

Lesson 4: Explaining the 'why' in TrackSAFE actions

Please refer to teacher notes for a list of the English Curriculum links

TrackSAFE outcomes of this lesson

Students should be able to:

- **Describe** what they themselves need to do to stay safe on the train network.
- **Explain** why they need to do those things.

4.0 Whole class learning session (30mins)

Questioning

Equipment/Preparation required: Box; items to place in box; Whiteboard or IWB; computer; internet; Vocabulary cards made in Lesson 2 (Resource 4); a range of photos (printed or on IWB: see Media Library on [student website](#)); writing materials; computers or tablets.

Produce a 'mystery box'. Tell students it has something related to trains and track hidden inside. Let students feel the weight of the box and shake it gently. Ask students:

- *How could you find out what is inside the box without opening the box?*
- *How could you find out what is inside the box by asking questions?*
- *What is a good question to ask to find out information about what is inside the box?*

Encourage students to ask questions to determine what is inside. Record all the questions student ask.

What is a question? (A question is a request for information.)

- *What does a question look like?*
- *What does it do? What do you do with it?*
- *What is a question used for?*
- *How do we know if a question is being asked? What words do we use?*

Ask for student ideas and write these where all can see.

Use the student questions about the mystery box as prompts to think more deeply about questions and their purpose. Ask students:

- *What is common to all the questions you asked about the mystery box?*

Underline the common features in the students' questions, e.g., vocabulary (who, what, where, how, why) and punctuation.

Create a class definition of a question. “We think a question is ...”

How do you answer a question?

Go through the list of student questions and provide a model for answering them using the question as part of the answer.

What colour are the things inside the box? The things inside the box are yellow.

***Why** does the box rattle when it is shaken? The box rattles when it is shaken **because** there are loose things inside the box.*

What questions can we ask about keeping safe around trains and tracks?

Pose some ‘why’ questions (emphasise safety actions in the questions and include some TrackSAFE actions).

Encourage students to practise answering questions using part of the question and ‘because’ or ‘so that’ in the answer.

You can reveal the contents of the ‘mystery box’ at the end of the whole class learning session or in share time at the end of the lesson.

Extension

Ask students what they wonder about questions. If they could ask a question of a question mark, what would it be?

Play Sentence Clubhouse: http://www.harcourtschool.com/activity/clubhouse/index_pre.html

Activities

You can allocate the following activities to groups according to student learning needs.

Activities are designed so that students can complete their activity within a one hour lesson. Each group can be working on different activities at the same time, or do the same activity.

The activities conclude with share time so students can share what they have learned with their peers.

Activity 4.1 Asking and answering questions (20mins)

Beginning/fluent writers

Preparation/Resources: Writing materials; a range of photos (printed or on IWB: see Media Library on [student website](#)).

Develop a learning intention and success criteria for asking and answering questions.

Ask students to:

- **Work** in pairs (a beginning writer with a fluent writer).
- **Discuss** the safety actions they would use at a pedestrian level crossing (or on a station platform).
- **Ask** each other 'why' questions about the safety actions they would use.
- **Answer** each other's 'why' questions about the safety actions.
- **Select** two 'why' question/answers to share with other students.
- **Choose** an appropriate photo to go with the questions (beginning writer).
- **Record** the two questions and answers by writing them down (fluent writer).
- **Reflect** on how well their explanations meet the success criteria and any next steps.

Provide opportunities for drafting, proof reading, conferencing and publishing.

Extension: Discuss how to share the photo and the sentences to communicate the safety message. Ask who would benefit most from seeing the safety message.

Activity 4.2 Words used to create questions (20mins)

Emergent writers

Preparation/resources: Writing materials

Develop a learning intention and success criteria for asking questions.

Students explore words that are commonly used to create questions (where, when, who, what, how and why).

Ask students to:

- **Work** in pairs to ask questions about keeping safe around trains and tracks.
- **Make** up a series of questions using the question starter words above.
 - *What is a pedestrian level crossing?*
 - *Where can you find pedestrian level crossings?*
 - *When do people use pedestrian level crossings?*
 - *Who uses pedestrian level crossings?*
 - *What should we do at a pedestrian level crossing?*
- **Finish** with a 'why' question. e.g.
 - *Why do we do that at a pedestrian level crossing?*
- **Reflect** on how well their questions meet the success criteria and any next steps.

Extension

Make an audio question bank that can be shared with other students researching how to keep safe around trains and tracks.

Record students' questions and save them as audio files.

You can record voice using the record facility on many electronic devices including computers, tablets or mobile phones, or by using apps such as Voice Record Pro or GarageBand.

Edit the recording using GarageBand (Mac/iPad) or Audacity (Windows).

Audio files can be embedded in a class blog or wiki.

Activity 4.3 Writing ‘why’ questions (20mins)

Early writers

Preparation/resources: Vocabulary cards from Lesson 2 (Resource 4); writing materials.

Develop a learning intention and success criteria for writing ‘why’ questions.

Ask students to use Resource 4 Vocabulary cards to:

- **Place** the cut up cards face down in the centre of the table.
- **Take turns** in choosing a card and asking a ‘why’ question for other students to answer. The question must use the word on the card and involve a TrackSAFE action.
- **Discuss** the answers to the questions.
- **Continue** until every student has had some practise making up questions for others to answer.
- **Work** independently writing ‘why’ questions for three cards chosen from Resource 4.
- **Reflect** on how well their written questions meet the success criteria and any next steps.

Provide opportunities for drafting, proof reading, conferencing and publishing.

Extension: Ask students to make up (and answer) “what if” or “wonder” questions to spark imagination and creative responses.

4.4 Whole class share time (10mins)

End the lesson with share time.

Allow time for students to share their learning about safety.

Early writers could ask their ‘why’ questions for other students to answer.

Emergent writers can demonstrate their questioning.