

Learning Guide



Firefighters

We hope you enjoyed learning all about the important job firefighters perform for our communities. Extend your learning with this print-ready Learning Guide!



What's in this Learning Guide?

Get Set to Listen:

Check your knowledge before and after listening to the episode by determining if statements are TRUE or FALSE.

Vocabulary

Discussion Questions

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3-8.3

Writing Prompts and Extension Projects

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.2; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.3; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.4; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.7; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.8

Fire Safety Escape Plan

NGSS: 3-5-ETS1-1

Water Hose Experiment

NGSS: 3-5-ETS1-3 & 3-5-ETS1-2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-5.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3-5.1

Activities: Being a Firefighter

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3-5.1; NHES Standards 1 & 4; CASEL Relationship Skills, Social Awareness, & Responsible Decision-Making

Fire Truck Maze & Reflection Questions

NGSS: 3-5-ETS1-1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-5.2

Design a Firetruck!

NGSS: K-2-ETS1-1 & 3-5-ETS1-1; VA:Cr2.1.3-5

Additional Resources and Book List



The Children's Hour
kids public radio

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<https://www.childrenshour.org/firefighters/>



Get Set to Listen

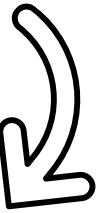
1. Before listening!

Read each statement and write TRUE or FALSE based on what you already know.



2. After listening!

Based on what the experts said in the episode, write TRUE or FALSE.



Before Listening	TRUE or FALSE?	After Listening
	1. Most of the calls firefighters respond to are fires.	
	2. Firefighters at Albuquerque fire stations usually work 48-hour shifts and live at the station during that time.	
	3. Albuquerque currently has only one fire station serving the entire city.	
	4. Firefighters want to reach critical emergencies, like fires, within about four minutes.	
	5. Fire trucks carry enough water to fight a large fire for a long time without connecting to a hydrant.	
	6. Firefighters wear custom-fitted protective gear that can weigh about 50 pounds with equipment.	
	7. Most firefighters in the United States are volunteers rather than paid professionals.	

What did you learn?



Get Set to Listen

Answer key

1. FALSE. About 80% of what firefighters respond to are medical emergencies.
2. TRUE
3. FALSE. Albuquerque has many fire stations, not just one.
4. TRUE
5. FALSE. Fire trucks only carry a limited amount of water and must connect to hydrants for large fires.
6. TRUE
7. TRUE



Vocabulary

Listening for Words

1. Make a four-column chart and label the columns “I don’t know,” “I’ve seen or heard, but don’t know the meaning,” “I think I know the meaning,” and “I know the meaning.”
2. Write the vocabulary word in the column that describes how well you know the meaning of the word.
3. Listen to [the episode](#). Note how the speaker uses the words.

Matching Words with Definitions

1. Print and cut apart the word and definition cards.
2. Spread out the word cards so you can see them all. One by one, attach a definition card to each word card.

Writing with New Words

After working with the words and definitions, write a one-page essay or story that uses at least three of the words.

response time

How long it takes firefighters to get from the fire station to an emergency after a 911 call.

dispatch

When emergency workers are alerted and sent out to help after someone calls 911.



Vocabulary

carbon monoxide

A dangerous gas you cannot see or smell that can make people very sick.

turnout gear a.k.a. **bunker gear**

The special protective clothing firefighters wear to stay safe from heat and flames.

fire extinguisher

A tool used to put out small fires, often found in kitchens or garages.

defensible space

A clear area around a home that helps protect it from wildfires.



Discussion Questions

1. What kinds of emergencies do firefighters respond to besides fires? Which one surprised you the most?
2. Why do you think firefighters need to live at the fire station during their shifts? What might be challenging about that?
3. How does wearing heavy turnout gear help firefighters stay safe? What do you think would be hard about wearing it?
4. Why do firefighters work in teams and use the buddy system? How does teamwork help in dangerous situations?
5. What are some ways families can prepare their homes to be safer in case of a fire? Which one could you do at your home?
6. Why do some communities use volunteer firefighters instead of paid firefighters? What are the benefits and challenges of that?
7. How do firefighters help the community even when there isn't a fire or emergency happening?
8. What did you learn about fire trucks or tools that you didn't know before?
9. After listening to this episode, how has your idea of a firefighter's job changed?

Group Discussion Strategies

Think Pair Share:

1. Individually, student writes down their answer to a question.
2. Students pair up and tell each other their answers.
3. Teacher calls for volunteers to share with the whole class their answer (and/or their partner's answer). Teacher notes key words/phrases on board.

