Catch a wildfire setter

Time needed for activity	60 minutes plus

Location	Indoors or outdoors

Context

This activity plan focuses on why wildfires are deliberately started and the consequences to individuals, communities and the natural environment.

Natural Resources Wales' purpose is to pursue sustainable management of natural resources in all of its work. This means looking after air, land, water, wildlife, plants and soil to improve Wales' well-being, and provide a better future for everyone.

Curriculum for Wales

Humanities	Expressive Arts	Languages, Literacy and Communication
• **What matters** – Enquiry, exploration and investigation inspire curiosity about the world, its past, present and future.	• **What matters** – Exploring the expressive arts is essential to developing artistic skills and knowledge and it enables learners to become curious and creative individuals.	• **What matters** – Expressing ourselves through languages is key to communication.
• **What matters** – Our natural world is diverse and dynamic, influenced by processes and human actions.	• **What matters** – Responding and reflecting, both as artist and audience, is a fundamental part of learning in the expressive arts.	• **What matters** – Understanding languages is key to understanding the world around us.
• **What matters** – Events and human experiences are complex, and are perceived, interpreted and represented in different ways.	• **What matters** – Creating combines skills and knowledge, drawing on the senses, inspiration and imagination.	• **What matters** – Languages connect us.

Digital Competence Framework

Completing this activity provides opportunities to meet the following strands of the Digital Competence Framework.

Citizenship	Interacting and collaborating	Producing	Data and computational thinking
• Identity, image and reputation.	• Communication.	• Sourcing, searching and planning digital content.	• Data and information literacy.
• Online behaviour and online bullying.	• Collaboration.	• Creating digital content.	
• Digital rights, licencing and ownership.	• Storing and sharing.	• Evaluating and improving digital content.	

Objectives

Learners will be able to:

* Understand that wildfires are dangerous to firefighters, communities and wildlife.
* Develop empathy for those affected by wildfire.
* Outline some of the job roles that contribute to the identification and apprehension of an arsonist.
* Work together to plan and create a persuasive communication tool.

Resources and equipment

* Information note – Investigating the causes of wildfire
* Information note – Wildfire
* Information note – Fire
* Resource card – Scenario – Catch a wildfire setter
* Resource card – Who's who

Background information

The act of deliberately starting a wildfire is illegal, irresponsible and is a criminal act known as arson. People who commit arson can face heavy fines and imprisonment. Section 4, of the Criminal Damage Act 1971 sets out a maximum penalty of life imprisonment for aggravated arson. As well as destroying natural habitat, tackling wildfires takes up vital resources, is very costly and endangers human health and lives.

A deliberately started wildfire affects many people. As well as having adverse impacts on the directly affected people in the local community, many are involved in the management of the wildfire, both during and after. This range of people and roles affected are discussed in our **Resource card – Who's who**.

What to do

1. Ask your learners to define what a wildfire is. Can they explain what a wildfire requires to start? Use our **Information note – Wildfire** and **Information note – Fire** to fill in any knowledge gaps. Where might your learners expect wildfires to happen? Have any of the group seen a wildfire or are they aware of any historical or local wildfires?

2. Discuss the criminal act of arson. Do your learners know any other nicknames that individuals who deliberately set fires sometimes get called? Examples include firebug, torch, pyromaniac, firestarter.

3. Can they explain why arson is viewed as a crime? Can they think of any reasons why someone may deliberately start a wildfire? In small groups, ask your learners to discuss what reasons someone may have for deliberately starting a wildfire. Ask each group to feedback on their thoughts and use the **Information note – Investigating the causes of wildfire**, to fill in any gaps.

4. In small groups ask your learners to make a list of any organisation or individuals that might have a role to play in preventing wildfire. If a wildfire was to break out, what kind of tasks would they need to carry out? How might they feel about their part in, or experience of, a wildfire event?

   Ask them to consider who might be:

   * Preparing to protect lives, property and the natural environment in case of a wildfire.
   * Spotting and reporting a wildfire.
   * Managing and putting out the wildfire.
   * Managing the safety of people and property during a wildfire.
   * Once extinguished, investigating how the wildfire started.
   * Prosecuting the perpetrator(s) of a deliberately started wildfire.
   * Dealing with the aftermath of a wildfire, for the people and business in the area and for the natural environment.

5. Give each group a set of the **Resource cards – Who's who**. Did any of the roles get left off their list? Did they think of any other roles that are not mentioned? There is an opportunity at this point to have your learners take a deep dive into some of the job roles mentioned, such as a police officer, journalist or meteorologist. Divide your learners into small groups and allocate a specific role for each group to research and then present information to the wider group on completion. Information to research could include:

    *   What qualifications are required to be employed in the role?
    *   What skills would someone in this role need?
    *   What are the main tasks the role takes on?
    *   What is the starting pay?
    *   What are the best parts of the role in their opinion?
    *   What are the most difficult parts of the role in their opinion?
    *   What are the public's perceptions about the job role?

