

Smoke Alarm

Approach: One to one

Level: Year 4 and year 8

Focus: Fire safety.

Resources: None.

Questions/instructions:

% responses
y4 y8

Imagine a child was asleep in her bedroom.

A fire had started in the house, and it was quickly filling with thick black smoke. When the child was awakened by the smoke alarm she saw that there was smoke everywhere. It wasn't possible for her to get out through her bedroom window.

1. What should she do?

PROMPT: Is there anything else she should do?

Ideas mentioned:

checking whether escape is possible (e.g. extensive flames in hallway)	14	17
choosing to escape rather than fight fire	1	1
going to get help rather than fighting fire	1	3
consider whether there is anyone else in house	19	18
deciding whether to try to rescue others or instead get help	5	5
how to make it safest to remain in room and wait for help	4	8
recognising problems with escaping through thick, black smoke	9	14
specifically getting down low and crawling out	61	71
covering face to reduce smoke inhalation	6	23
following a pre-arranged plan	8	4
not trying to save possessions	2	1

Overall response:

thorough understanding	0	0
reasonable understanding	5	9
some understanding	30	40
only one valid idea	43	40
no useful response	22	11

Commentary:

Most students' responses were one-dimensional, focusing on escape by getting down low and crawling out. Year 8 students scored only a little better than year 4 students.