

Emergency services

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To assess emergency situations and know who to call for help
- To consider alternative ways of dealing with non-emergency situations



RESOURCES

- Word/phrase cards to be devised by teacher ('Engage' activity)
- Copies of Resource 1
- Short summaries of each situation on the audio (Activity 1 ESOL)
- Cards prepared from Resources 2A and 2B
- Audio equipment 🎧 28

RELATED TOPICS

Emergency calls (Theme 9, Topic 10)
Following emergency instructions (Theme 8, Topic 5)

HEALTH SKILLS

To help save lives and increase the effectiveness of the emergency services it is important to understand the difference between an emergency and a non-emergency situation, and to know which emergency service to call.

This topic explores the issues around this decision-making and is extended in the topic 'Emergency calls'.

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

In order to understand what constitutes an emergency and which service to call, learners need to be able to:

- listen and identify relevant information
- follow the main points of a discussion and form a view about each situation.

Functional Skills/Core Curriculum

Activities in this topic will contribute to learning in the following curriculum areas:

- listen to telephone callers and identify emergency and non-emergency situations **English E3.12 (L Sllr/E2.2)**
- discuss and form a view about the action to take in emergency and non-emergency situations **English E3.6 (L Sld/E3.1)**
- read specific information and select emergency situations and the emergency service(s) they require **English E3.12 (L Rt/E3.9)**
- recognise and use key words and statements connected with emergency services **English E3.12 (L Rw/E3.2)**
English E3.2 (L Sc/E3.4).

Engage

- Write words related to emergencies in speech bubbles on large cards and place them around the room. For example, 'crisis', 'urgent', 'disaster', 'help!', 'come quickly', 'can't breathe'.
- Ask learners to use these word 'clues' to help them predict the word on the board (written as this: e_ _ _ _ _ _ _ y).
- Once learners have guessed the word, ask them to think of any more words, phrases or statements to help describe the concept of an emergency ('he's collapsed'; 'huge pile-up'; 'blood everywhere'; 'she's too heavy to lift off the floor').

What does the word 'emergency' mean?

Enable

ACTIVITY 1 28

Identify emergency and non-emergency situations

- Play the six short audio clips of calls to the emergency services and ask learners to select the ones they think should have been made to these services. At the end they can listen to their choices again and explain why they think these are emergencies.
- It will help learners to focus and remember each call if numbers 1–6 are listed on the board with an appropriate sketch/icon drawn against each one to represent the situation (1 – tap; 2 – car; 3 – magnifying glass; 4 – bike; 5 – stick figure horizontal; 6 – dog).
- After establishing the only two real emergencies (2 and 5), ask learners to work in pairs for two or three minutes and discuss who they might call in the other instances.
- Ask each pair to share ideas with the whole group. Record these ideas against the original list on the board and point out that there is often more than one way to solve non-emergency situations (e.g. phone the local police station about the stolen bike and then insurance company; ask a neighbour for help/phone a plumber to turn off the tap; ask police advice about your suspicions of neighbour being a spy/talk to neighbourhood watch representative/keep quiet and wait for more evidence; put an advert in a local shop asking if anyone has seen your dog/phone local dog rescue).
- Encourage learners to share situations they may have faced – emergency and non-emergency – and discuss the actions they took.

Only some of these are real emergencies. Which do you think they are?

Who would you call instead in this situation?

Have you ever had to call the emergency services?

Do you think you made the right decision?

Support

Ask direct questions about what learners heard (e.g. 'What has happened?' 'Does the situation require an ambulance? A fire engine? The police?').

ESOL

To help learners understand the gist of the extracts, provide a list with a short summary of the situations in random order (e.g. 'an accident in the street', 'a problem with a tap', etc.). Play through the extracts and ask learners to match the extracts and summaries. If necessary play again, pausing after each extract to discuss. Then proceed to the main task.

ACTIVITY 2

Assess whether situations are *real* emergencies

- Discuss the definition of an emergency at the top of Resource 1 and ask learners to apply this to the situations shown on the page. Ask them if they

think all these would count as emergency situations requiring someone to call 999.

- Ask learners to take each situation and to think about which emergency service would be needed. Ask if there are some circumstances where more than one service might be needed.

Support

Cut out the pictures and bubbles on Resource 1 so learners can physically place them together.

ESOL

- Offer help with vocabulary. Ask learners to highlight words they are unfamiliar with (e.g. 'unconscious', 'crash', 'collapse', 'railing').
- Provide simple explanations for the words yourself, or pair ESOL learners with native English speakers who can help with explanations.

Which of the three emergency services would you ask for?

ACTIVITY 3

Assess a situation and decide what action to take

- Arrange learners into small groups and give them either the whole set of situation cards from Resource 2 if there is time, or just one or two.
- Ask them to discuss what they would do in each situation. Which emergency service do they think will come first to the scene, and why?
- Point out that provided the situation is described accurately by the caller, the appropriate emergency service(s) will be sent to the scene.
- Discuss and compare decisions as a whole group.
- Establish that although your first instinct may be to try to help, there are some situations where you can only call for help. Trying to carry out a rescue may put your own life in danger, resulting in two casualties not one (e.g. jumping into a fast-flowing river; climbing to rescue someone from overhead electric cables; going back into a blazing house). However, point out that to stand by and (for example) watch a child choking without trying to do something would not be acceptable – it is all about making quick, and hopefully appropriate, assessments of each situation.

