

## Don't Monkey Around with Safety in a Car Lesson Plan (3-5)

### Learning Objectives: Students will

1. Explain the dangers of texting while driving,
2. Identify ways passengers can distract drivers, and
3. Understand how texting distracts a person from any activity.

**TEKS:** 19 TAC Ch.113 TEKS for Social Studies, 3.9AC, 4.19B, 5.17A

### Materials Needed:

- Stopwatch
- Chairs or cones
- Cause and Effect graphic organizer copies (see below)
- Don't Monkey Around with Safety in a Car by Dawn Fielder

**Estimated Time:** 30 minutes (optional follow up activity will add another 30 minutes)

### Teaching Strategy:

#### Teaching Tips -

- You can order the Don't Monkey Around on Safety in a Car book and the Our Town Community Map in color on the DRSR website for free.
  - This would be a great story to use for shared and modeled reading. You can project the PowerPoint book on the screen (PowerPoints for all the DRSR books are available on the DRSR website <http://www.tmcec.com/drsr/educators/childrens-books/>).
  - You might consider having students reread the story during station time. Provide questions for students to find text evidence at the station. Students can also write cause and effect statements about safety rules.
  - Some of the other DRSR Children's Books make great read alouds. All the books are available free of charge (including shipping) from the Driving on the Side of the Road TxDOT traffic safety education grant. Email [drsr@tmcec](mailto:drsr@tmcec) for more information.
1. Ask students what physical and mental actions drivers do as they drive a car. Possible answers:  
Physically – steering, turn on signal, adjust heater/AC, use their feet to push the gas pedal or brake, turn their head to see around them, change gears  
Mentally: remember traffic rules, check the position of other cars ahead, behind and beside and decide on necessary adjustments, notice signs, check for hazards, remember the directions to the destination, be alert for changes in speed of traffic, sirens, traffic lights, road conditions.  
Make a list of these on the board as students brainstorm.
  2. Focus Thought: Direct students to complete the following comparison statement: Driving a car is more than difficult than \_\_\_\_\_, but texting makes it harder than \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. Begin to read the book, or assign students to read it. While reading the book, direct students to listen or look for cause and effect relationships. Some examples to look for:  
Marigold wants Mom to text Daddy because she forgot her tutu. p.5  
Marigold is upset because she can see other driver texting and driving. p.6  
Mom did not send a text because it takes two hands and “all of her brains” to drive the car. p. 9

The man crashed into a post and was stumbling to walk because he had been drinking alcohol. pp. 19 and 20

4. Students can record the cause and effect relationships in a graphic organizer. An example is included.
5. Discussion question: What is the main idea of the book? How does the author communicate this main idea?
6. Return to focus thought: Direct students to complete the comparison statement:  
Driving a car is more than difficult than \_\_\_\_\_ and texting makes it harder than \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Optional Follow up activity:
  - a. Create a twisting and turning pathway through the classroom or other space using chairs, traffic cones, or other objects. The pathway should be about 50 feet long.
  - b. Direct students to walk through the pathway one at a time while typing in the following sentence on a smartphone or other device. Use a stopwatch to record how long it takes to type the sentence while walking the path. The sentence must be completed before reaching the end. A time penalty or disqualification may be assessed for running into chairs or cones that mark the path, veering off the path, and for misspelling words in the sentence. \*  
*The quick red fox jumped over the lazy brown dogs.* \*\*
  - c. Next, direct students to hold their device while they walk through the path and then type the sentence when they get to the end. Use a stopwatch to time how long it takes to complete the path and type the sentence while standing still at the end of the path.
  - d. Students can write down the lesson learned from the experience.
  - e. Students can also make graphs to compare the time results.
    - \* Variation: Students can hold up signs along the way while their classmates travel the path. A bonus for being able to tell what the signs say can be awarded in the form of subtracting seconds from the overall time. Use dry erase boards so that a new sign messages can be shown each time.
    - \*\*This short sentence contains each letter in the alphabet.

**(HANDOUT 1)**  
**Don't Monkey Around with Safety in a Car**  
**Cause and Effect Chart**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Period: \_\_\_\_\_

| CAUSE  | EFFECT                                    |
|--|---|
| The cause is the reason something happened.                        | The effect is what happened.              |
|  | Marigold asked Mom to send a text to Dad. |
| It takes two hands and all of her brains for Mom to drive the car. |   |
|  |   |
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