Round Robin:

1. Teacher poses one question (written on top of a large page) to students, who are assembled into small groups of 3 or 4.
2. Students take turns brainstorming the answers. The recorder of the group writes down all answers.
3. The leader reads the group's ideas to the entire class. Teacher moderates.



Writing Prompts

Narrative Prompts

1. Imagine you spend a full day and night at a fire station. Write a story about what you see, hear, and do, including an emergency call.

Extensions:

- Add dialogue between you and a firefighter.
- Draw a map of the fire station and label key areas.

2. Write a story from the point of view of a firefighter responding to a call. What happens from the moment the alarm sounds?

Extension: Act out one scene with a partner

Informative/Explanatory Prompts

1. Explain the different types of calls firefighters respond to and why their job is more than fighting fires.

Extension: Create a job description brochure to recruit new firefighters.

2. Explain how turnout gear, teamwork, and training help firefighters stay safe during emergencies.

Extensions:

- Make a safety checklist.
- Compare firefighter safety gear to sports safety gear.

3. Learn about why Dalmatians are associated with fire stations. Draw or write a short report on their history with horses and fire trucks.

Extension: Compare the role of Dalmatians to service dogs today.

Opinion/Persuasive Prompts

1. Do you think firefighters are heroes? Use reasons and examples from the episode to support your opinion.

Extension: Write a thank-you letter to a local fire station.

2. Create a poster encouraging people to volunteer as firefighters. Include reasons why volunteering helps the community.

Extension: Present your poster to the class or family and explain why volunteer firefighters are important.



Fire Safety Escape Plan

Learn

Visit the [US Fire Administration Fire Safety for Children website](#) for important fire safety info.

Listen

- [Part 2: Fire Safety Tips](#)

Plan

Draw a map of your home and mark all exits. Plan two ways out of each room and a safe meeting spot outside.



Extension: Practice a “fire drill” at home with your family.



Water Hose Experiment

Learn how firefighters use water to put out fires and explore how different nozzle settings affect water flow!

Materials

- spray bottle (filled with water)
- paper flames (draw or cut out small fire shapes from paper)
- tape or a target area
- measuring tape or ruler

Set Up Your Fire

1. Place your paper flames on the floor, table, or outside.
2. Make sure you have enough space to spray safely.

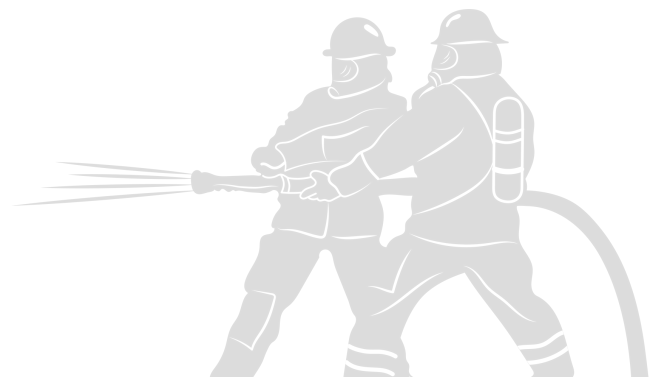
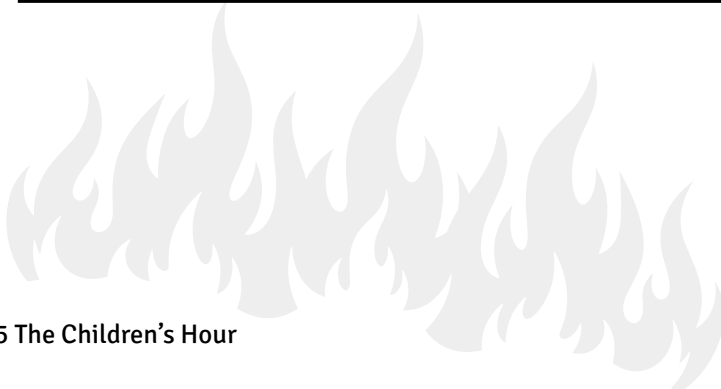
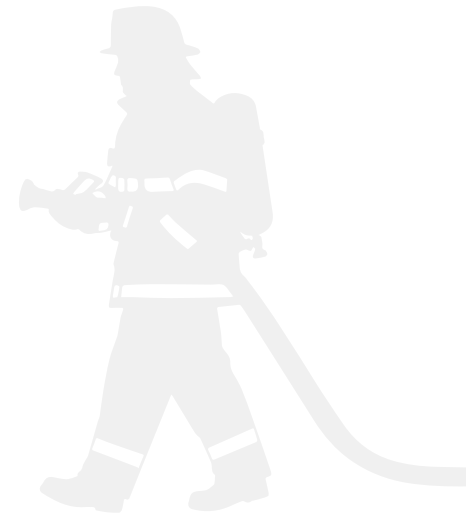
Listen

