

FIFTH GRADE

FIREARMS SAFETY

Lesson Plan & Teacher Guide

THEME: Respect, Responsibility and Making Safe Choices

TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	MATERIALS	TIME
PART 1: Firearms Safety and You	Teacher introduces the lesson by sharing the concepts of respect, responsibility and awareness. Through discussion, students learn that firearms are serious tools meant only for trained adults and that poor decisions can have real consequences.	Firearms Safety Guide: Respect & Responsibility	10-20 minutes
PART 2: "Park Scenario" Video: Safety Steps in Action	Students review the safety steps and explain them in their own words. Then they watch the "Park Scenario" Video in which a child finds a gun. Through guided discussion and small group conversation, students analyze how the student in the video followed the safety steps and how those actions helped keep others safe.	Safety Steps Poster; Safety Steps Slide Deck (optional); "Park Scenario" Video	20-30 minutes
PART 3: What Should You Do?	In groups, students work through realistic scenarios in which safe choices may be difficult, especially when friends are involved. They discuss why hiding a firearm, showing one to others or keeping dangerous secrets can lead to harm. Students practice and share safe responses and explain why telling a trusted adult is the safest choice.	Safety Scenarios Worksheet	15-20 minutes
PART 4: Safety Pledge & Personal Commitment	Students read and sign the Safety Pledge and add one personal safety commitment (e.g., "I will notice what's happening around me," "I will tell an adult if something feels unsafe," or "I will make safe choices even if friends don't").	Safety Pledge; Pens	5-10 minutes

PART 1

Firearms Safety and You (10-20 minutes)

NEED: Firearms Safety Guide: Respect & Responsibility

TEACHER: Welcome, class. Today we're going to talk about safety in a new way. You already know the safety steps, but today we'll focus on something just as important: respect and responsibility. As you get older, you become more aware of what's happening around you, and that awareness can help you recognize unsafe situations and make smart choices. Follow along on your **Firearms Safety Guide**.

- **Respecting the tool:** In movies and video games, guns are often shown as exciting or entertaining. But in real life, firearms are serious tools that should be handled only by trained adults. Showing respect for the tool means always following safety steps – every single time – not just when it feels easy to do.
- **Recognizing real consequences:** When guns are used the wrong way or handled carelessly, the results are not like in a game. Real people can be seriously hurt or killed. These injuries can affect families, friends and entire communities for a long time.
- **Preventing accidents:** Most gun accidents can be prevented. Paying attention to what's happening around you helps you notice unsafe situations early. If you see something unsafe, you can make a smart choice – such as stepping away and telling a trusted adult – before anyone gets hurt.

TEACHER: Let's think deeply about this.

DISCUSSION PROMPTS AND KEY POINTS:

- **What does it actually mean to "respect" a tool like a firearm? And why should we show respect for a thing?**
 - Respecting a firearm means understanding that it's not a toy and that it can be dangerous if it's misused.
 - Only trained adults should handle firearms, which is an important part of being responsible.
 - Safety rules should always be taken seriously when a firearm is involved.
 - If a child sees a gun, he or she should leave it alone and not touch it.
 - Joking around, showing off or pretending a firearm is part of a game can lead to serious harm.
 - Unsafe choices with a firearm can hurt other people, which is why careful decisions matter.

- **What are some real consequences of poor decisions? How can treating a gun like a toy or “showing off” lead to harm?**
 - A gun could be fired, even if the person didn’t mean it to.
 - People might panic or get scared.
 - Someone could get seriously injured or killed.
 - It could hurt a friend, a family member or even the person holding it.
 - It could lead to trouble with police or other serious consequences.
 - Even one mistake could change someone’s life forever.
- **How can you help prevent accidents, especially those involving firearms? How can you help keep your community safe?**
 - If I see a gun, I should tell a trusted adult right away.
 - I can remind my friends not to mess with dangerous things.
 - I can walk away from an unsafe situation.
 - I can speak up if someone is doing something dangerous.
 - I can tell a teacher, parent or trusted adult if something feels wrong.
 - I can model safe behavior.
 - I can make smart choices and avoid risky behavior.
 - I can help others stay calm and get help instead of panicking.

