Preparing for bushfires

Lesson: Preparing for the bushfire season

Overview

**Curriculum levels:** 1 and 2

**Time:** 50 minutes (approximately)

**Links to the Victorian Curriculum F–10:**

Geography, Foundation to Level 2

Geographical Concepts and Skills

Interpret data and information to draw conclusions and describe the direction and location of places, using terms such as north, south, opposite, near, far [(VCGGC062)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCGGC062)

Geographical Knowledge

Natural, managed and constructed features of places, their location and how they change [(VCGGK068)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCGGK068)

Personal and Social Capability, Levels 1 and 2

Self-Awareness and Management

Explain how being prepared to try new things can help identify strategies when faced with unfamiliar or challenging situations [(VCPSCSE010)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCPSCSE010)

English, Level 2

Reading and Viewing

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to analyse texts by drawing on growing knowledge of context, language and visual features and print and multimodal text structures [(VCELY222)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCELY222)

Health and Physical Education, Levels 1 and 2

Personal, Social and Community Health

Recognise situations and opportunities to promote their own health, safety and wellbeing [(VCHPEP074)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHPEP074)

**Learning intention:**

Students will explore safety measures related to their personal safety, as well as what should be done to prepare a home for the bushfire season.

**Suggested resources:**

* Whiteboard, IWB or poster paper, and appropriate markers
* Materials as selected for recording student responses, e.g. workbooks and markers, tablets, recording devices
* Online resources such as the images and linked resources listed in the [Resources](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/foundation-10/crosscurriculumresources/bushfireeductation/Pages/Resources.aspx) section of the Bushfire Education website’

Activities

Starting

Engage students in a discussion to draw out their prior knowledge. Focus the discussion on the following points:

* experiences students have had with fire safety plans at home
* the role of adults in evacuations and real bushfires.

Key ideas to make explicit:

* A safe place means somewhere away from the fire and with trusted adults who are in control (i.e. they keep us together and look after us).
* Adults guide us. They make sure that we stay together and take us to a safe place.

Continue to reinforce the concept of a safe place and the message that adults take care of children.

Exploring

Fire preparation images

Revise earlier discussions about:

* fuel
* the risk of embers starting fires
* the concept of radiant heat.

View and discuss photos and illustrations that show people preparing their property for a bushfire, e.g. clearing leaves. (for photos and illustrations, see the ‘Images’ section in [Resources](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/foundation-10/crosscurriculumresources/bushfireeductation/Pages/Resources.aspx) on the Bushfire Education website).

Also refer to the CFA’s [Prepare Your Property](https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/how-to-prepare-your-property/) web page.

Ask students:

* Can you describe what they are doing?
* How are these preparations helping with fire safety?

Fire safety games

Access the CFA’s [Fire Safety](https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/schools/primary-schools/activities/activities)games.

* Choose activities as appropriate for your group. Refer to any pop-up screens that detail fire safety aspects and tips in the games; these can be used as background information or for teacher-led discussion.
* Guide students through this resource or have them explore it independently.

Bringing it together

Identifying bushfire hazards

Provide students with a copy of the CFA’s ‘Spot the Fire Dangers’ activity (pp. 5–6 of the CFA’s ‘Summer Fire Safety Lessons for Years 3 and 4’ on the [CFA Primary School Students webpage](https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/schools/primary-schools)), which sets out an illustration of a home with various potential hazards.

Guide students to:

* identify the dangers
* discuss how they might be fixed.

Student task:

* Students can create and share their own illustrations of the home with these hazards fixed or reduced.
* Assist them to label key features and write explanations and fire safety messages to accompany their drawings.

Concluding discussion about preparing to leave early

Guide students to think and talk about a family in a bushfire area who may need to leave their home early if there is a bushfire.

Continue to reinforce key messages about:

* staying together
* being looked after by adults
* going to a place where the family will be safe.

Ask students to consider where a safe place might be (e.g. a relative’s home away from the bushfire area, or a community place set up for families).

To assist with completing these tasks, refer to the ‘Leave early’ section of the CFA's [Fire Ready Kit](https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/before-and-during-a-fire/fire-ready-kit).

Extending

Consider the fire dangers in your area

Students work in pairs or groups to consider fire danger risks in the area where they live. They could use photographs, illustrations and text to describe their ideas, and incorporate terms such as ‘weather’, ‘vegetation’ and ‘flammable materials’ in their responses.

Fire safety messages

Students will develop a series of messages to promote bushfire awareness and fire safety, including:

* when fires are most likely to occur
* conditions to watch out for
* how to be prepared.