- [Part 3: Firetrucks and Tools](#)

Test Your “Fire Hose”

1. Use your spray bottle to aim at the paper flames.
2. Try to hit the flames from different distances.
3. Measure how far the water travels each time and write it below:

Trial	Distance from flame (inches/cm)	Hit the target? (yes/no)	Notes
1			
2			
3			





Water Hose Experiment

Try Different Nozzle Settings

1. If your spray bottle has different settings (cone, stream, mist), test each one.
2. Record what happens in the table below:

Nozzle Setting	Distance Reached	Area Covered	Observations
cone			
stream			
mist			

Think Like a Firefighter

Answer the questions below:

1. Which nozzle setting would be best for a small fire? Why? _____

2. Which nozzle setting would be best for a large fire? Why? _____

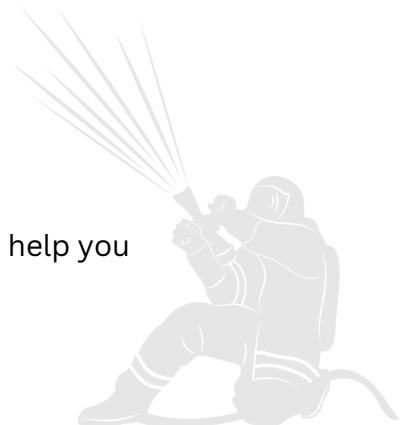
3. How do firefighters use water pressure and nozzle shapes to stay safe while putting out fires?

Extensions: Firefighting Strategy

- Set up several “fires” at different distances and angles.
- Try to put out all the fires as quickly and accurately as possible.
- Record your strategy: Which nozzle settings and angles worked best?

Reflect

Write 2–3 sentences about what you learned from this experiment. How does it help you understand what firefighters do?





Activities: Being a Firefighter

Explore what it's like to be a firefighter in these activities by practicing teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. Through role-play and hands-on challenges, learn how firefighters respond to emergencies, work together, and use strength to help keep their communities safe.

Listen

- [Part 1: What's It Like Being a Firefighter?](#)

1. Fire Station Role Play

Set up a “fire station” in the classroom or at home. Assign roles: firefighters, dispatchers, and community members. Practice receiving a “911 call” and responding.

Skills: Teamwork, problem-solving, communication.

Extension: Record your role-play and write a story about your emergency.



2. Fire Gear Weight Challenge

Collect backpacks and books to simulate the 50 lbs of firefighter turnout gear. Try walking a short distance while carrying it safely.

Skills: Physical awareness, empathy for firefighters' work.

Extension: Write a reflection on how it feels to carry the gear and why strength and teamwork are important. How did it feel?

