

Clifford and the Big Storm

By Norman Bridwell / ISBN 978-0-590-25755-8

Lesson Author

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Standards and Benchmarks (see page 8)

Lesson Description

Students are read a series of two options and are asked to decide which options are more dangerous. They then learn about risk and how to prevent or reduce risk by taking precautions. Next they listen to a story about risk, where Clifford, the big red dog, helps reduce the risk of danger by taking precautions. After the story, the students complete a story sequencing activity based on Clifford's actions. Finally, they recognize that Clifford does not exist in the real world and talk about people in their families and communities that help protect them from risk.

Grade Level

1-3

Economics Concept

Risk

Objectives

Students will be able to

- define risk,
- explain that risk is an unavoidable part of everyday life, and
- identify ways to prevent or reduce risk.

Essential Question

What makes something risky?

Time

60 minutes

Materials

- *Clifford and the Big Storm* by Norman Bridwell (ISBN 978-0-590-25755-8)
 - Handout 1, one copy for each student
 - Handout 2, one copy for each student
 - Glue and scissors for each student
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Procedures

1. To introduce the lesson, tell the students you are going to read them three scenarios, each with two options: Option A and Option B. Explain that they will vote for which one they think is more dangerous. Read each scenario, ask the students to vote, and record the vote count on the board.

Scenario 1

A: Skydiving, which is jumping out of an airplane

B: Drinking a glass of milk with breakfast

Scenario 2

A: Driving a race car

B: Jumping rope at recess

Scenario 3

A: Walking to school

B: Riding your bike in the neighborhood

2. Discuss all three scenarios and how the students voted. Students probably had an easier time with Scenarios 1 and 2, recognizing Option A as the more dangerous option. However, Scenario 3 was likely more challenging. They might have been split or even said that neither one was dangerous.
 3. Explain to the students that all of the scenarios involved some **risk**. Risk is the chance of loss or harm. Explain that we face risks every day. Some things, like skydiving, are riskier than others, like drinking milk.
 4. Explain that when the chance of harm or risk is low, we usually just accept the risk and do the activity. In fact, you probably don't even think about there being a risk. For example, drinking milk. Most people aren't worried milk will cause harm. However,
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some people are allergic to milk. For them, drinking milk is very risky. They could get sick.

5. Explain that when the chance of risk is high, like with skydiving, you can either avoid or reduce the risk. Avoiding the risk means you don't do the activity. Reducing risk means you take precautions to protect yourself. In the case of skydiving, people take a safety course, wear a parachute, wear goggles, and skydive with an experienced person.
6. Return to Scenario 2 and discuss the following:
 - Is there risk involved with driving a race car? (Yes)
 - What is the risk? (*You could get into an accident and get hurt or even die.*)
 - When an activity is risky, you can choose to avoid the risk. How do you avoid the risk of driving a race car? (*You do not drive a race car.*)
 - You can also try to reduce risk. What could you do to reduce the risk of driving a race car? In other words, what precautions could you take? (*Wear a seatbelt, helmet, goggles, fireproof race suit, or other safety equipment; get proper training; and drive very slowly*)
 - Is there risk involved with jumping rope at recess? (Yes)
 - What is the risk? (*You could trip on the rope and fall and get hurt.*)
 - When activities are risky, you can choose to avoid the risk. How do you avoid the risk from jumping rope? (*You don't jump rope.*)
 - What could you do to reduce your risk when jumping rope? In other words, what precautions could you take? (*Make sure you have a proper jump rope, the area is clear, your shoes are tied, the floor isn't slippery, and so on*)
7. Tell the students you are now going to read a story about risk. Explain that they should listen carefully about what the risks are and what steps the characters in the story take to avoid and/or protect themselves against the risk. Read the story *Clifford and the Big Storm*.
8. After the story, discuss the following:
 - Grandma's house was at risk. What was the risk? (*The storm was coming and it could damage or destroy the house.*)
 - Were Emily Elizabeth and Grandma at risk? (Yes)
 - What did Emily Elizabeth and Grandma do to reduce the risk of being harmed? (*They went to the gym; they evacuated the house.*)
 - Who protected the house? (*Clifford*)
 - Who protected the town? (*Clifford*)

- What did Clifford do to protect the town? (*He put out the fire at the lighthouse, rescued the puppies, and brought boats safely ashore.*)
9. Explain that Clifford also took steps to reduce the risk of the house being harmed by the storm. Distribute a copy of *Handout 1: Story Sequence* to each student. Explain the instructions: Students are to cut out the word strips in the bottom box. They are to then glue the strips into the top box in the order they occurred in the story. Distribute glue and scissors to each student and allow time for the students to complete the activity. Review the answers as follows:
1. *Picked up fallen trees*
 2. *Piled the trees*
 3. *Covered the trees with sand*
 4. *Packed the sand on the trees*
 5. *Lay down to guard the house*
10. Review the story by discussing the following:
- The story we read was made up, or fiction. Do you think there is a Clifford to protect us or our neighborhood? (*No*)
 - Who are some people in your family who help protect you? (*Answers will vary but may include parents, grandparents, siblings, or other family members.*)
 - Who are some people in the community who help protect you? (*Answers will vary but may include the military, police, firefighters, doctors, nurses, crossing guards, teachers, or lifeguards.*)
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Closure

