or draw pictures of the hazard areas.

Depending on your class, students may wish to record this information on the '**Spot Fire Audit**' activity sheet.



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Explain to students that if spot fires are dealt with quickly, they can be extinguished before causing any major damage. Spot fires can be extinguished with things such as wet towels, buckets of water, wet mops, water pistols, hoses, etc. Ask students to brainstorm any other household items that could be used.

Safety note: Children should not be encouraged to extinguish spot fires themselves, however they can help to prepare buckets of water, wet towels, etc.

As a class (or in small groups) make a 'Putting out spot fires' chart that records items that can be used to extinguish spot fires. Make copies of the chart for students to illustrate/colour and take home.

Further activities

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

- Invite someone from your state or territory fire agency to speak to the class about ways to prepare for bushfire season.
- Research types of material that would be suitable to use when covering gaps. What properties do the materials have that make them suitable?
- Students to research what a fire needs to start and stay alight.

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/



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- 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/