

Flooding emergencies: learn

These activities introduce flooding emergencies: they look at how flooding happens and some of the actions children and their families can take when responding to a flooding emergency.

Activities can be worked through in order. You can do all activities, or you can pick and choose. If you are short on time, you could pick the following activities:

1. What is a flood?
and
2. Impacts of flooding
and
3. How does flooding happen? **or** Experiencing a flood.

The 'Flooding worksheets' are optional. These worksheets can be used as homework activities.

Learning objectives

By the end of the 'Flooding emergencies: learn' activities children will be able to:

- > Identify and explain what causes flooding and what might happen during a flood.
- > Explore and understand what to do during a flood alert, flood warning or severe flood warning.

Learn activity summary		
Time	Activity name	Supporting resources
10 minutes	What is a flood?	Flooding factsheet for teachers Paper and pens
15 minutes	Impacts of flooding	Flooding film 'What does flooding look like?' presentation 'Flood alerts and warnings' presentation 'Flood alert/warning' signs Flooding factsheet for teachers
10 minutes	How does flooding happen?	'How does flooding happen?' presentation
20 minutes	Experiencing a flood	National Geographic online article
10–20 minutes	Flooding worksheets	'Match the impact to the photo' worksheet 'Match the impact to the photo' answers 'Word jumble' worksheet 'Word jumble' answers

1. What is a flood?

Activity type



Learn

Suggested time



10 minutes

Suggested group size



Whole group

What you need

1. [Flooding factsheet for teachers](#)
2. Paper and pens
3. Space for children to sit in a circle

Introduction

This activity introduces what a flood is, by exploring what the children already know about floods and developing their understanding through the information listed in the 'Flooding factsheet for teachers'.

Activity description

Before the activity:

1. Ensure children have some pens and paper or an exercise book to note their ideas on.
2. Print out a copy of the 'Flooding factsheet for teachers' for your reference.

Write 'flooding' on the board. Explain that:

- > In this lesson we are going to start thinking about flooding emergencies and how to stay safe if one were to happen.
- > Write 'flooding' in the middle of your page and draw a circle around the word.
- > Draw some lines coming out from the circle. At the end of each line write down words or phrases that come into your head when you think of flooding. These words or phrases could be about what flooding looks like, when and where it can happen, or how it can affect people or the environment.

Give the children a few minutes to note down their ideas.

- > Now that you have written a few ideas down, come and sit in a circle.
- > We are going to go around the circle. Everyone is going to say one word or phrase they associate with flooding.

Go around the circle, giving each child a chance to say something related to flooding. You may want to keep going around the circle until the ideas are exhausted. Write some of the key words that are mentioned on the board.

At the end of the activity summarise some of the key words and read out/write up the flooding definition:

- > Floods occur when there is too much water on land that is normally dry.

2. Impacts of flooding

Activity type



Learn

Suggested time



20 minutes

Suggested group size



Whole group

What you need

1. [Flooding short film](#)
2. [What is flooding?](#)
3. 'What does flooding look like' presentation
4. 'Flood alerts and warnings' presentation
5. ['Flood alert/warning' signs](#)
6. [Flooding factsheet for teachers](#)

Introduction

This activity explores the different impacts floods can have, especially on people, through photos, a map and a news story.

Activity description

Before the activity:

1. Open the 'What does flooding look like?' presentation.
2. Read out the information "What is flooding?" to learners.
3. Print out a copy of the 'Flooding short film transcript' for your reference.
4. Have the 'Flood alerts and warnings' presentation ready.
5. Print out several copies of the 'Flood alert/warning' signs.
6. Print out a copy of the 'Flooding factsheet for teachers' for your reference. It contains information on floods to help answer some of the discussion points the images and videos may initiate.

Read out the information about flooding to learners. After you've read through the information, ask them if they have any questions. Use the teacher factsheet to help support you answer their questions. If you don't know the answer, keep the question for later and research the answer together.

Then continue the activity by going through the 'What does flooding look like?' presentation of images. While going through the presentation explore and discuss key facts about flooding. You can use some or all of the following suggested prompt questions to generate group discussion. Question prompts and their answers can also be found in the notes section of the presentation.

- > Why do floods happen?
- > Where does flooding happen?
- > What impacts can floods have on the environment?
- > What impacts can floods have on people's lives?
- > Are some landscapes more at risk than others?

In the 'What does flooding look like?' presentation work through the links in the notes section on slide 10 to see if your location is in a flood risk area. Talk

through this with the children and discuss what impacts it might have for you and your local community.

If continuing from the 'What is a flood?' activity, ask children to write any more ideas that came out of the discussion on their flooding notes, and add any further ideas to the board.