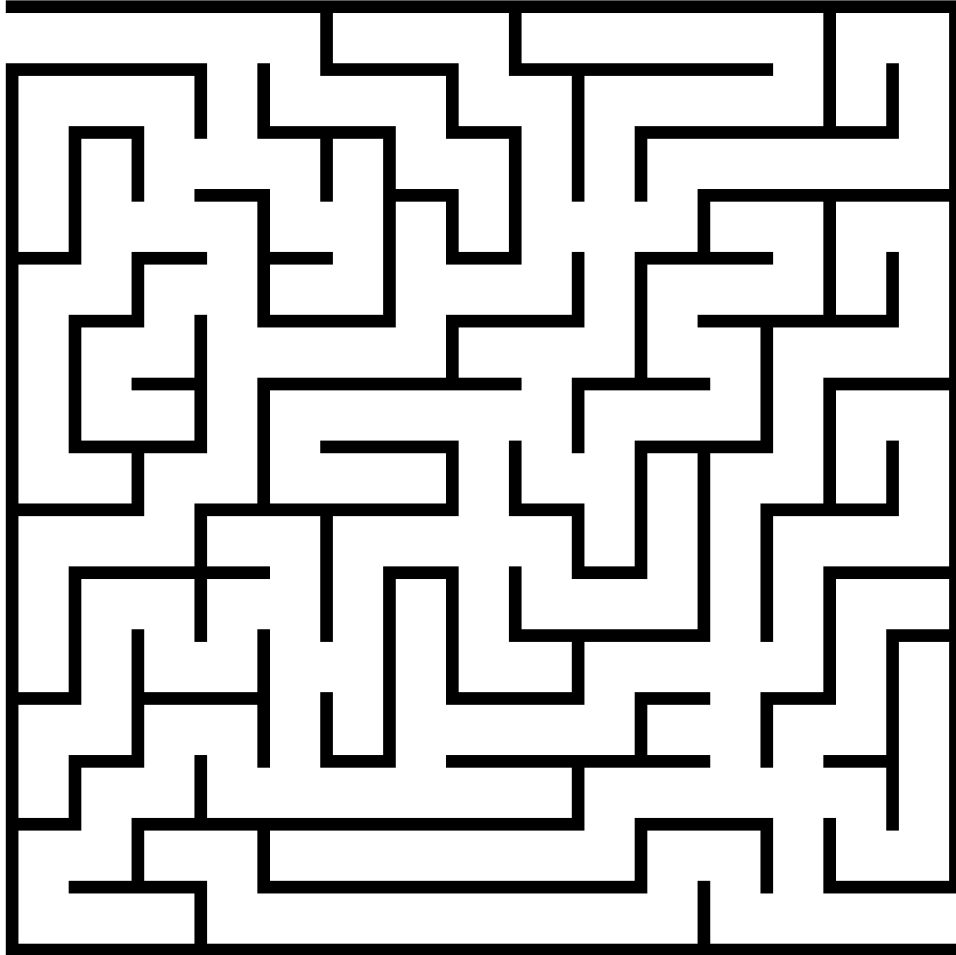
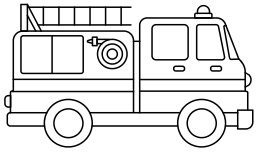
- Why is strength important for firefighters?
- Why do firefighters work in teams?



Fire Truck Maze

Help the fire truck reach the fire safely!

Draw a line from the truck to the fire without hitting obstacles.



Think About It

1. Why is it important for fire trucks to reach emergencies quickly? _____

1. What kinds of obstacles might firefighters face on the way to an emergency? _____

Make your own maze!

- Design your own fire truck maze on the back of this page.
- Add obstacles like traffic, narrow streets, or construction zones.
- Trade mazes with a partner and try to solve each other's!



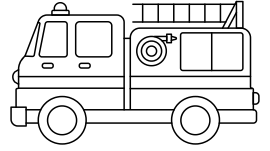
Design a Firetruck!

Listen to [Part 3: Firetrucks and Tools](#)

Draw

a **diagram of a firetruck**. **Label** each part and **explain its purpose**.

Include: hose, ladder, siren, storage for turnout gear, and more!



Extension

Build your fire truck using cardboard boxes, paper, and markers. Include hoses, ladders, and firefighter figures.



Upload your design to our Instagram [@tchradio](#), TikTok [@thechildrenshourradio](#), and [Facebook page](#), and check out others' designs!



Mail your design to:
The Children's Hour
PO Box 70236
Albuquerque, NM 87197



[Record a Voice Message](#)

This might be used on The Children's Hour!



Post your design on our Instagram, TikTok and Facebook! Check out others' designs!



Additional Resources

[National Fire Protection Association](#)

Fun games, cartoons, coloring pages, and fire safety lessons designed for kids.

[Official Fire Safety Manual \(National Fire Safety Council\)](#)

A printable fire safety manual (including coloring and review activities) for elementary-age learners.

[FEMA Youth Preparedness Catalog](#)

Disaster preparedness education programs and resources.

[U.S. Fire Administration](#)

Fire safety tips, escape plan guides, and educational materials to help kids and families stay prepared.

[National Interagency Fire Center – Wildfire Education](#)

Learn about wildland fires, how they start, and what people can do to help prevent them — good for older kids or classroom projects.

[Albuquerque Fire Rescue School Presentations](#)

Local fire safety presentations available for schools and groups through the Albuquerque Fire Rescue Fire Marshal's Office.

