

Lesson 1

Bringing in ideas about managing the unsafe behaviours of young people using level crossings on the rail network

What is the provocative question about level crossings?

Explain to students that they will be devising a drama that explores a provocative question about level crossings, a place on the rail network where impatience can be fatal.

The activities that follow will provide ideas and experiences to help them identify ideas about level crossings that are worth communicating to others.

Learning intention

Use voice, body, movement and space to **describe** different viewpoints of a character waiting with others at a level crossing.

We have provided assessment rubrics at the back of this document (Appendix) for guidance as to how students may achieve the learning intention to differentiated standards.

1.1 Define terms

Determine students' prior knowledge about level crossings.

Ask students to read the following extract about level crossings from the TrackSAFE website:

Australia's rail network is the sixth largest in the world, with 44,000km of track and 23,500 level crossings across the network. Railway level crossing safety remains one of the industry's highest safety priorities.

Through education and awareness, TrackSAFE works to improve peoples' knowledge, skills and attitudes about safety around tracks and level crossings, to increase public safety and avoid preventable incidents from occurring on the rail network.

Trespass

Every year there are around 136 trespass incidents causing death or serious injury on the rail network. Additionally, there are over 4,200 near hits resulting from trespass. Through the [Rail Safety Week](#) campaign, rail organisations and police join forces to combat trespass and reduce incidents on the track related to trespassing.

Level Crossings

There are 130 pedestrian level crossing incidents causing death or serious injury every year and an additional 20 collisions with vehicles. That equals 150 level crossing collisions in total causing death or injury. To access the National Railway Level Crossing Safety Strategy 2017 – 2020 please [click here](#).

TrackSAFE Foundation tracksafefoundation.com.au/level-crossing-and-track-safety

Use the TrackSAFE Education high school tracksafeeducation.com.au/students/high/ to help students gain a deeper understanding about level crossings – their physical structures, and the attitudes and behaviour needed to stay safe around level crossings.

You may also wish to use video of Australian level crossings to help students visualise a level crossing. For example:

- Timelapse At Level Crossing – Australian Trains & Railways –Val73TV: <http://youtu.be/Kdtydc0ir3U>
- QRNational Freight Train at Level Crossing – Australian Freight Train at Railroad Crossing – PoathTV: <http://youtu.be/OHA1zDtWHRl>
- Vline Vlocity Passenger Train at a Country Road Level Crossing – Australian Grade Crossings: <http://youtu.be/xbhhZ4xq-fc>

Ask students to brainstorm anything they know about level crossings. Use text, quotes, drawings and/or images to express these ideas. Place these ideas on hexagons and then give them to groups, who need to find connections between the ideas by tessellating the hexagons and explain orally or by annotation why these ideas are related. Step back from the resulting tessellation (clusters of hexagons) and make a group/class claim – “Overall we think a ‘level crossing’ is [make a claim] ... because [give a reason] ... because [give evidence].” Keep this definition statement as evidence.

As a class, discuss *level crossings* in the context of your own experiences.

Agree on a class definition for *level crossing*.

Ask students to work in groups to make an operating level crossing using their bodies. Role-play the passage of a train through the crossing and the level crossing’s response.

Extension: Ask students to create a 3-D model of a level crossing using any easily accessible modelling materials (e.g. modelling clay) or software of your choice. Suitable software includes:

- Google Sketchup: <https://www.sketchup.com/products/sketchup-free> or <https://www.sketchup.com/education/sketchup-for-schools>
- Minecraft: <https://minecraft.net>

1.2 Describe how people behave on and around level crossings

Research suggests that the behaviour of road users and pedestrians is a major cause of level crossing incidents. If road users and pedestrians obey the road rules, collisions at railway level crossings are avoidable.

Ask students to work in groups to:

- **Research** the following level crossing topics:
 - **Managing risks and keeping safe on level crossings**, such as TrackSAFE: Pedestrian Level Crossings: <https://tracksafeeducation.com.au/teachers/parents/tracksafe-actions/>
 - **Level crossing incidents**, such as ABC News: Passengers Shaken after Train Crashes into Bus at Level Crossing near Maddington: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-10-23/bus-crashes-into-train-near-maddington/5041654> and The Age: Trains Running Again after Level-crossing Crash in Sunshine North: <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/trains-running-again-after-levelcrossing-crash-in-sunshine-north-20130801-2r10h.html> and international incidents via The Guardian: Man and teenage boy killed in West Sussex level-crossing crash: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/feb/17/two-people-killed-in-west-sussex-level-crossing-crash-barns-green-horsham>
 - **Level crossing removal works**, such as in Victoria: <https://levelcrossings.vic.gov.au/>
 - **Level crossing controversies**, such as BBC: The Level Crossing Wars: <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-27037582>
 - **Level crossing news from across the world**, such as Canada: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/london-ontario-level-crossing-upgrades-1.4307300> and the UK <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-22428211>
- **List ways** in which level crossings communicate the message that driving, cycling or walking across the tracks is a high-risk activity – for example, rumble strips, pavement markings, enhanced pavement lighting, boom gates, sirens, flashing lights, barrier arms.
- **List ways** in which people fail to receive the message and/or fail to react to the message – for example, crossing when distracted by using a mobile device, crossing when listening to an audio device, crossing when wearing a hoodie that limits peripheral vision, impatience, wilful failure to obey warning signs and signals, accidental failure to obey warning signs or signals, trying to “beat the train” across a crossing, crossing when rushing to get somewhere, crossing in poor visibility, ignoring warning devices, crossing without checking if there is a clear path on the other side.
- **Role play** a pedestrian waiting to use a level crossing. Ask other students to guess the way in which the pedestrian might fail to notice the warning signals and signs.

- **Draw** a series of comic cells, in manga style or using stick figures, to describe situations where people behave in ways that put them at risk around level crossings.

The following tutorials may help you get started.

- How to Draw Manga: Tutorials: <http://www.howtodrawmanga.com/pages/tutorials>
- WikiHow: How to Draw Manga: <http://www.wikihow.com/Draw-Manga>
- Figure Drawing: <http://www.thedrawingsource.com/drawing-figures.html>

Extension: Discuss the claim that *“The best level crossing is the one that has been eliminated.”*

1.3 Experiment with viewpoints

Ask students to experience waiting by themselves and with others:

- **Identify** opportunities when you can experience waiting by yourself and with others in school and in life outside of school – for example, waiting to start eating, waiting to buy a ticket, waiting for a movie to start, waiting at a bus stop, waiting on a platform for a train, waiting for a shop to open, waiting for the lights to come on, waiting at the airport when a flight is delayed, waiting for the police or ambulance to arrive, waiting to get official documents stamped, waiting to get in to a sale or concert, waiting to be served food, waiting to be noticed, waiting for an answer to a question, waiting for someone to stop talking, waiting for a dog to stop barking, waiting for a baby to stop crying, waiting at a hospital for news of a loved one, waiting for a response to a message.
- **Wait** with or without others in one or more of these situations. When waiting, think about what you can hear, feel, smell, touch and see. How do you feel? What emotions do you experience? How are other people behaving and responding? What emotions do they experience while they are waiting with others? Who speaks first when you are waiting with others? What is the nature of any conversation when waiting with others? What happens when the period of waiting is shorter or longer than expected? What are the challenges and opportunities when waiting by yourself? What are the challenges and opportunities when waiting with others? What conflicts might occur when waiting with others? Is there a person who waits in a different way – someone who stands out because of the way they wait with others? Is there someone who is waiting to start waiting?
- **Keep a log** (audio or written) of your impressions when waiting by yourself and with others.
- As a class, **discuss** how the viewpoint you hold can affect the way you wait and the actions you take.

Ask students to imagine they are a pedestrian standing with others waiting to cross a level crossing and to **identify** their character. For example, imagine you are a pre-schooler, primary student, secondary student, tertiary student, young person, unemployed, someone with a hangover, someone under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, someone who has just been dumped by their girlfriend or boyfriend, someone who has just received very bad news, middle-aged office worker, new immigrant, stay-at-home parent, retired person, labourer, farmer, tourist, business person, a person with a disability.

Ask students to **make working notes** for this character and the scenario:

- **Setting**
 - What would you hear, feel, smell, touch and see at the pedestrian level crossing?
- **Character**
 - Where have they been? What are they doing while they wait? Where are they going?
 - How do they speak, how do they behave, how do they respond to others?
 - How are they feeling? What emotions are they experiencing?
- **Viewpoints**
 - List the different viewpoints the identified pedestrian character might have about the experience of waiting with others until the rail corridor is safe to cross.
 - Identify your view, as the student developing this character, of this character's viewpoint. How will you represent their viewpoint to an audience?
- **Actions**
 - Think about the three possible choices for action that the pedestrians waiting at a level crossing have: cross safely, cross unsafely or don't cross at all.
 - Think about the reasons why pedestrians might make these different choices – for example, keeping safe, being distracted, not being aware, taking a short cut, being late.
 - Think about how you will represent these actions.
- **Connecting viewpoints to actions**
 - Which viewpoints could lead the character to cross safely?
 - Which viewpoints could lead the character to attempt to cross unsafely?
 - Which viewpoints could lead the character to not cross at all?
 - Which viewpoints could lead the character to change their mind?
 - Which viewpoint could lead the character to manage the safety of others waiting at the level crossing?
 - Which viewpoint will you favour in writing the narrative? Which viewpoint will you promote? Which viewpoint will you trivialise?