To conclude the activity, open the 'Flood alerts and warnings' presentation. Divide the class into small groups and give each group a set of the 'Flood alert/warning' signs. Explain that:

- > To conclude this activity, we are going to explore the flood alerts and warnings that can be issued during a flooding emergency.
- > In the short film we saw earlier, it was mentioned that there are three alerts and warnings that can be issued before and during a flooding emergency.
- > On each slide of this presentation, there is a definition of one of these alerts and warnings. Each group has been given a set of signs with the name and symbol that represents each of these alerts/warnings.
- > As a group, you have to decide which sign best matches the definition in the presentation and hold it up.

Work through each of the presentation slides, inviting the groups to hold up their signs. Ask children what they would need to do if they heard this alert or warning being issued. The answers are in the notes section of the presentation slides.

3. How does flooding happen?

Activity type



Learn

Suggested time



10 minutes

Suggested group size



Small groups

What you need

1. 'How does flooding happen' presentation

Introduction

This ordering activity develops children's understanding of how flooding happens – specifically looking at the type of flooding that occurs when a river bursts its banks.

Activity description

Before the activity:

1. Print out copies of the 'How does flooding happen?' presentation. You will need one copy for each group. Ensure each slide is on a different A4 sheet of paper and jumble up the order so each group has a jumbled set of images.
2. Print out a copy of the presentation for your own reference, with multiple slides per page to give the correct order of the stages at the end of the activity.

Divide the class into small groups, then ask children:

- > What different types of flooding do you think there might be? Gather answers.
- > Floods could happen on coasts, or near rivers. In this activity we will be looking at the type of flooding which happens when the water in a river overflows onto normally dry land.
- > In your groups, look at your set of images and work together to put them in the order you think this type of flooding would happen.

After a few minutes ask the groups which stage they think comes first. If the stage they have suggested is correct, ask one of the children from that group to come in front of the class to hold the first stage up. Continue this process until you have children holding the flooding stages in the correct order at the front of the class.

4. Experiencing a flood

Activity type



Learn

Suggested time



20 minutes

Suggested group size



Whole group

What you need

1. [‘Kids reveal their experiences of the Boxing Day floods’](#) article from the National Geographic website
2. Space for children to sit in a circle

Introduction

This activity explores what experiencing a flood might feel like through a story about a boy called Archie who was affected by the flooding in Yorkshire in December 2015. This activity might be more suitable for 9–11 year olds, depending on your class.

Description of activity

Before the activity:

1. Open the 'Kids reveal their experiences of the Boxing Day floods' article. The article has several different stories about children's experiences of the 2015 Yorkshire floods. Scroll down to Archie's story.

Children can sit on the floor or stay in their chairs. Explain that:

- > We are going to read Archie's story to help us gain an understanding of what it might feel like to be in a flooding emergency. This is a real story about the flood in the Christmas holidays in 2015 in Yorkshire.
- > Sit in a circle, close your eyes and listen to Archie's story.

Read out the story and, if you have previously completed the 'Impacts of flooding' activity, continue with:

- > Think about the images and videos we saw when we looked at the impacts of floods. Now think about how Archie might have felt in this flooding emergency.

Ask for some responses from the children.

- > What feelings do you think Archie might have experienced?
- > Open your eyes. To explore the feelings Archie might have had during this emergency, we are going to do an activity called 'hot seating'.
- > 'Hot seating' means one person takes on a character and the rest of the group ask questions to help them learn more about the character and their experiences.

Ask for a volunteer to come and stand/sit in the middle of the circle – they are going to imagine that they are Archie from the story.

- > [Volunteer name] is going to sit/stand in the middle of the circle and take on the character of Archie. Everyone around the circle is Archie's friends. One at

a time, we'll ask 'Archie' questions about what happened during the flood and how he coped throughout the emergency.

Ask the children in the circle to turn to a partner on either side and to come up with two or three questions they would like to ask Archie. They could ask questions that help establish what Archie's life is like in Yorkshire and what he likes to do at school or in his spare time. Then move on to questions about his experience of the flood and how he managed to cope. Children could also ask questions about now: for example, does he worry about flooding happening again, is he better prepared, etc.

Whilst the children in the circle are coming up with some questions, the child playing Archie could read over the story again to familiarise themselves before the hot seating.

End the activity when a range of emotions, practicalities and experiences have been explored. If there is time, you could give other children the opportunity to play Archie in the centre of the circle, or choose another child's story from the National Geographic article.

At the end of the activity ask the children to summarise the emotions Archie might have felt during the flooding emergency. You could write the emotions on the board. If you have time, you could work through some of the coping skills, to support children in learning techniques to keep calm in an emergency.

5. Flooding worksheets

Activity type



Learn

Suggested time



5–10 minutes per worksheet

Suggested group size



Individual

What you need

1. ['Match the impact to the photo' worksheet](#)
2. ['Match the impact to the photo' answers](#)
3. ['Word jumble' worksheet](#)
4. ['Word jumble' answers](#)

Introduction

This activity helps children consolidate their learning about the impact of flooding and reinforce their language around this topic.

Activity description

Before the activity:

1. Print out one or both of the worksheets. You will need one copy for each pupil.
2. Print out a copy of the teacher answers sheet for each worksheet.

