

## Lesson Plan – ‘Being a Passenger’

**Introduction**

This lesson consists mainly of discussion and debate around the issues and responsibilities of being a passenger in a vehicle on the roads. Pupils will be able to explore their own attitudes to a variety of issues, learn about what happens in a car crash and how to keep themselves as safe as possible, and will be made aware of how the Law changes on their 14th birthday!

**Part 1: What is a passenger? (Group or whole class discussion)**

- Task the group with coming up with a definition for a ‘passenger’ compare with the ‘dictionary definition’ (A traveller on a public or private conveyance other than the driver, pilot, or crew).
- Discuss where they have been passengers and what differences there are between different types of transport (e.g. passengers separated from the ‘operator’ or in the same space?).

**Part 2: Distracting the Driver (Whole class discussion, guided by tutor)**

- Discuss the complexity of the road environment
- Discuss how unpredictable the road environment can be
- Discuss what vehicles are made of
- Discuss what allows or qualifies a person to be a driver
- Discuss all the things a driver must do
- **Conclusion:** If they are driving legally, a driver of any capability has the right to be on the road, in charge of a potentially ‘lethal weapon’, multi-tasking in order to negotiate it through a very complex and unpredictable environment.

**So, what is the worst thing a passenger can do? (Distract the driver!)**

- Discuss the ways passengers can distract drivers – in the car, or on the school bus or coach.
- Does anyone think they may have distracted a driver – or do they know anyone who has? What happened? What could have happened?
- How long do they think it takes for an ‘accident’ to happen?
- How long do they think it takes for a driver to turn around to see what is happening in the car or behind them in the bus?



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**Remember, we all have a duty of care not to put others at risk – and most times we are in a vehicle the people we are with are family and/or friends – the people who mean the most to us – why would we do anything to risk their lives?**

- Discuss the possible outcomes of distracting the driver? Think about immediate outcomes; short-term outcomes; long-term outcomes.
- Why might passengers behave in a distracting way? (Deliberate, larking about, unaware they are being distracting, high spirits, showing off, effects of alcohol etc).

**Consequences: If you distract the driver causing him or her to crash, and someone dies in the crash, you could be up in court on a manslaughter charge – a very serious offence and you will be responsible for someone else’s death, which you will have to live with for the rest of your life!**



### Part 3: ‘Passenger Power’! (Class or in groups)

- Discuss how a young driver might behave with different passengers
- A young male driver - the same person driving the same car but with different passengers - a) with a group of mainly male friends; b) with a group of mainly female friends; c) with his girlfriend; d) with his parents.
- A young female driver – the same person driving the same car but with different passengers – a) with a group of mainly female friends; b) with a group of mainly male friends; c) with her boyfriend; d) with her parents.
- Discuss how the different groups of passengers might behave in different circumstances – why do we behave differently or have different attitudes in different circumstances – we’re the same people – what influences us?

### Part 4: Seat-belts

- What is a seat-belt for?
- What is the correct way to wear a seat-belt?
- What is the Law on seat-belts?
- What could be the consequences of not wearing a seat-belt?
- Air-bags

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**Part 5: Road Traffic Collision Injuries**

- How do the injuries happen?
- What injuries are likely to be sustained?
- What can be the consequences of a crash – immediate; short-term; mid-term; long-term?
- Who else might suffer consequences?

**Part 6: Discuss the following scenarios:**  
(Groupwork)

- **Scenario 1:** ‘Five of you are stranded, following an evening out, and a friend’s older brother offers to take you home in his new car. He has recently passed his test and is eager to show off his driving skills. Do you accept the lift?’
- **Scenario 2:** ‘You have accepted a lift home with someone you know, but as the journey proceeds you suspect that the driver may have had a drink or taken something. Their driving seems to be getting more erratic. What do you do?’



- **Activity:** Ask each group to think up their own scenario, based on personal experiences if possible, or something that has happened to someone they know, or that they have seen on TV. Ask them to write it down, then swap their story with one from another group.
- **Plenary:** Class review the most important things, they feel they have learned about ‘being a passenger’.

**Resources:**

- Almost none, other than writing materials, required as the lesson is mainly discussion and debate based, but any of the sections could be concluded by making a presentation to other pupils on the topics discussed, or designing and running a campaign in the school or locally, to highlight the issues.
- Presentation resources; art/media resources.