Ask students to **select** three provocative and/or engaging viewpoints their character might hold. Fill in the table below to:

- elaborate each viewpoint
- explain why the pedestrian might hold this viewpoint
- wonder about the consequences of holding this viewpoint for the character's actions and for the audience.

Pedestrian:		
Possible viewpoints about waiting at a pedestrian level crossing	Why does the character hold this viewpoint?	What does it make you wonder?
Viewpoint 1:		
Viewpoint 2:		
Viewpoint 3:		

Ask students to **select** a viewpoint that challenges or differs from the accepted viewpoints held by pedestrians at level crossings. For example, if the accepted viewpoint is that *“waiting until all warning signals and sounds have finished is a waste of time”*, create a viewpoint that values this waiting time. If the accepted viewpoint is that *“waiting with others is a challenge”*, create a viewpoint that waiting with others is an opportunity.

Share the viewpoints you have developed and select a character with a viewpoint that you think will have an emotional connection or appeal to young people.

Ask students to work in small groups to:

- **Draft** a story line with a simple exchange of dialogue to fit the scenario of waiting at a pedestrian level crossing.
- **Experiment** with different drama techniques to develop your character's viewpoint. Choose one or several of the following character techniques to focus on.

1. Voice

Develop a vocal type for your chosen character. Experiment with voice: try speaking in different ways – fast, slow, angry, sad, excited, worried – using some of the ideas suggested in the table below.

When you find a voice that is effective in communicating the character's viewpoint, complete the table with your description.

Character:				
Voice technique	What does your character sound like?	How will you use this technique?	Where will you use it in the script?	Why is this technique the most effective choice?
Pitch	squeaky/screechy/ resonant/low/medium/ husky/croaky/varied intonation pattern			
Projection/V olume	booming/whisper/soft/ loud/well-projected			
Tone	annoyed/inviting/ arrogant/sarcastic/ matter of fact/enthusiastic/ depressed			

Pace	rapid/slow/deliberate/ staccato/stop-start/ unpredictable/clipped/ steady			
Pause				
Accent	Received Pronunciation/ Australian/Italian/Greek/ New Zealand/Pacific Island/South African/ Samoan/Indian/ Chinese/Lebanese/ Vietnamese			
Other descriptors	nasal/slurred/lisp/ dragging out vowel sounds/declamatory/ robotic/monotonous/ breathy/stutter			

2. Body

Develop body techniques for your chosen character. Experiment with body techniques, trying out which ones effectively communicate the character's viewpoint. Use some of the ideas in the table below.

When you find some effective body techniques, complete the table with your description.

Character:				
Body technique	What does your character's body technique look like?	How will you use this technique?	Where will you use it in the script?	Why is this technique the most effective choice?
Eye contact	avoiding eye/looking down/ staring/piercing/ confrontational			
Gesture	scratching head/biting nails/ playing with hair/ hand gestures/clenching fists/pulling on clothes/ pointing/hands on hips			
Posture/STANCE	open/closed/upright/hunched/ slouched/slumped/awkward/ hands in pockets			
Facial expression	eyebrows furrowed/frowning/ mouth wide open/lips pursed/ eyebrows raised/nose scrunched up/smiling/biting lip/wide eyes/blank expression			

3. Movement

Develop movement techniques for your chosen character. Experiment with movement techniques, trying out which ones effectively communicate the character's viewpoint. Use some of the ideas in the table below.

When you find some effective movement techniques, complete the table with your description.

Character:				
Movement techniques	What does your character's movement look like?	How will you use this technique?	Where will you use it in the script?	Why is this technique the most effective choice?
Energy	hyperactive/lethargic/ sedentary/controlled/ contained/vivacious/ bubbly/listless/playful/ stillness			
Timing	sudden/sustained/ controlled/stop-start/ staccato			
Weight	heavy/plodding/light/ effortless/weight in toes/ weight in heels/balanced			
Direction	direct/indirect/scattered/ purposeful/meandering			
Realistic/unrealistic				

4. Use of space

Develop use of space techniques for your chosen character. Experiment with use of space, trying out which ones effectively communicate the character's viewpoint. Use some of the ideas in the table below.

