



Lesson Plan: Dangers of Distracted Driving

Subject: Health, Language Arts

Grades: 9-12

Description

This lesson will educate students on the dangers associated with distracted driving (texting while driving, talking on the phone while driving).

According to a 2009 Pew Internet Study:

- One in three (34%) texting teens ages 16-17 say they have texted while driving. That translates into 26% of all American teens ages 16-17;
- Half (52%) of cell-owning teens ages 16-17 say they have talked on a cell phone while driving. That translates into 43% of all American teens ages 16-17;
- 48% of all teens ages 12-17 say they have been in a car when the driver was texting;
- 40% say they have been in a car when the driver used a cell phone in a way that put themselves or others in danger.

Learning Objectives

- Upon completion of this lesson, students will have a better understanding of the risks associated with distracted driving.
- Teen drivers will gain a perspective in recognizing unsafe driving situations and selecting the correct response or reaction.
- Teaching teen drivers to be aware is also teaching them to be responsible for themselves and to use their best judgments.

Keywords

texting, driving, distracted driving, driver's education, mobile phones, teen culture, teen health, cognitive distraction, cell phones, health

Lesson Materials

To complete this lesson, students will need access to the following:

- **'No Phone Zone' Pledge**
- **Distracted Driving Safety Quiz**
- **Video Clip (15 Minutes) | Oprah Winfrey: *America's New Deadly Obsession***
<http://www.oprah.com/oprahshow/Americas-New-Deadly-Obsession-Partial-Episode-Video>
- **Video Clip (3 Minutes) University of Utah | Applied Cognition Lab**
<http://www.psych.utah.edu/AppliedCognitionLab/>
- **PSA Project Resources:** If students choose to make a PSA, they can use an easy and free online editor to combine their media with Oprah's voiceover, footage, music from *The Oprah Winfrey Show* and the No Phone Zone logo.
<http://www.citizenglobal.com/harpproductions/nophonezone/>

Additional Teacher Materials

- **Web Resource: NPR and Car Talk**
<http://www.cartalk.com/content/features/Distraction/>
- **Web Resource: The National Safety Council:**
http://www.nsc.org/safety_road/Distracted_Driving/Pages/KeyResearch.aspx#cognitive.
- **Pew Internet Report: Teens & Distracted Driving**
<http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2009/Teens-and-Distracted-Driving.aspx>

Activity 1

Learning About the Dangers of Distracted Driving

1. The teacher will ask students to watch video clips and take notes on key distracted driving risk behaviors.
2. After watching the videos, students will break into groups and given time to discuss the video. Each group will identify the key risk behaviors associated with distracted driving and then present them to the class.
3. As each group shares their findings, the teacher will facilitate a discussion on the dangers of distracted driving and ask students to share what they've learned as a result of watching the videos.
4. Students will take the *Distracted Driving Safety Quiz*. When students have finished the quiz, the teacher will review the answers with the class.

Activity 2

Reflection on Distracted Driving

1. Students will reflect on both the class discussion and the video and then write a short essay or blog post stating what they have learned about distracted driving.
2. In their essay or blog post students will:
 - Outline the steps they will take to educate their peers, siblings and parents on the dangers of distracted driving.
 - Explain why they have decided to sign, or not sign, the "*No Phone Pledge*."

Activity 3

Create a Public Service Announcement (PSA)

1. **Option 1:** Students will create a Public Service Announcement (PSA) poster that helps to detail one of the dangers of distracted driving. Students will present their signs in class before posting them around the school.
2. **Option 2:** Students will create a Public Service Announcement (PSA) video that details the dangers of distracted driving. Have the students talk to the principal about posting their PSA on the school website. Encourage students to post their video on their own social networking profiles.

Assessment Based on Objectives

1. Student should be able to pass the 'No Phone Zone' Quiz
2. Student should be able to define what activities contribute to "distracted driving."
3. Teacher will evaluate the reflective writing exercise to see if the student has an understanding of the essential concepts and practices concerning injury prevention and safety while driving;
4. Essay or blog post should demonstrate competence in the general skills and strategies of the writing process;

National Academic Content Standards

These standards are provided by the Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL) online publication, [Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education](#).

The following standards are addressed by the activities of this lesson:

Health Level IV: High School (Gr. 9-12)

- **Standard 5:** Knows essential concepts and practices concerning injury prevention and safety;
- **Benchmark:** Knows injury prevention strategies for community health (e.g., neighborhood safety, traffic safety, safe driving);

Language Arts Level IV: High School (Gr. 9-12)

- **Standard 1:** Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of the writing process;
- **Benchmark:** Writes compositions that are focused for different audiences (e.g., includes explanations and definitions according to the audience's knowledge of the topic, adjusts formality of style, considers interests of potential readers);

To see additional related learning standards for your state, search:

<http://www.achieve.org/K-12Benchmarks>

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Distracted Driving Safety Quiz

Name:

Circle the **most correct** answer to each question.

1. Driving while texting on your phone is the equivalent to consuming:

- a. 2 alcoholic drinks
- b. 4 alcoholic drinks
- c. 6 alcoholic drinks
- d. 0 alcoholic drinks

6. True or False:

Singing along to a song playing on your car radio or iPod while driving is a form of distracted driving.

2. How many people a year die from distracted driving related accidents?

- a. 2,000
- b. 4,000
- c. 6,000
- d. 8,000

7. Which of the following contribute to distracted driving:

- a. Being alert for potential road hazards
- b. Speed of the windshield wipers
- c. Talking on the phone to someone who is driving
- d. Focusing on the weather conditions

3. True or False:

Statistics show that talking on the phone or texting while driving is just as dangerous as driving drunk.

8. True or False:

A driver talking on the phone is four times more likely to get in an accident.

4. How many people a year are involved in distracted driving related accidents?

- a. 100,000
- b. 300,000
- c. 500,000
- d. 700,000

9. How many cell phone owning teens ages 16-17 say they have talked on a cell phone while driving?

- a. 32%
- b. 42%
- c. 52%
- d. 62%

5. True or False:

Using a headset or other hands free device eliminates the effects of distracted driving.

10. True or False:

Talking or texting on a phone while driving is a skill that you can learn to do safely.

Answer Key & Teacher Script

1. B
2. C
3. TRUE: Contrary to popular belief, texting or talking while driving is a dangerous habit that is just as dangerous as driving while intoxicated.
4. C
5. FALSE: Using a Bluetooth or other hands-free headset doesn't reduce the risks of distracted driving.
6. TRUE: Any activity that decreases your focus is distracted driving.
7. C: Talking to someone you know is using a cell phone while driving contributes to distracted driving.
8. TRUE: Any activity that removes your primary focus from driving, including talking on a mobile phone, is a distracted driving hazard.
9. C
10. FALSE: There is no safe way to text and/or talk while driving. It is not a skill that you or anyone else can learn to master.