

Activity A1

Fire! Teacher and trainer notes

In this activity, learners are asked to relate theory to practice as they inspect fire extinguishers and fire blankets in real situations. Learners locate, identify and plot fire protection equipment on plans of their work areas in order to become familiar with the main types of fire extinguisher and their uses.

This is active, engaging and relevant, and adds variety to a topic that is sometimes 'dry'. Learners are asked to construct their own understanding of safe practice. The activity links well to the safety signs board activity.

Learning objectives

Learners should be able to:

- describe the main types of fire extinguisher and their colour codes
- select the correct type of extinguisher to fight different types of fires.

Materials required

- Each learner will need a colour copy of the *Fire!* learning resources.
- Each group will also need a simple floor plan of your work area or building.
- Example session plan on CD ROM *Resources*.

Time needed

About an hour.

Starting points

This activity should be supported by coverage or reinforcement of safe procedure in the case of fire. Check your fire extinguishers are in good condition and are the appropriate type. They must be correctly labelled before you ask learners to locate them and should have been tested recently.

You may wish to prepare a floor plan or site plan of your centre for learners to use to locate extinguishers. You could ask learners to create their own plan if there is time and you may wish to include this as a useful key skills numeracy activity. By creating a computer generated floor plan, it is possible to develop a drag and drop activity to locate the fire extinguishers.

Suggested approach

You might introduce the topic in a lively way by exploring understanding by asking learners what they already know about fire and fire protection.

Organise learners into groups of three and ask some "Show me..." questions. Ask each group to respond on mini-whiteboards. Allow thinking and discussion time before asking for responses, but keep it speedy to build up momentum for the session. Drawing on the content of the first two pages of the learning resources, ask:

"Show me what you need for a fire to start"
(look for fuel, oxygen, heat).

"What sort of situations might make a fire worse?"
(look for indirect effects, such as confined spaces, effects of fumes, no clear fire procedures, locked doors, unclear signage).

"Show me what you should do if you discover a fire. Make a list and explain the order"
(look for the items on the Fire Action sign. You can introduce this later).

You could use these responses to construct a spidergram on the whiteboard if you wish, to build up a shared, visual picture of learners' understanding.

Now is a good time to:

- ask learners to inspect the Fire Action sign in your workplace to confirm what it says and
- distribute the *Fire!* learning resources. Learners can check their responses to your questions by looking at the first two pages carefully and deciding if they wish to disagree with anything or add anything.

Explain the rest of the activity and relate it to the session learning objectives. Then ask learners to start Stage 1 of the task, work out the use of each type of fire extinguisher and their colour codes. Make sure they test each other's knowledge before moving on.

Developing the session

When you are sure learners are familiar with the fire extinguishers, ask them to work in their groups of three to undertake a survey of an area chosen by you.

They should:

- record the location and type of fire extinguishers and fire blankets on a plan
- check the equipment has been tested and is correctly secured.

Ask learners to note any problems or where they are not clear about an extinguisher's use. They should produce a complete floor plan with extinguishers marked, including their type and last test date.

Some pilot centres printed small, coloured fire extinguisher and fire blanket symbols for learners to stick onto their plans.

Consolidating and checking learning

Ask groups to display their labelled plans and explain them. Look out for misconceptions, but use open questions to ask other learners to address these:

“Does anyone want to add to this?”

“Who can think of another solution here?”

You could ask learners to move and re-group around the different floor plans during the feedback. This apparent informality gives learners confidence as they speak and it aids communication. Movement also encourages renewed concentration.

To conclude the activity, ask learners to confirm their understanding by completing the fire extinguisher colour codes checklist on their own, and then to exchange it with a colleague for checking and feedback.

What learners might do next









Learners can create short scenarios about different types of fire. These can either be exchanged with others with the challenge of selecting the correct fire extinguisher for the fire, or used as questions in a whole class quiz.

To enhance the activity, or to provide reinforcement, use the safety signs board layout (from Activity A3 *Safety signs*) and ask learners to place fire equipment symbols appropriately.

If learners are at work, they could create a layout of their work area, plot their fire escape routes, location of fire protection equipment and fire assembly point.



Suggested solution sheet for learners

Know your fire extinguisher colour code						
Cylinder colour coding and contents						
Classification of Fire Risk ↓	Water	Foam	CO ₂ Carbon dioxide	Dry Powder	Wet Chemical	Fire Blanket
	Unsafe all voltages	Unsafe all voltages	Safe all voltages	Safe all voltages	Safe all voltages	
						
	Use on: wood, paper textiles etc.	Use on: flammable liquids	Use on: flammable liquids	Use on: flammable liquids	Use on: oil and fats	Use on: kitchen fires clothing fires
A Paper, Wood, Textile and Fabric	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
B Flammable Liquids		✓	✓	✓		
C Flammable Gases				*		
F Oil and Fats					✓	✓
 Electrical Hazards			✓	✓		
 Vehicle Protection		✓		✓		
Colour coding in accordance with BS EN3: 1996 – portable fire extinguishers. *Flammable gas fires must be extinguished by the emergency services only.						