When you find some effective use of space techniques, complete the table with your description.

Character:				
Movement techniques	What does your character's movement look like?	How will you use this technique?	Where will you use it in the script?	Why is this technique the most effective choice?
Energy	hyperactive/lethargic/ sedentary/controlled/ contained/vivacious/ bubbly/listless/playful/ stillness			
Timing	sudden/sustained/ controlled/stop-start/ staccato			
Weight	heavy/plodding/light/ effortless/weight in toes/ weight in heels/balanced			
Direction	direct/indirect/scattered/ purposeful/meandering			
Realistic/ unrealistic				

Ask each group to:

Share your pedestrian character techniques with another group using Hot Seating or **Freeze Framing**.

Hot Seating: When you are in role, accept questions from the group to establish/clarify the type of character and the role in the level crossing scenario. Ask for feedback to make the characterisation more convincing.

Freeze Framing: Take a key moment in the scenario and freeze it. Accept questions from other students about why and how you are feeling at this moment in the scenario.

Use the developed characterisation to draft, rehearse and then present a two- to three-minute role play showing different characters waiting with others at a level crossing.

Ask the audience for feedback on your characterisation using the following criteria.

Communicating a role	Using drama techniques: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice • Body • Movement • Use of space
Developing ideas	Did not show use of drama techniques. Unconvincing. Did not stay in role
One idea	Muddled or unsustained use of drama techniques to show character's viewpoint.
Loose ideas	Some use of drama techniques but use did not always fit with the character's viewpoint.
Connected ideas	Varied body techniques used appropriately to effectively communicate character's viewpoint.
Extended ideas	Wide variety of drama techniques used to communicate the character's viewpoint and convincingly extend it in the minds of the audience.

Ask students to write a reflection on their use of drama techniques to communicate the character's viewpoint in the level crossing scenario. Their assessment should include their ideas on how they might modify the technique/s used to portray the viewpoint more effectively.

Student reflection: Self-assessment

Communicating a role	Using drama techniques: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice • Body • Movement • Use of space
Developing ideas	I need help to identify any drama technique used in my characterisation.
One idea	I can describe several drama techniques used in my characterisation.
Loose ideas	AND how and where they are used to communicate intentions about a character in the scene.
Connected ideas	AND give reasons why they communicate intentions about a character in the scene.
Extended ideas	AND make a generalisation about the effectiveness of the use of different drama technique AND suggest modification/s to improve my characterisation.

Appendix: Differentiated assessment rubrics

We have provided guidance for how students may achieve differentiated standards within these learning activities.

The Arts (Drama)

This rubric may assist you in assessing student achievements within the Australian Curriculum. Results can be recorded via your usual assessment record method.

*Use voice, body, movement and space to **describe** different viewpoints of a character waiting with others at a level crossing.*

Extended ideas	I can use voice, body, movement and space to describe different viewpoints of a character waiting with others at a level crossing AND explain how, why and when to use them in a performance AND I seek feedback on how to improve my use of voice, body, movement and space to describe different viewpoints AND I act on this feedback to improve my performance.
Connected ideas	I can use voice, body, movement and space to describe different viewpoints of a character waiting with others at a level crossing AND explain how, why and when to use them in a performance.
Loose ideas	I can use voice, body, movement and space to describe different viewpoints of a character waiting with others at a level crossing BUT I am not sure how, when or why I should use them in the performance.

Rail Safety

This rubric may assist you in assessing student achievements within the suggested rail safety outcomes of this lesson. Results can be reflected in the included [assessment of learning](#).

Identify potential hazards on and around the rail network.

(What are potential hazards on and around the rail network?)

<p>Extended ideas</p>	<p>I can identify many relevant hazards for people on and around the rail network <i>[using text, oral language, drawing, visual arts, dance, drama, music etc.]</i> AND can explain why these hazards need to be managed to keep people safe AND can reflect on my role in helping to manage these hazards.</p>
<p>Connected ideas</p>	<p>I can identify many relevant hazards for people on and around the rail network <i>[using text, oral language, drawing, visual arts, dance, drama, music etc.]</i> AND can explain why these hazards need to be managed to keep people safe.</p>
<p>Loose ideas</p>	<p>I can identify many relevant hazards for people on and around the rail network <i>[using text, oral language, drawing, visual arts, dance, drama, music etc.]</i>.</p>