PART 2

“Park Scenario” Video: Safety Steps in Action (20-30 minutes)

NEED: Safety Steps Poster; Safety Steps Slide Deck (optional); “Park Scenario” Video

ACTIVITY: Display the **Safety Steps Poster** (with optional **Safety Steps Slide Deck**).

- Review the safety steps and ask students to describe/explain in their own words what each step means:

1 **Treat every gun as real and loaded.** Even if someone says a gun is “not real” or “not loaded,” you should *always* act like it is. A gun can still be dangerous even if it looks like a toy or if someone thinks it’s empty. Many accidents happen when people assume a gun isn’t real or can’t fire. The safest choice is to treat every gun like it could go off at any moment.

- **What this means for you:**

If you see a gun, don’t go near it, don’t pick it up, and don’t try to check it.

2 Don't touch! The best way to prevent an accident is to leave the gun alone. Touching it — even for a second — can be dangerous. Even moving a firearm “to be helpful” could cause someone to get hurt.

- **What this means for you:**

Stop where you are, back away, and don't let your friends touch it either.

3 Tell an adult. Your most important job is to find a trusted adult quickly. Adults are trained to handle serious situations and can get the right help. The faster an adult knows, the faster he or she can make the area safe.

- **What this means for you:**

Tell a parent, teacher, school staff member or another trusted grown-up right away. If you can, stay nearby at a safe distance so you can show him or her where it is, but don't go back to it or stand close to it.



TEACHER: Now we're going to review a video of a young girl who finds a firearm at a playground. Watch closely for clues and warnings.

- Watch the “**Park Scenario**” Video. The video shows a young girl following the safety steps by:

- 1) Calling her mother

- 2) Alerting another adult at the park

- Sample discussion questions:

- **What did the girl do first when she saw the gun?**

- Answer: She was surprised and a bit scared when she first found the gun. In one ending, she called her mom to come help her. In the other ending, she asked another grown-up/parent at the park to help.*

- **How did her actions help protect the younger children in the background?**

- Answer: She didn't touch the gun. She didn't leave the other kids. She immediately found a trusted adult to help.*

- **Why was calling her mother or telling another adult the right choice?**

- Answer: She followed the safety steps. Telling a trusted adult is the best thing to do when you encounter an unsafe situation.*

ACTIVITY: In groups, describe the details of the scene. What was the first thing that signaled something was wrong? What did you notice first? Was it the object itself or the location? How did the student in the video use the safety steps?

PART 3

What Should You Do? (15-20 minutes)

NEED: Safety Scenarios Worksheet



TEACHER: Sometimes making safe choices isn't easy, especially when friends are involved. In small groups, let's look at a few situations.

Teacher note: Assign each group one of the scenarios to discuss and then share. More than one group can discuss the same scenario.

- **SCENARIO 1: At the Park** — Your best friend finds a gun at the park. Instead of telling anyone, your friend hides it and says not to worry about it.

What should you do?

- Whom should you tell?
- Why is hiding a gun dangerous?
- How could telling an adult help prevent an accident?

Talking points:

- Your friend could mishandle or drop the gun and accidentally fire it.
- Other kids might follow your friend and try to see the gun.
- If your friend hides the gun, someone else could find it later.
- The safest choice is to tell an adult right away.

- **SCENARIO 2: At Home** — Your parents are out of town, and you're home with your older brother. One of his friends comes over and shows you a gun, saying it belongs to his father.

What should you do?

- Should you touch the gun? Why or why not?
- Who is a trusted adult you could tell?
- How does leaving the area help keep you safe?

Talking points:

- Stay calm and don't touch the gun.
- Ask your brother's friend to put it away.
- Leave the area and find or call a trusted adult: a parent, neighbor or family member.
- If you feel unsafe, you can go to a safe place, such as outside or to a neighbor's house.

- **SCENARIO 3: At School** — Your best friend tells you that he or she has been bullied and plans to bring a gun to school to scare the other student.

What should you do?

- Whom should you tell right away?
- Why is telling an adult the safest choice?
- How could your actions help protect others?

Talking points:

- Trying to scare someone could turn into a serious injury.
- Even if your friend doesn't mean to use it, a firearm is still a weapon and isn't allowed.
- Keeping the gun a secret could lead to a terrible tragedy.
- Telling an adult could save lives, including your friend's.

