



Safety Corner

Lesson Plan

Topic: Responsible Passengers

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Colorado Academic Standards: Reading, Writing and Communicating 7.2.2

“Engage in a wide range of nonfiction and real-life reading experiences to solve problems, judge the quality of ideas, or complete daily tasks.”

Synopsis:

Students participate in a role play scenario about being a responsible passenger in a vehicle.

Learning Objective: Students will learn how to be a responsible passenger.

21st Century Skills & Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness: Reading, Critical thinking, and Analyzing

Materials: Scenario handout, Responsible Passenger handout

Key Vocabulary: Collaborate

Time: 35 minutes

Connect with Students (10 Minutes)

- Introduce yourself.
- Introduce your learning objective.
Students will learn how to be a responsible passenger.
- Key vocabulary
Collaborate: to work cooperatively with someone on an activity.



Instructor: I recognize that some of you are not driving yet, but you have certainly had the opportunity to ride with others as a passenger.

Have you ridden in a car with a responsible driver? How do you know? What are the characteristics of a responsible driver?

In groups of three, collaboratively make a list. We'll compare notes in a moment. (Allow five minutes for discussion.)

Instructor: Good drivers 1) focus on the road, 2) are calm and patient - despite the road conditions, 3) anticipate possible dangers or problems before they occur, 4) follow the traffic laws, and 5) know the limits of their vehicles.

How many of you got all five characteristics?

Were there some you think I missed?

Hopefully, you have had many opportunities to ride with someone who exhibits these characteristics. I remember well when I first started driving. (Relay a personal story of an experience you had as a new driver in which you exhibited the characteristics of a responsible driver.)

Instructor: As important as it is to be a responsible driver, it is equally important to be a responsible passenger. To learn the traits of a responsible passenger we are going to participate in a role-playing scenario. (Attached after lesson plan)



In your same groups, you are going to choose roles to read. There are three characters: Stacey, Sissy, and Sam. Stacey and Sam are high school students. Stacey is the driver. Sissy is in middle school and is Stacey's younger sister.

You are going to read about an interaction that occurred one morning when they were driving to school. When you are finished reading, be prepared to discuss their conversation.

Instructor: Which of the characteristics of a responsible driver did Stacey display and which ones did she not? (2-minute table talk)

Answer: None of them. First, she failed to ensure that all the passengers in the car were safely secured in their seat belts before she began driving. Even if Stacey is belted, she is at serious risk of being injured if one of her passengers is not. In the event of a car crash, unsecured passengers can be ejected from their seats. That was a dangerous choice.

Stacey was not concentrating on the road. This was confirmed when she failed to stop at a stop sign. She can scarcely anticipate potential problems if she is not focused on what is happening on the road at all times. Furthermore, she removed her hands from the steering wheel while it was still under her control. She was more interested in giving her sister a donut and listening and dancing to music than focusing on driving.

All of these behaviors are reckless, distracting, and dangerous to other drivers as well as passengers. Sissy observed this and was quite concerned.



Instructor: How did Sam influence Stacey as a driver?
How did Sissy influence Stacey as a driver? (2-minute table talk)

Answer: Passengers can exert a great deal of influence on drivers. Their behavior can be distracting enough to cause a car crash. Sam turned up the music loud, encouraged Stacey to dance behind the wheel and watch him while he danced. He also encouraged the driver to reach for an object while she was driving and to allow him to take the wheel. These actions placed everyone in the car at risk of injury.

Sissy attempted to exert influence over Stacey by reminding her of responsible driver behaviors. When she failed to do so, Sissy called a responsible adult. Her sister may not have appreciated it, but it was an action that may have saved lives. If you are traveling with a driver who is making unsafe choices, you may have to make a similar decision or choose to exit the car when safe to do so. Responsible behavior is always a choice. It takes courage to always make the right choice even when others do not.

Instructor: What is the role of a responsible passenger and why is this role important? (2-minute table talk)

Answer:



- Help the driver focus on the road. Responsible passengers limit any activity that could be distracting to a driver. Cell phone conversations are kept at a minimum. They use inside voices that are calm and encouraging. They ensure that any other passengers are not doing or saying things that will distract the driver. They do not make any requests of the driver that are not related to concentrating on the road. They choose to have the most important conversations after they have reached their destination - not during.
- Are calm and patient. Responsible passengers monitor the tone and volume of their voice so it is not distracting. They do not encourage the driver to drive faster than the speed limits or road conditions allow, even if they are late to their destination. They understand it is better to arrive late than not at all.
- Point out potential problems. Responsible passengers are watching the road and road conditions too. If they foresee a potential problem, they may bring it to the attention of the driver. Even if the driver already foresaw the problem, they will be grateful to have another set of eyes looking out for safety.