6. Once the roles have been outlined, discuss with your learners which of the job roles they think might be the most interesting. Would they be interested in any of these jobs once they enter the world of employment?

7. Provide your learners with the **Resource card – Scenario – Catch a wildfire setter** and allow time for them to read it carefully. Alternatively, you can task them with writing their own wildfire setter scenario - a short, written piece of creative work, that outlines an imaginative event related to wildfire. The scenario will need to contain the concise facts of the imagined event. They are to write a maximum of one side of A4.

8. Explain to your learners that they will work in groups to create a news appeal based around their wildfire setter scenario. They will need to use persuasive communication techniques to encourage the perpetrator, anyone who knows the perpetrator, or anyone who knows anything about how the wildfire started, to come forward to come forward and divulge what they know to help catch the arsonist. The appeal could be in the format of a:

    *   Filmed appeal.
    *   Audio appeal for local radio.
    *   Stop motion animation (see our **Activity plan – Animating nature through stop motion animation**).
    *   Social media campaign (see our **Activity plan – Campaigning for nature: Running a social media campaign**).
    *   Enviro vlog (see our **Activity plan - Creating an enviro-vlog: would your learners like to be nature influencers?**).
    *   Written news story.

9. Explain that each group will need to work together to set out and write their appeal. They will need to:

    *   Think about the roles required within the group and decide on who is responsible for what. They might want to appoint roles or swap them around to see who the best is at performing, filming, editing, writing, and so on. If the appeal is being filmed or recorded – will they take on a role in front of the camera or behind the scenes?
    *   Consider the perspective they want to take. What role are they representing? For example, they could take on one of the roles listed in the **Resource card – Who's who**, such as a police officer appealing for calm or information, or a local parent, dog walker, or business owner who is upset at the impact the wildfire has had on their lives.
    *   Ask your learners to consider what makes a good appeal? How can they make their appeal as compelling as possible? For example, to help persuade someone to come forward with information.
    *   Plan and prepare a script and list of questions to aid the content of their creation.
    *   The 'appealer' will need to consider the perspective of who they are trying to communicate with.

For example, are they are appealing to the perpetrator, someone who might know them or anyone who might have come across some vital piece of evidence?

- What points do they feel they need to capture to get their message across?
- Explain and summarise the 'incident' and explain the impacts it has had on their role.

10. Provide each group with the equipment they need to create their appeal including the <u>Resource card – Scenario – Catch a wildfire setter</u> and <u>Information note – Investigating the causes of wildfire</u>, to help them set the scene.

11. Allow sufficient time for each group to develop their ideas, practice and produce a finished appeal to share with the wider group.

12. Ask each group to evaluate their performance in this task. Is there anything they would do differently if they had the opportunity?

13. Compare and contrast each group's finished appeal. Have they shown emotion? Were they credible? Have they explained their reasoning well? Do they think each group's appeal would persuade either the perpetrator, family member or member of the public to come forward? If so, what elements of the appeal were the most compelling? If not, what might the group improve on?

14. Ask your learners to imagine that their vital role in making a persuasive appeal has directly led to the successful apprehension of a suspect. How do they feel about their role in this? What do your learners think the suspect might be feeling, having been arrested? What might their family be feeling? How will the local community and everyone affected by the wildfire be feeling now that someone has been caught? What might happen next to the suspect? If found guilty, what would be a suitable punishment?

15. Extend the activity by inviting your learners to hold a role play, mock court case to work out what may happen next.

Suggested key questions

- Who might be affected by a deliberately started wildfire?
- What job roles are involved in preventing, managing and investigating wildfires?
- Why do some people deliberately commit arson? This can be found in our <u>Information note – Investigating the causes of wildfire</u>.
- What are the consequences of arson?
- Why do other people's perspectives matter?
- How can others be persuaded to help, act or change their way of thinking?

Adapting for different needs/abilities

More support
- Provide additional support for each group.
- Complete as a whole group.
- Leave out the media appeal element.

More challenge
- Task your learners with deciding on the best format, devices and apps to use to create the appeal.
- Ask your learners to create a dangers of wildfire awareness poster or leaflet.

Follow up activity/extension

Why not try our:

- <u>Activity plan – Bright sparks</u>
- <u>Activity plan – Wildfire evacuation plan</u>
- Research wildfire investigative forensics.

Learning in, learning about, and learning for the natural environment.

Looking for more learning resources, information and data?

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