- **Many fire stations offer tours or meet-and-greet opportunities where kids can see trucks and gear up close — just call ahead to schedule!**

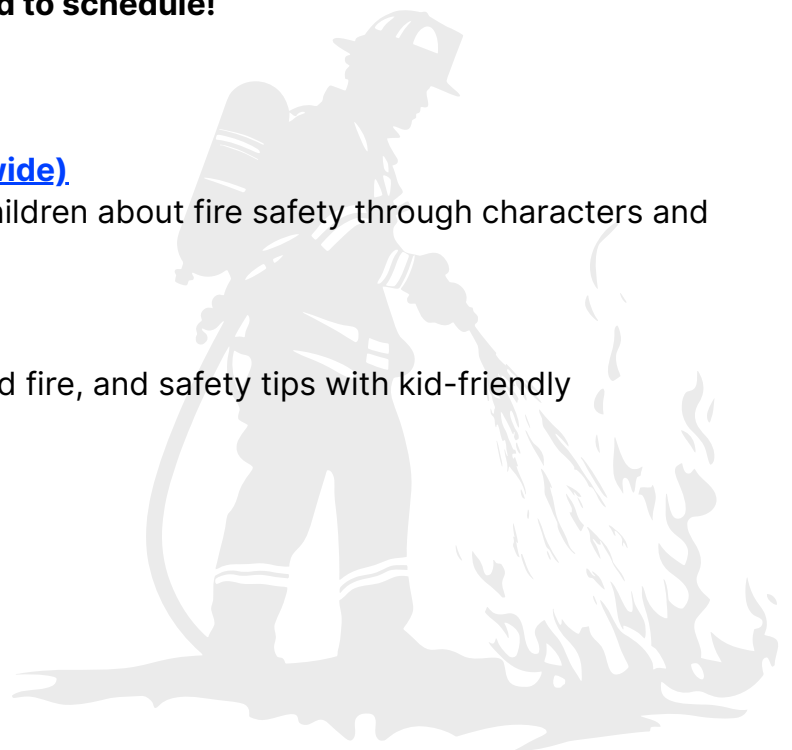
Videos

[Start Safe: Fire Resources \(Safe Kids Worldwide\)](#)

Free videos and materials that teach young children about fire safety through characters and fun activities.

[National Park Service: Fire Basics for Kids](#)

Interactive learning about fire science, wildland fire, and safety tips with kid-friendly explanations.





Book List

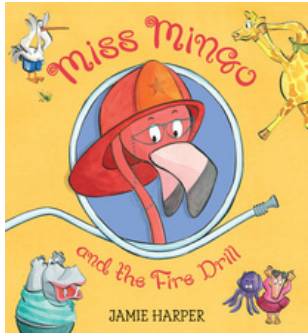


Fire Chief Fran

by Linda Ashman, illustrated by Nancy Carpenter

This lively, rhyming story shows the many jobs firefighters do each day, from training and rescues to medical aid and fighting fires.

ages 4-8

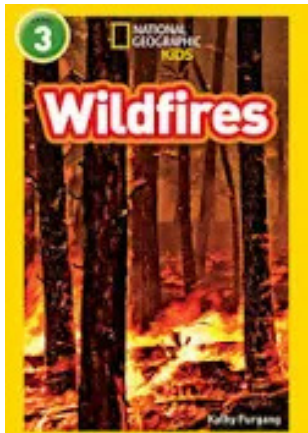


Miss Mingo and the Fire Drill

by Jamie Harper

This fun classroom story teaches fire safety and fire drills while helping kids feel less afraid.

ages 4-8

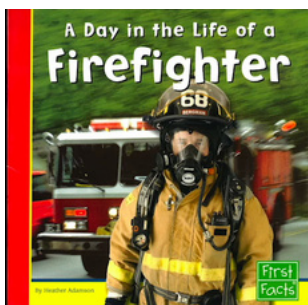


National Geographic Readers: Wildfires

by Kathy Furgang

Discover how wildfires start, when they help nature, and when they become dangerous in this engaging Level 3 reader filled with photos and facts.

ages 7-9

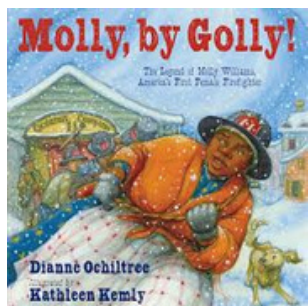


A Day in the Life of a Firefighter

by Heather Adamson/Time for Kids

A great pick for upper elementary kids, with more advanced facts and photos.

ages 7-11



Molly, by Golly!: The Legend of Molly Williams

by Dianne Ochiltree, illustrated by Kathleen Kemly

This story tells the true legend of Molly Williams, an African American cook who became one of the first known female firefighters during a dangerous New York City snowstorm.

ages 7-10