- Help navigate by reading maps, GPS, street signs, traffic signs, and paying attention to street lights. Responsible passengers support the driver by being another set of eyes. They may be able to read the GPS or maps so the driver can focus on the road. Passengers may see street signs or traffic signs before the driver notices them, allowing the driver to monitor inclement weather conditions, unusual road work, or heavy traffic that require a high level of concentration.

- Limit conversations unrelated to traffic. Lively conversations can be distracting mentally. To help drivers remain focused, responsible passengers limit conversations on topics outside of driving and choose to have serious conversations when the car is parked.

Evaluation: Let's see if we met our learning objectives today. Name four things a responsible passenger does.

Sources:

Colorado Driver Handbook, 2015,

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/DR2337.pdf>

National Safety Council, www.NSC.org

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, (2010) Virginia Tech Transportation

Institute Release Findings of Breakthrough Research on Real-World Driver

Behavior, Distraction and Crash Factors.

LeadervationLearning.com



Activity (Role Play):

Stacey and Sissy's Not So Safe Ride

There are three characters: Stacey, Sissy and Sam. Stacey and Sam are high school students. Stacey is the driver. Sissy is in middle school and is Stacey's younger sister.

Stacey (driver): If you don't hurry up, I'm going to leave you and you're going to have to find your own ride to school.

Sissy: All right, all right. I'm ready.

Stacey (driver): Are you wearing my scarf?

Sissy: Oh, please. It's so cute.

Stacey (driver): No! Now take it off and throw it in the back seat. I'm going to be late for my first period class waiting on you.

Sissy: Wait! I haven't buckled my seat belt yet.

Stacey (driver): Well you better hurry up 'cause I'm not waiting for that.

Sissy: Dad said you are not supposed to drive until all the passengers are safely buckled up.

Stacey (driver): Well, Dad's not here right now, is he? And if you tell him, you better get used to walking to school.

Sissy: Why are we stopping? Whose house is this?

Stacey (driver): I'm picking up my friend, Sam.

Sissy: Sam?!!! I thought Dad said you couldn't have more than one passenger in your car right now. You just got your license last week.

Stacey (driver): Be. Quiet.

Sam: Hey, Stacey. Thanks for the ride. Hi Sissy, you mind sitting in the back seat?



Sissy: Why?

Stacey (driver): Get in the back seat.

Sam: Oh! That's my favorite song. Turn up the radio! (Starts snapping and dancing to the music) Come on, Stacey!

Stacey (driver): That's my favorite song too! (Starts snapping and dancing to the music.)

Sissy: Stacey! Shouldn't both hands be on the steering wheel at all times?

Sam & Stacey: Be. Quiet.

Sam: This is the move I'm going to do at the dance next week. Watch this! (Snapping and dancing to the music)

Sissy: Stacey! Shouldn't your eyes be on the road?

Sam: Geesh, Stacey. Your little sister talks a lot. Don't you have a donut or something you can feed her?

Stacey (driver): Yeah, let me just reach behind the back seat and get my lunch.

Sissy: I don't want a donut! Yikes, Stacey, you just ran a stop sign!

Stacey (driver): Oops, sorry, I was just reaching for my lunch.

Sissy: I don't know how you can even think with the music so loud! Sam, turn it down!

Sam: Where's that donut?

Sissy: I'm calling Dad.

Stacey (driver): Sam, get her phone.

Sam: No, you get her phone. I don't know why but your dad doesn't like me driving with you. I'm sure he wouldn't like it if I took her phone.

Stacey (driver): I'm trying to drive!

Sam: Well, we will never get there at the speed you are driving. Step on the gas! Here, I'll steer while you get her phone.

Sissy: Dad?! Sam is in the car and he is not being a responsible passenger! How can I tell? Well . . .



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Responsible Passengers



Find and point out potential problems.

Own a calm and patient demeanor.

Collaborate with the driver to focus on the road.

Uppdate driver by reading maps, GPS, street signs, traffic signs, and paying attention to street lights.

Save distracting and unrelated conversations for later.

I pledge to be a responsible passenger. I will collaborate with the driver to keep everyone safe.

X

Safe Student