What would you do in this situation?

TIP

Remind learners of the European standard emergency number 112, which can be used throughout Europe and in the UK.

Support

Do the whole task verbally by asking direct questions. For example, a motor cyclist has been knocked off his bike and he is unconscious, but still breathing. Which emergency service(s) must be called?

ESOL

As preparation, discuss the situations with learners, asking questions to check their understanding (e.g. 'What's happening outside the pub?'). Encourage learners to guess the meaning of unknown words from the context and the pictures or look words up in a bilingual dictionary.

Action

- Ask learners to pass on their knowledge to family members.
- Encourage learners to compile a list of the names and telephone numbers of other services they can call instead of the emergency services (e.g. their doctor, NHS 111, plumbers, local police, etc.). This can be kept by the phone.

What important numbers would you find it useful to have by your phone?

Emergency services

RESOURCE 1

An emergency is a situation that needs an immediate response.

It could be:

- a life-threatening situation
- a crime that is happening *now*.

police



ambulance



a house on fire

a person lying unconscious at the bottom of the stairs

a person suddenly collapsing, gripping at his heart

a child with his head caught in railings

a burglary taking place

fire



liquid leaking out of an overturned lorry onto a main road

a road traffic accident

Emergency services

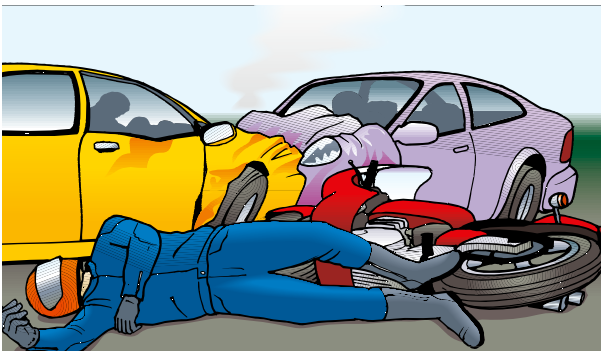
RESOURCE 2A



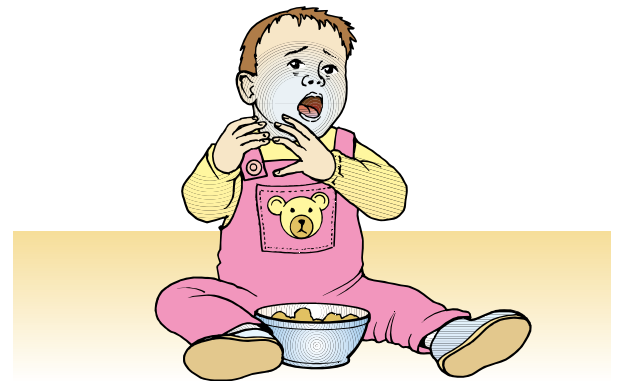
A group of men are fighting outside a pub. One of them has a knife.



Thick black smoke is coming out of the window of a neighbour's house. The neighbour is away on holiday.



There has been a crash involving two cars and a motor bike. The motor cyclist is lying unconscious on the road.



A child is choking on some food. She is beginning to turn blue.



A person has fallen into a fast-flowing river.



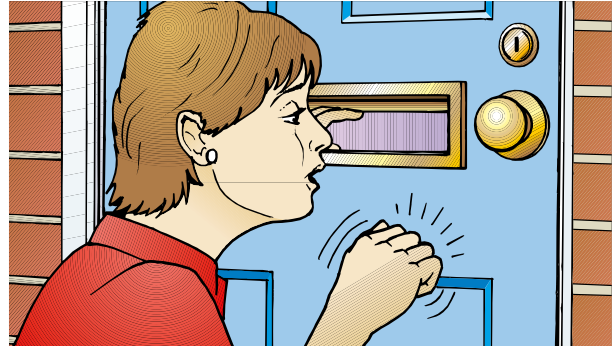
Two young boys have grabbed an older woman's handbag and run off with it. She is in a state of shock.

Emergency services

RESOURCE 2B



A workmate has cut his hand badly.



An elderly neighbour doesn't answer the door when you call. You know he seldom goes out but there's no answer.



A family member has fallen off a ladder while painting a wall. He landed on his back and says he's in a lot of pain.



A person has been electrocuted. Two other people are trying to reach him.



A person has fallen off a high cliff. No one can reach her.



A family member has run out of medication. He has a serious asthma condition and is starting to have difficulty breathing.

ANSWERS**ACTIVITY 1**

- 2 – An old lady's been run over.
- 5 – My father has just collapsed – he's unconscious.

AUDIO SCRIPTS**ACTIVITY 1**

- 1 This is an emergency. I can't turn my tap off.
- 2 This is an emergency. An old lady's been run over.
- 3 This is an emergency. I think my neighbour's a spy.
- 4 This is an emergency. My bike was stolen last week.
- 5 This is an emergency. My father has just collapsed – he's unconscious.
- 6 This is an emergency. My dog's gone missing.