The following worksheets can be used in class or as follow-up homework activities:

- > Match the impact to the photo
- > Word jumble.

Flooding factsheet for teachers

Why and where does flooding happen?

- > Floods occur when there is too much water on land that is normally dry, any time of the year, anywhere in the UK, and can last several days or weeks. River floods can last weeks or even longer.
- > Most floods happen when heavy rain or melting ice and snow cause rivers and streams to overflow, spilling water onto normally dry land. Floods can also happen with thunderstorms and snowstorms.
- > The rain, ice and snow (or a combination of these) that cause the flood can be miles away from where the flooding actually occurs.
- > Flooding has become more severe as more of the landscape has been covered by tarmac, concrete for roads, car parks, etc. When there were more natural landscapes, rainwater was absorbed into the soil. Now it flows into rivers and streams as 'run-off', adding to the volume of water that can cause floods. In addition, when flood waters spread over paved areas, they can become fast-flowing channels and long-standing pools.
- > People who live in low spots near rivers and streams are most likely to experience flooding, but floods can affect everyone. Floods can wash away roads and bridges, knock down buildings and in some cases they can cut out power supplies.
- > Flash floods can happen almost without warning. They occur when a river or stream fills up with water so fast that it overflows quickly. Flash floods can also be caused by a sudden, heavy rainstorm that is miles away. When there are storms anywhere in the area, be on alert for a flash flood.

Below are the definitions of the flood alert/warnings (to find out more about them go [here](#)):

- > **FLOOD ALERT:** Flooding is possible. Be prepared.
- > **FLOOD WARNING:** Flooding is expected. Immediate action required.
- > **SEVERE FLOOD WARNING:** Severe flooding. Danger to life.

Staying safe

During a FLOOD ALERT:

- > Develop a plan with your family for moving furniture and objects that could be damaged by flood waters to a safe place.
- > Listen to the news for updates on the chance of flooding.
- > Gather emergency supplies and check on the evacuation route for your neighbourhood in case you need to leave home and go somewhere safe that will not be affected by flooding.

During a FLOOD WARNING:

- > Head somewhere safe that will not flood with the whole family immediately if local officials tell you to evacuate.
- > Ask your parents to turn off gas, electricity and water supplies if it is safe to do so.
- > Help your family put flood protection equipment in place, such as sandbags.
- > Avoid flood waters. Flood water that is just six inches deep can knock you off your feet, and flood water just two feet deep can sweep a car off the road. Flood waters can also carry harmful waste and chemicals.
- > When you come to flood waters, remember the safety rule: **Turn around, don't drown!**

During a SEVERE FLOOD WARNING:

- > If you are still in your house, stay in a safe place with a means to escape.
- > If you have not been able to evacuate, be ready should you need to.
- > Call 999 if you are in immediate danger.

What is flooding?

Flooding is the UK's biggest weather emergency. It happens when there is too much water on land in places that are usually dry. Flooding can happen any time of the year, and can last several days, or even weeks.

In general, most floods happen when a large amount of rain, melting ice or snow causes rivers and streams to overflow onto dry land. This means that events like thunderstorms or snowstorms can also cause floods.

People who are more likely to have their homes affected by floods live in low-lying areas near rivers and streams, but floods can affect everyone by washing away roads and bridges, knocking down buildings, causing power-cuts and in some cases loss of life.

If you live in an area which has flooded in the past, it is important to be prepared in case you might need to leave your home quickly. Having an emergency grab bag and an evacuation plan ready are some ways you can be prepared. Keeping up to date with the weather information is also important – you might hear a flood alert, flood warning or severe flood warning being issued for your local area.

- > A flood alert means that it is possible that a flood might occur within the next day or so.
- > A flood warning means a flood is expected to start very soon.
- > A severe flood warning means that flooding is occurring and it could be life-threatening.

If you are prepared, and know how to get information and help, it will help you to cope and stay safe if you are affected by a flood.

Flood alert/warning signs



FLOOD ALERT



FLOOD WARNING



**SEVERE FLOOD
WARNING**

Flood alert/warning icons source: Environment Agency

Match the impact to the photo

Match the impact to the photo by drawing a line between the description and the photo.



A flood that is two feet deep
can carry a car away.



Sometimes people will have to
leave their homes in boats
with the help of the
emergency services.



Gardens can be damaged in a
flood.



If roads are flooded, then
people cannot get to work or
school.



Floods can ruin farmland.



Flooding can damage
restaurants and shops on
town streets.

Match the impact to the photo answers

Match the impact to the photo by drawing a line between the description and the photo.



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Word jumble

Rearrange the letters to spell words about flooding.

I F O L O D N G

N N G I W A R

I E R R V

N A I R

A E L T R

T A W R E

Word jumble answers

Rearrange the letters to spell words about flooding.

I F O L O D N G**FLOODING****R N N G I W A****WARNING****I E R R V****RIVER****N A I R****RAIN****A E L T R****ALERT****T A W R E****WATER**