

Traffic Education Lessons from MTEA'S Lesson Slam 2017

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

- Measure distances related to headlight illumination, stopping distance at different speeds, how far cars travel when texting (based on Mythcrashers video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=4oBHf5D0oXk). Set up the same experiment with kids and have students actually measure distance travelled in the seconds they looked away from the road.
- Students approach a line on gym floor in three rounds (walk, jog, run). Each time learner must approach line without changing speed and then "hit the brakes" at the line. A partner measures how far traveled before coming to a complete stop.
- "What Would You Do?" Show a picture of a potential hazard in the road (rural/horses on side/semi coming toward you) and have students in groups of three discuss what they would do to avoid collision.
- Categories of types of drivers posted around the room (speeders, cautious, aggressive, narcissists, vigilantes, competitors, distracted). The kids pick who they are similar to and discuss options for behavior.

Research Projects

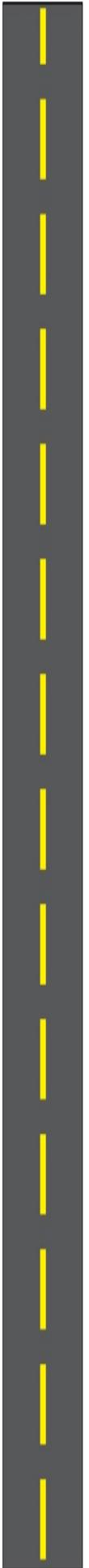
- For written reports related to newspaper stories, select different stories for students to research. Provide a template that each student will follow as well as an example report. Students required to record information sources (manual, book, handout) as part of report.
- Students observe driver behaviors in their community and record what they see (seatbelt/distracted/illegal turns/signals/lane position/etc.). Discuss in class.

Simulations

- Show students something that is typically dangerous (i.e., little girl with grizzly bear). Ask: "Little girl worried?" "Would her parents be worried?" "Do you think her parents are worried that she's not worried?" Now equate it with speeding, driving distracted, driving drowsy, etc.
- Use Google Earth to show interesting, but common intersections or roadways. Use phone or iPad. Preview odd intersections like 3-way stops, Y's, roundabouts. Take students to nearby areas. Videotape intersection several ways and discuss correct and incorrect ways to navigate it.
- Use toilet paper to create roadways in the gym. Use the 3-point line on one side of gym for curve and toilet paper inside of course four feet from line for a center circle roundabout and make 4-way stop on other end of gym.
- Use drunk goggles to go through a road on basketball court.
- Use desks to form traffic lanes or place in a square to simulate a car. Have students practice pre-drive routines. Also have them demonstrate proper lane changes, merging, signaling, lights, speed control, yielding, passing, getting off interstate, uncontrolled intersections, 4-way stops, etc.
- Use masking tape on the floor to represent lanes. Students get in single file lines in each lane, and make left hand turns, reenact traffic situations with bikes/pedestrians, and other sharing-the-road simulations.

Distractions

- Compare distracted and not distracted: Two people on phone talking. One writing numbers from 1 to 100 and a third student not distracted writing the numbers.
- Create obstacle course with football dummies, agility ladder, cones, etc. Kids walk through at different speeds, texting and eating. Other students pop up with signs or as moving objects.
- Hand out five playing cards and piece of paper with 10-15 numbers on it. Use a stop watch. Student touches finger on number in order, reading the number out loud. Every time a card is flipped have student look and say what it is. Tell them how long it took. Partner flips the cards as fast as they can read all numbers on sheet. Another version has students say numbers out loud the first time; then say the name of another student instead of numbers (i.e., boys say a girl's name and vice versa).
- To simulate distracted driving, have students sing "Mary Had a Little Lamb" while completing math problems on the board.
- Fatal Vision Goggles: Try to handle simple tasks while wearing goggles, like tossing Nerf ball back and forth, pouring water into a cup, picking pennies off floor, etc.
- Written plan for texting and driving signed by parents and student. (See Parent Teen Agreement in KEYS Homework)
- Compare level of distraction when kids talking and texting, talking only, and doing nothing but driving.



LESSON SLAM—BEHIND-THE-WHEEL ACTIVITIES

Scheduling Drives

- Write drive schedule on white board. Have students write names on desired time slots, take a picture, and send out to students and parents using remind.com. Print and copy to post in classroom; keep another copy in the car and on phone.
- Group scheduling of drives, so that every student can observe all the other students.

Blind Spots

- Along with SMOG (Signal, Mirrors, Over the shoulder, and Go) count to 4 with each step. Vary counting speed depending on if a student needs to be quicker or more methodical in their check for blind spots behind vehicle.
- Backing up: Driver gets into car and instructor distracts them while other students place cones behind car to show how many people, toddlers or items could be there.
- Student sits in driver's seat. Several students walk up from behind on both sides of car at same time moving in and out of blind spots. The driver uses mirrors to count how many students sees before they reach the front of the vehicle.

Last Drive

- Decide on a common or familiar destination for the final drive. Have students choose their route. The teacher can give them a hint if they don't know. Watch their skills.
- Ask the students which places they visit the most and are "favorite" destinations. Make those the destinations for their final drives.
- Teams with each kid taking turns as expert on one part of the course. Teams must demonstrate in a timed relay activity how to properly parallel park, angle park, and curbside park. Also, how to change a tire, jump a car and drive the serpentine course cones.

Reference Points

- Set up three cars to demonstrate lane positions and blind spots. Kids rotate through and explain reference points to each other.
- Cut a 2x4 one foot long. Set it out in the parking lot and have kids attempt to run over it with right front tire and then left front tire. Helps driver recognize where tires are in relationship to outside line-of-sight. It is the first step to learning lane position and being able to adjust to different lane positions on highway.

Communication

- Have students communicate what they are seeing and what they are going to do in each situation they approach.
- Commentary driving (help them out on 1st drive) – teacher demonstrates what's most important.
- After each drive with instructor, 10-15 minutes are reserved to speak with parent about kid's progress and where kid needs to improve and to set goals for teen/parent to practice.

Guest Speakers

- **MECHANIC:** Line up several vehicles for this activity. Invite a local mechanic to show students parts of car on one vehicle. Students then go from vehicle to vehicle to find the part and perform a simple task. Create a worksheet listing the tasks the students have to check off, such as checking tire pressure, oil, belts, spare tire and jack, etc.
- **LAW ENFORCEMENT:** Invite a local officer to explain and demonstrate with student volunteers what happens when they stop someone for a DUI. When finished, students perform some exercises wearing fatal vision goggles to get realistic feel.
- **SNOW PLOW DRIVER (MDT):** Use video showing what it looks like to ride/drive behind a snowplow. Maybe instructor could record a video following a plow. Hand out flyers. (Montana Department of Transportation is a good resource.)
- EMTs, hospital trauma nurses/doctors and injury prevention specialists. Contact local hospitals for referrals.



Thank you for sharing your traffic education classroom and in-vehicle lesson activities for MTEA's first Lesson Slam at the 2017 Montana Traffic Education Conference. We'll do this again at the 2018 conference, April 22-24 in Bozeman.