

Part 2—Traffic Education Lessons from MTEA'S Lesson Slam 2017

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

- **Know your Traffic Signs 1:** Use a 21-card visual reference game to teach review of the three types of signs. This could end up being part of a puzzle the whole class completes.
- **Know your Traffic Signs 2:** Race to put magnetic signs in the right category. Helps students understand the main functions of traffic signs and how their color and shape indicates sign as regulatory, warning, or guidance.
- **Brain in a Jar:** Need small containers with lids (1/2 c.), whipped cream, jaw breakers. After discussing “three collisions,” explain as you pass out items. Keep whipped cream hidden until last. Container is skull; lid is skull cap; jaw breaker is brain; and whipped cream is fluid cushioning brain. *Small trip and fall is no problem. What happens in a car crash without seatbelts?* Have kids hit the containers on edge of table. “Where is your brain?”

RESEARCH PROJECTS

- **The Rest of the Story:** Kids look for crash stories in Montana using newspapers or online and read about them, perhaps sharing with the rest of the class. Helps students internalize the seriousness of driving.
- **Observation at a corner:** Kids go to the streets to observe traffic behaviors and record seatbelt/distracted/illegal turns/signals/lane position/etc. Discuss data in class.
- **Trip Planning 1:** Plan gas stops, overnights and money needed. (See *Trip Planning Worksheet* in [OPI Teen Curriculum Module 7.2](#) and new *Trip Planning Activity* from traffic educator Khrystye Earle—download at <http://mteaonline.org>.)
- **Trip Planning 2:** Create a 4-night trip within a budget with different cars. Only 525 miles allowed per day. Choose 5 cities, find distances and total miles, hotel costs, meal costs, total trip expenses.
- **Trip Planning 3:** Students will be given an old school map and use it to answer 15 questions on a handout. Name intersections, how far away, possible routes, and Indian reservations. How could smart phone help with planning and navigation? Plan a trip using Google maps.

USING MAGNETIC TOY CARS

- Demonstrate driving impaired or distracted. See *Magnetic Cars—Drugs and Alcohol* in OPI's Teen Driver Curriculum, Module 6. Thanks to Heather Haney for this lesson idea.
- Diagram intersections on the board with Dry Erase markers or with computer generated overlays and have students talk their way through a difficult intersection in the classroom prior to getting to that intersection behind the wheel.
- Show how to make a left-hand turn into the closest lane.
- Show how to travel in your lane in multiple (2 or more lanes) lanes that may or may not have dots to stay in your lane when turning.
- Make presentation with diagrams and video frames for the kids to watch or better yet have them create the path of travel with voice or type on screen to reinforce a lesson.

STUDENT COMMENTARY

- Observers watch for signs and traffic signals and can comment to give the driver a heads up. Rationale: Students spend more and more time riding in cars and being on their phones. Then when the student gets behind the wheel having to watch for and read signs, traffic devices, and ROW are too much for some students even in simple traffic situations.



LESSON SLAM—TRAFFIC EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

SIMULATIONS

- **Turning:** Have kids act out sharp left turn, sudden stop, acceleration, etc. They have to move their bodies in the directions that they would go in case of left turn, etc.
- **Candy Game:** Everyone starts with 1 candy, listens to a risk scenario and decides whether to keep candy and not risk, or to risk, and maybe get more candy. Involves driving scenarios and pulling names out of hat to see who loses each time. With each new scenario comes more candy. Again students must decide to stay in the risk scenario – most candy wins it.
- **Intersections:** Have students find intersections on Google Earth Street View and create slides. Use the collaborative project to discuss scanning, searching, yielding, right of way, and more.

DISTRACTIONS

- Balance golf tee on classroom steering wheel. Throw tennis balls at a student with steering wheel. Driving student tries to catch tennis ball while balancing golf ball on steering wheel.
- Student places hand on table, fingers are an inch apart. Another student drops the ruler and student tries to catch it as it falls.
- Have students sing a song while simulating driving and trying to make driving decisions.
- See magnetic toy cars above. Numerous “staying in your lane” demonstrations can be made. *What happens when you're distracted and drift out of your lane?*

TECHNOLOGY, WEBSITES & VIDEOS

- Create trip here with required restrictions: <http://www.roadtrippers.com>.
- Video to show at parent meeting or in class. Song by Canadian rock band, Simple Plan, about how drinking and driving impacts more than the people involved in a crash. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQ7oqmikZDQ>.
- Video of a 1998 Ford Expedition Sled-Rollover Crash Test, showing dummies thrown from vehicles, inside and outside the vehicle. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHFsmsGPDVc>
- Child safety: How to protect children in and around vehicles: <http://www.kidsandcars.org>.

GUEST SPEAKERS (expanded from Part 1 of Lesson Slam ideas in Fall 2017 MTEA News)

- **MECHANIC/AUTO BODY:** 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.
- **AUTOMOBILE DEALER, INSURANCE AGENT:** Contact local agencies for referrals.
- **LAW ENFORCEMENT:** Invite a Montana Highway Patrol (MHP) 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. MHP's Alive at 25 Program: <https://dojmt.gov/highwaypatrol/alive-at-25/>
- **SNOW PLOW DRIVER (MDT):** Invite someone from MDT to speak. Play video showing what it's like to ride/drive behind a snowplow. Maybe instructor could record a video following a plow or watch videos on Montana Department of Transportation's website (see link below). Download new Winter Driving Trips flyer and watch snow plow videos here: <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/other/webdata/external/maint/winter-driving-tips.pdf>.
- **EMTs, hospital trauma nurses/doctors and injury prevention specialists. 911 dispatcher.** Contact local hospitals for referrals.
- **MOTORCYCLE SAFETY TRAINER—Motorcycle Rider Safety:** <http://motorcycle.msun.edu/brc.htm>
- **BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY—Bike Walk Montana:** <https://www.bikewalkmontana.org/>
- **RAILROAD SAFETY: Operation Lifesaver:** <https://oli.org/>

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.