11. Review the important concepts in the lesson by discussing the following:
- What do you call the chance of loss or harm? (*Risk*)
 - What are some risks you face when riding your bike? (*Answers will vary, but students should say they could fall and get hurt.*)
 - What are things you do to help reduce your risk when riding a bike? (*Answers will vary, but students should say things like wear a helmet, knee pads, or elbow pads; use training wheels until they can ride on their own; not ride in the street; and so on.*)

Assessment

12. Distribute a copy of *Handout 2: Assessment* to each student. Review the directions, allow time for students to work, and then review the answers.

Handout 2–Answer Key

Part A

1. *True.* Risk is the chance of loss or harm.
2. *False.* An activity is risky if there is any chance of harm (not just death).

Part B

All items should be checked except the following three, which should be crossed out:

Wear a seatbelt in the car.

Never swim without an adult present.

Look both ways before crossing the street.

Note that the crossed out items would help avoid or reduce risk in other situations.

Handout 1: Story Sequence

Name: _____

Directions: Cut out the words strips on the dotted lines. Glue the strips in the box in the order they occurred in the story.



Steps Clifford took to protect the house from risk.	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	



Lay down to guard the house
Piled the trees
Covered the trees with sand
Picked up fallen trees
Packed the sand on the trees

Handout 2: Assessment

Name: _____

Part A

Directions: Answer the questions by circling the correct answer.

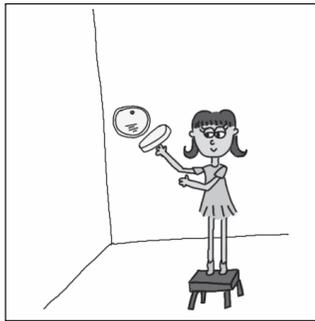
1. True or False: Risk is the chance of loss or harm.
2. True or False: An activity is risky only if there is a chance you could die from doing it.

Part B

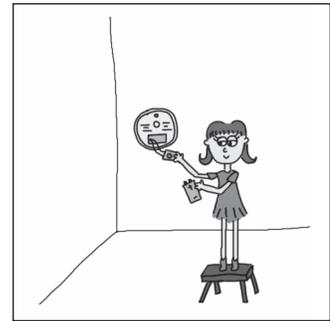
Directions: Check the things that help you avoid fires or reduce the risk of a fire in your home. Cross out the things that do not help you do this.



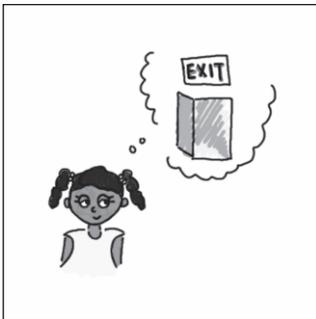
Wear a seatbelt in the car.



Install smoke detectors.



Check the batteries in smoke detectors.



Know where the nearest exit is.



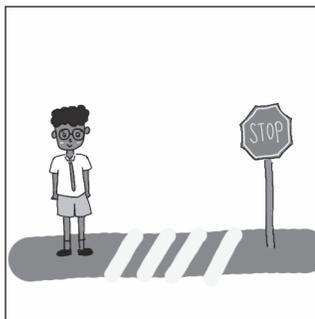
Have an emergency meeting location outside your home.



Never swim without an adult present.



Have a fire extinguisher.



Look both ways before crossing the street.



Never play with matches or lighters.

Standards and Benchmarks

National Standards for Financial Literacy

Standard VI: Protecting and Insuring. People make choices to protect themselves from the financial risk of lost income, assets, health, or identity. They can choose to accept risk, reduce risk, or transfer the risk to others. Insurance allows people to transfer risk by paying a fee now to avoid the possibility of a larger loss later. The price of insurance is influenced by an individual's behavior.

- **Benchmark 1, Grade 4:** Risk is the chance of loss or harm.
- **Benchmark 2, Grade 4:** Risk from accidents and unexpected events is an unavoidable part of daily life.
- **Benchmark 3, Grade 4:** Individuals can either choose to accept risk or take steps to protect themselves by avoiding or reducing risk.

Common Core State Standards: English Language Arts Standards, Grades 1-3

Reading: Literature

- **Key Ideas and Details**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.1: Ask and answer such questions as *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1: Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2: Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.2: Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3: Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3: Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

- **Craft and Structure**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.5: Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.

- **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7: Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.7: Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

Speaking and Listening

- **Comprehension and Collaboration**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.2: Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.2: Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.