PART 4

Safety Pledge & Personal Commitment (5-10 minutes)

NEED: Safety Pledge; Pens



TEACHER: We're going to conclude this lesson by reviewing our **Safety Pledge**. But today, I want you to go a step further. I want you to add a personal safety commitment.

REVIEW THE PLEDGE:

A gun is a tool for trained adults, not kids.

I will remember and use the safety steps:

- 1 Treat every gun as real and loaded.**
- 2 Don't touch!**
- 3 Tell an adult.**

If I ever see a gun — at home, at a friend's house or anywhere else — I will leave it alone and find a trusted adult right away.

I will help keep myself and others safe by using what I've learned.

I pledge to treat all firearms with caution and respect.

TEACHER: Now, think about what you can add to this pledge as your own personal safety commitment. This commitment should be a promise to yourself to build a safe habit.

○ Examples to provide students:

- I WILL pay attention to what’s happening around me.
- I WILL tell an adult if something looks or feels unsafe.
- I WILL make safe choices even if my friends don’t.

TEACHER: Great work today. Remember that safety rules work best when we use them every time – not just once. When we practice them over and over, they become habits. By making these safety habits part of who you are, you’re helping protect yourself, your friends and your community.

***LANGUAGE NOTE:** In this guide, the terms “gun” and “firearm” are used interchangeably. While “firearm” is often the more technical or legal term, “gun” is commonly used in everyday language. Both terms refer to the same category of devices, and the choice of wording is intended to support clarity, consistency and accessibility for learners.

If you find a gun, DON’T TOUCH IT! Find and tell a trusted adult right away.



WE’D LOVE TO HEAR YOUR THOUGHTS!

Scan the code to take a brief survey.



FIREARMS SAFETY GUIDE

RESPECT & RESPONSIBILITY

Understanding Guns

- Some people think guns look exciting or powerful.
- Guns may seem like entertainment in movies and video games.
- In real life, guns are serious and must be respected.
- Respect begins with following firearms safety rules.

Real Consequences

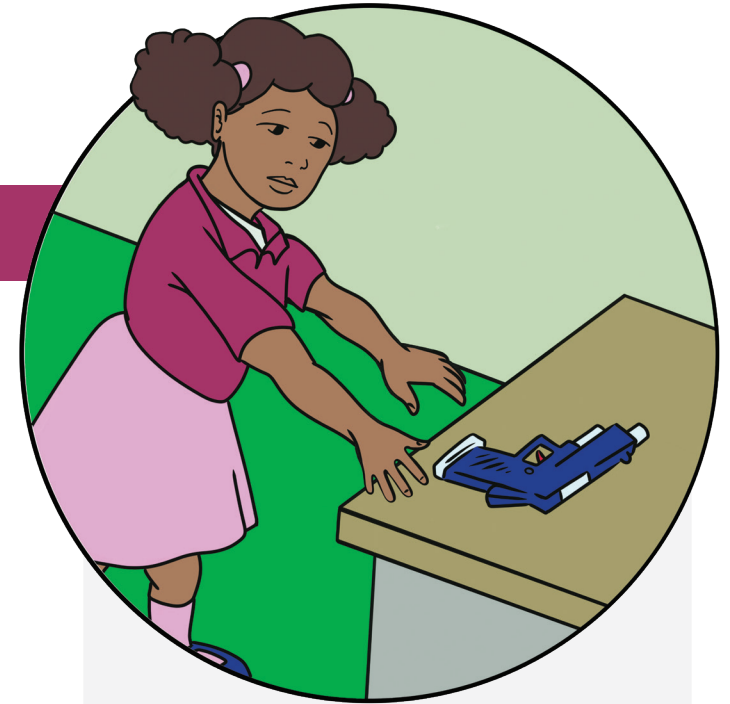
- Every year, accidents happen in cities and towns across the United States.
- Some accidents happen when guns are:
 - Mishandled
 - Fired by mistake
- In some cases, young lives are lost, and dreams are never reached.
- These outcomes affect families and entire communities.

