

Writing an Emergency Plan

Consider using with *Voyages in English 2011*

Grade 3–Chapter 2 Writer’s Workshop

Grade 4–Chapter 4 Writer’s Workshop

Grade 5–Chapter 2 Writer’s Workshop



Teach

Tell students that an emergency plan is an outline of what to do in the event of an emergency or natural disaster. Explain that it is important to have a plan in place and to understand it well before ever having to use it. Discuss how a plan for an earthquake or tornado would be different than one for a structural fire or flood. Explain that a good emergency plan has adjustments for any kind of emergency.

Point out that all schools and public structures must, by law, have an evacuation plan posted in the building. Have students discuss the emergency plans they practice at school. Then discuss the elements of a good emergency plan:

- Identifies a plan of evacuation specific to the structure or location
- Identifies situations that may be encountered during the disaster and what causes them to happen
- Explains what to do in a concise, step-by-step format
- Gives procedures to follow under certain circumstances and explains the purpose for each one

Explain that having an emergency plan is just as important at home as it is at school.

Practice

Discuss with students the kinds of natural disasters more common to your area and list these on the board. Then invite students who are familiar with basic first aid to share what they know. Using what they already practice at school during fire and earthquake drills, discuss what people should do before, during, and after an emergency. Compare and contrast how reacting to a fire would be different from reacting to an earthquake or tornado. Tell students that their emergency plan should have three parts. It should begin with an introduction that tells what happens during the particular disaster. The body should include a sequential plan that tells what to do during the emergency and addresses other possible situations that could arise and what to do in those events. The conclusion should sum up why it is important to have a plan like this during such a disaster.

Apply

Have students choose a disaster scenario and ask them to write a detailed emergency plan for their family to use at home. Provide them with resources to help them develop their plan, including books and Internet resources. Point out that FEMA and the American Red Cross are both good sources of information. Explain that some resources will have diagrams and illustrations that can help them understand certain procedures. Remind them that any procedures should be written so that they are easy to remember and follow when under the stress of an actual emergency.

Encourage students to share their completed emergency plans with their family. Ask them to make notes of feedback their family provides. Have students share this feedback and how they revised their emergency plans with the class.

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Assess

Use the rubric on the following page to evaluate students on their understanding of an emergency plan.

Listening and Speaking Connection: Tell students that one of the more important calls they will ever have to make is one to report an emergency. Remaining calm and knowing what to say may save someone's life. Then review what one should do when reporting an emergency. (Identify whether to call 911 or another number in your area.)

- Stay calm.
- Give the city and state you're calling from (very important when calling from a cell phone).
- Provide your full name
- Give your specific location or describe your surroundings.
- State your emergency.
- Stay on the line until told to hang up.
- Never, ever make a false emergency call.

Have partners role-play reporting an emergency. You may want to give students specific emergency scenarios, have them research online what should be done specifically for that scenario, and then act out making a call for the class.

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POINTS

Ideas	
Outlines characteristics of a specific emergency or disaster	
Includes cause-and-effect details	
Gives accurate, concise, and complete directions	
Organization	
Introduction tells what happens during the particular emergency	
Body includes specific step-by-step plan on what to do	
Conclusion explains importance of having the plan in place	
Voice	
Informative, confident	
Precise imperative sentences	
Word Choice	
Formal language with use of specific details	
Uses language specific to the topic	
Sentence Fluency	
Clear, concise sentences	
Logical sequence	
Conventions	
Correct grammar, usage, and spelling	
Correct punctuation and capitalization	
Presentation	
Consistent margins and spacing	
Neat, legible writing or text	
Visual aid is appropriate for purpose	
Enumerated steps where appropriate	