



Be Disaster Safe 3-5

At School

LESSON PLAN 8

Build a Kit

Children find comfort in knowing they have stored items they will need in case of emergency.

Key Terms and Concepts

comfort	NOAA Weather	perishable
emergency	Radio	prepare
expiration date	needs	supplies

Purpose

To help the students prepare for an emergency at school and help the school get ready, too

Objectives

The students will—

- Come to a consensus on a class list of items to be included in their individual comfort kits.
- Write letters to their families discussing the class list of items and why a comfort kit is needed.
- Work with their families to fill and return their individual comfort kits. (Home Connection)
- Write journal entries describing using their comfort kits.
- Determine how to distribute within the community comfort kits that are not used by the end of the year. (Linking Across the Curriculum)
- Act as school ambassadors to promote the creation of comfort kits in other classrooms. (Linking Across the Curriculum)
- List items to be placed in a classroom emergency kit, based on specific criteria.
- Help pack and store emergency items for their classroom, discussing why each item is necessary.
- Write stories to illustrate how their classroom emergency kit might be used to make an emergency situation better and to determine changes or additions to the kit.
- Use the Internet to research expiration dates, their rules and dangers. (Linking Across the Curriculum)
- Work in small research groups to discover the impact and importance of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio and how it can be used in schools.



Visit the American Red Cross Web site
at www.redcross.org/disaster/masters



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Activities

- “Comfort Kits”
- “Classroom Emergency Kit”



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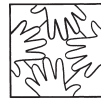
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Materials

- Chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and markers
- One-gallon bags with a zip closure, 1 per student



"Comfort Kits"

SET UP 10 minutes CONDUCT 30 minutes, plus Home Connection

Social Studies: Personal Responsibility; Science: Health

TEACHING NOTE The purpose of storing individual kits is that each student will have items from home to provide comfort during an emergency. In low-income areas, the PTA or other organizations might be able to purchase the supplies in bulk to be assembled by students in the classroom.

1. Talk to the students about what they might want to have at school in the event an emergency kept them away from home longer than normal. What items might make them feel better?
2. Write the class ideas on the chalkboard and then go through the list to make sure that everything on it will fit inside a one-gallon plastic bag. Also, every item will be stored in the classroom for the school year, so nothing perishable can be on the list. Which items must be eliminated? Which items are most necessary? Most comforting? Work with the class until they come to a consensus.

TEACHING NOTE The standard items many schools include in comfort kits are—

- A space blanket or large plastic trash bag for warmth and protection from wind and rain
- Snack food such as granola bars, dried fruit, nuts and hard candy
- One or two boxes or small plastic bottles of juice or water
- A family photograph
- A light stick
- A small toy

3. After agreeing on a list, guide the students to write a letter home asking for help in assembling the supplies.



Home Connection

Send home a gallon plastic bag labeled with each student's name, along with his or her letter. As the kits are returned, mark off each student's name.

TEACHING NOTE It may be necessary to assist some students, if the family is unable to provide the needed items. The PTA might help.



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Wrap-Up

Store the individual kits in a large storage box. Work with the students to find a suitable storage spot—away from heat, light and insects and in a secure but accessible place.

Remind the students that there is a good chance the supplies will not be needed but that these are items that will be helpful in almost any emergency.

TEACHING NOTE Some schools choose to store the comfort kits from all the classrooms together in one location.



Ask the students to write journal entries describing how they would use the comfort kit in an emergency and how it would make them feel to have something from home at school.



Linking Across the Curriculum

Social Studies: Personal Responsibility and Community

Once the comfort kits are completed and stored, talk with students about possible ways to use the kits if they are not needed by the end of the year. Discuss ways the items might help others. Let the students decide as a class whether to take home the kits or remove personal photographs or memorabilia before donating the bags to a homeless shelter or other institution.

Mark a date on the calendar, near the end of the school year, to dispose of the kits in the agreed-upon manner.

Social Studies: Personal Responsibility and Community

Divide the class into teams. Assign the teams to different classrooms within the school. Have them talk with the teachers of these classrooms to set up times to share their comfort kits and encourage other students to create comfort kits as well. In each classroom, they might help students create their lists, reminding them to stick to the size limitations and nonperishable criteria.

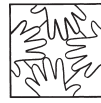


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Materials

- Chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and markers
- Supplies for the classroom emergency kit



“Classroom Emergency Kit”

SET UP 5 minutes **CONDUCT** 30 minutes, plus time to pack and store the kit

Social Studies: Community; Science: Health; Language Arts: Writing

1. Now that the students have individual emergency supplies, talk about what the whole class might need in case of an emergency.
2. Write the students’ ideas on the chalkboard. Make sure students consider the criteria discussed earlier, easy-to-store and nonperishable.

TEACHING NOTE Classroom emergency supplies are often stored in backpacks or buckets. The basic items many schools include in classroom kits are—

- The class roster or emergency contact cards
- A copy of school emergency procedures
- First-aid instructions and first-aid supplies
- Bottled water (for drinking purposes only, the recommended amount is one half-gallon [2 liters] per person per day)
- Food
- A bucket and plastic bags (to be used if toilets are not accessible)
- Toilet paper
- Hand wipes or antibacterial hand cleaner
- Duct tape
- A push broom
- Work gloves for adults
- Tissues
- A flashlight with extra batteries
- Space blankets, one per student in cold climates, if not included in comfort kits
- Large tarp or several large trash bags
- Age-specific activities for students

3. Work with school officials and the PTA to gather the items for your classroom. Ask the students to help pack the supplies, discussing the use of each item and why it might be needed. Store the water apart from the other supplies, because occasionally water bottles leak.
4. Guide the students to set up a calendar to check the supplies every few months to ensure that batteries work, water bottles are not leaking, and perishable supplies are replaced according to marked expiration dates.



Wrap-Up

Have the students write stories about fictitious emergencies that cause them to shelter-in-place at school. How were their supplies used? What items were not available? What happened when they ran out of items? Based on these scenarios, have them discuss changes or additions to their classroom emergency kits.



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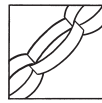


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Linking Across the Curriculum

Science: Health



Guide the students to research the expiration dates on water, foods and medication. Have them be prepared to discuss—

- What do the dates mean?
- Who makes the rules?
- What are the dangers in using out-of-date items?

Science: Health; Social Studies: Community



All Hazards NOAA Weather Radio is an excellent preparedness tools for classrooms, schools and homes. Divide the class into small research groups. Assign groups to find out about NOAA

Weather Radio broadcasts and maps, background information on the service, alarms, alerts and tests, as well as the program for putting radios in all public schools. The sites below are excellent starting points for research.

- NOAA Weather Radio
<http://www.weather.gov/nwr/geninfo.htm>
- Public Alert Radios for Public Schools
<http://public-alert-radio.nws.noaa.gov/proginfo.htm>

Have the groups come together to share information and write a brochure to help other classrooms and families recognize the impact and importance of NOAA Weather Radio.