



Danger on the tracks: a drama

Britain's railway network is one of the busiest in the world. Trespass on the railway can have tragic consequences.

In this activity you will study real life stories and information about the dangers of trespassing on the railway track, and then using this research write and act out your own short drama on the subject. Here are some resources you can use to research and shape your drama:

Real life story videos

You can download the videos below from the Secondary School Resources section at:
www.networkrail.co.uk/safetyeducation

Nathan

Nathan was electrocuted while playing near the railway overhead power line. He suffered severe shock and burns, and was lucky to survive.

Leighton and Sammy

Leighton tells the story of his girlfriend Sammy who died in his arms after she tripped and fell onto the electrified rail while they were taking a shortcut across the railway.

Richard

Richard drove over a level crossing when the lights were flashing and the alarm sounding, crashing into a train. His two friends died.

Railway staff talk about what happens on the tracks

Train drivers and a mobile operations manager for Network Rail give the lowdown on the risks.

News reports of the real life incidents

You can view news reports of these real life incidents via the links below:

Samantha Cook: www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/hampshire/6382771.stm

Richard Fleming: www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/highlands_and_islands/7346459.stm

Trespass and vandalism

This video illustrates the dangers of trespassing on the railway:

www.trackoff.org/TrespassAndVandalism.aspx?subItemId=A2AD2237-950B-40B0-93B1455C6D8B40E2&#anchorVideo

The dangers of the electrified rail

BBC news story about deaths caused by the third rail: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-10640569



Perspectives

A video about the impact of a death on the railway, from the point of view of railway staff as well as the British Transport Police is available from the Secondary School Resources section at: www.networkrail.co.uk/safetyeducation

Outline scenario

You should consider these aspects in creating your drama:

Characters involved

- You and your friends or others you know, or characters you've made up
- Parents, brothers, sisters
- Form teachers
- The emergency services
- A police officer
- An ambulance crew
- The Network Rail community safety manager
- A local councillor
- Reporters from the local newspaper and TV station

The situation

What was the occasion and time of day? For example, was it dark, cold or rainy making it hard to see what was happening, or a clear sunny day when you'd expect to know well in advance if a train was coming.

The reason for ending up on the track

A shortcut returning home from seeing friends? A game? A regular journey home from school or work? Rescuing an animal or a ball?

What happened?

There are a number of scenarios to choose from, including trespassing on the tracks illegally, or messing around on a level crossing, or an incident involving the electrified overhead lines or third rail.

Why did it happen?

A combination of factors may have caused the incident:

- Motivation for taking a risk, e.g. a bad decision due to time pressures; a desire to rescue someone or something; a game gone wrong; a mistake or misunderstanding; confusion due to emotional upset; bad influences such as friends or alcohol.
- Actual causes of harm, e.g. slipping and becoming trapped; injury; coming into contact with electrified rails or overhead lines; being hit by a train; unable to make it to safety.

What was the impact of the incident?

- What range of thoughts and emotions might different characters be experiencing?
- How would the characters react in the immediate aftermath of the accident?
- What would happen in the next few hours, days and weeks as a result of the incident?



RAILWAY ELECTRICITY IS 100 TIMES MORE POWERFUL THAN ELECTRICITY IN THE HOME.

It is very dangerous so remember the **Rail Life 'Safety Top 3'**:

- **STAY CLEAR OF THE TRACKS.** Is it worth putting your life on the line?
 - electricity can jump up to three metres.
 - don't play with kites or balloons near overhead power lines.
- **USE THE LEVEL CROSSING.** Shortcuts across the railway can kill.
- **KNOW THE SIGNS.** Be alert to railway signs, they could save your life.