Preventing Accidents

- Gun safety helps prevent:
 - Serious injuries
 - Loss of life
- Safe choices protect:
 - You
 - Others
 - Your community

When Guns Are Misused

- Some people misuse or abuse guns.
- Misuse can lead to:
 - Accidents
 - Serious injuries
 - Preventable violence
- Many of these tragedies could have been avoided.



Your Role

- Gun safety begins with you.
- You can help by following the safety steps:

- 1 Treat every gun as real and loaded.**
- 2 Don't touch!**
- 3 Tell a trusted adult.**

- Make a personal pledge to help keep your community safe!

FIREARMS SAFETY

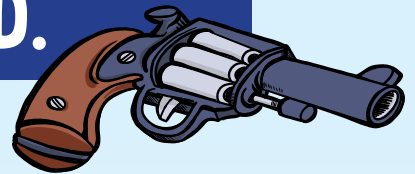
FOR KIDS

LEARN TO STAY SAFE!

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU SEE A FIREARM:

1 TREAT EVERY GUN AS REAL AND LOADED.

It's **NOT** a toy!



NO! DON'T TOUCH!

Leave it alone!

2

3 TELL AN ADULT.

Find a trusted grown-up fast!



NEVER PLAY WITH GUNS!

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SAFETY PLEDGE

A GUN IS A TOOL FOR TRAINED ADULTS, NOT KIDS.

I will remember and use the safety steps:

- 1 Treat every gun as real and loaded.**
- 2 Don't touch!**
- 3 Tell an adult.**

If I ever see a gun – at home, at a friend's house or anywhere else – I will leave it alone and find a trusted adult right away. I will help keep myself and others safe by using what I've learned.

I pledge to treat all firearms with caution and respect.

I WILL: _____

NAME



FIREARMS SAFETY STEPS

What Is Safety?

Firearms Safety Steps

Knowledge in Action

Conclusion



What Is Safety?



- Safety is IMPORTANT!
- You need to be safe wherever you are:
 - Home
 - School
 - Church
 - Stores
 - Parks
 - Even unfamiliar locations
- But what does it mean to be safe?

What Is Safety?



Safety can mean:

- Knowing your surroundings
- Being careful
- Having protection (or a protector)
- Staying alert and attentive
- Avoiding harm
- Avoiding danger
- Keeping yourself and others from accident or injury

Firearms Safety Steps

Now let's learn how to be safe around firearms.

We will talk about each on its own, but for now, repeat and remember these three important safety steps:

- **Treat every gun as real and loaded.**
- **NO! Don't touch!**
- **Tell an adult.**

FIREARMS SAFETY FOR KIDS

LEARN TO STAY SAFE!

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU SEE A FIREARM:

1 TREAT EVERY GUN AS REAL AND LOADED.

It's **NOT** a toy!



NO! DON'T TOUCH!

Leave it alone!

2

3 TELL AN ADULT.

Find a trusted grown-up fast!



NEVER PLAY WITH GUNS!

Treat every gun as real and loaded.

- This is a time to be **mindful** and **careful**.
- Many fake guns look real, and many real guns look fake.
- This can make things confusing, so it's best to treat every gun as real and loaded.
- Guns are to be **respected**. And to respect an item means to take it seriously and to leave it alone, especially when it doesn't belong to you.
- Since a gun in a home, at a place of work, in a car or in someone's hand MAY or MAY NOT be loaded, we want your brain to think that it IS loaded, every time.



No! Don't touch!



- Do **NOT** touch a gun if you see one or find one.
- You don't have to be scared of firearms, but you must remember that **they are not toys!**
- Unless a parent, a teacher or a responsible, trained adult has given you permission, do NOT touch any firearm.

Tell an adult.

- This is an important step to remember!
- You don't need to run away. But you don't want to cause trouble or hurt yourself or another person.
- It's best to **have a plan** to follow in case you do happen upon a gun.
- And that plan is simple: Find or contact a **trusted adult** (a parent, teacher, neighbor, babysitter, older family member, law enforcement officer, etc.) and let him or her know, right away!



Conclusion

- You now know the basics for firearms safety and accident prevention.
- You've started to build a foundation for being safe!
- Remember to use the safety steps in your life – all the time and wherever you go – to be safe around guns ... and more.