



Train Safety Savvy
Lesson Plan: Game Show Script

Audience: Educators

Operation Lifesaver, Inc.'s *Train Safety Savvy* presentation teaches children in grades 3-5 or between the ages of 8-11 general safety messages, signs and signals, and defines trespassing.

The following is a play in one act for use with Operation Lifesaver, Inc.'s lesson plan *Train Safety Savvy*. The script can be adapted and developed for your individual class needs including:

- Adding additional characters
- Inserting specific community spaces and places
- Reflecting individual Standards of Learning : for additional resources, see the 1-week drama lesson plan for use with *Train Safety Savvy* script.

Setting: The idea is a game-show style like *Family Feud*, with a few questions that stump even the host, and the show's director must jump in with additional information to help get the show back on tracks. Your class can help to determine:

1. Name of Show
2. Name all characters
3. Set and prop requirement (suggested options below)

Basic Setting Needs:

- Podium for Host
- Tables/Chairs for families
- Dedicated space for Commercial Break scenes
- Dedicated backstage space so audience can see the director and production assistant's reaction to the game show.
- Options for Commercial Breaks: Suggested use of acting blocks or step stools.

Basic Prop/Found Costume Needs:

- For Host(s): Microphone
- For Director/Production Assistant: Earpiece, clipboard, coffee mug
- For Game show contestants:
 - Similar-colored t-shirt or costume element to show family unit
 - Object for buzzer (as simple as a bowl turned up-side down)—**two total one for each family**
- For Commercial Breaks:
 - Images of Trestle, Overpass, and Underpass (potential Images included)
 - Images of common railroad signs (potential Images included)
 - NOTE: YOU CAN MAKE POSTERS OF EACH IMAGE IF INCLUDING DESIGN ELEMENTS AS PART OF THEATRE UNIT

Character List (as used in script):

1. Host

2. Co-host
3. Family A (minimum of 3, more as needed)
4. Family B (minimum of 3, more as needed)
5. Director
6. Production Assistant
7. Sponsor (1-2, depending on size of class)
8. Sponsor Actors for Commercial break (suggested 3, more as needed)

Train Safety Savvy: A Play in One Act

SCENE 1: INTRODUCTIONS!

Characters:

- Host
- Co-host
- Director
- Production Assistant
- Family A
- Family B

Set/Props:

- Tables (if using) for families
- Buzzer (one for each family)
- Clipboard for production assistant, earpiece, coffee mug (options)

Notes for Reading the Scene: Names and family roles can be determined by the players. Where specific names are addressed has been emboldened and italicized so that players know where they will be inserting names.

Host: Good evening all you Train-tastic Safety Stars!

Co-host: That's right! It's time for another edition of Train Safety Savvy, I'm your host—

Host: No, I'm your host (***CHARACTER NAME***)

Co-host: Fine. That's your co-host, and I'm your other co-host (***CHARACTER NAME***)

Host: Don't do this on live TV or I'll—

Co-host: Why I'll—

Director: Cut cut cut!

Production Assistant: People, what have we told you. You are *both* equally important to this. Okay? Settle down.

Director: Let's roll with introductions.

Host: Fine. I'll be introducing—

Co-host: No, I'll be introducing—

Director: Cut cut cut!

Production Assistant: You will each introduce one family!

Host and Co-host: Fine.

Host: First up we have... (*FAMILY A'S LAST NAME*)

Co-host: They'll be battling it out with...(FAMILY B'S LAST NAME)

Family A Adult 1: Thanks, (*HOST NAME*) we're so excited to show what we've got.

Family A Adult 2: Yeah! We've been riding around all over town to watch the trains come through.

Family A Kid 1: Ugh. Literally every day.

Family A Kid 2: It's so fun!

Family B Adult 1: Listen to these snoozers. The (*Family B's Last Name*) have been doing *real training*.

Family B Adult 2: Yeah, like running over a mile trying to determine if we could ever outrun a train.

Family B Kid 1: That's a no.

Family B Kid 2: We cannot outrun a train. No one can outrun a train.

Host: And what a great statement, (*Family B Kid 2's chosen name*)! That will really kick off our game today!

Co-host: That's right, we'll be talking all about how to—

Host: Stay safe around tracks and trains!

Co-host: Hey, that's MY LINE.

Director: Cut cut cut... are we really going to do this again. May I remind you we are LIVE?

Co-host: Wait, so what's my line?

Director: Let's reset and cut to the opening. (*Production Assistant's name*), give them their starting lines:

Production Assistant: Okay people. Let's start from: (*Host's name*), introduce the first game section.

Scene 2: Game Show beginnings!

Characters:

- Host
- Co-host
- Director
- Family A
- Family B
- Production Assistant

Set/Props:

- Buzzer (one for each family)
- Tables (if using) for Family
- Clipboard for Production Assistant, earpiece, or coffee mug (options)

Notes for Reading: Stage directions will be written in ITALICS either on the line for the actor or between the lines for reactions/actions of other actors.

Host: They get more lines than me!

Director: And we're on in five... four...

Host: Like I was saying, the first session is about MYTHS versus REALITY.

Co-host: I'll read a statement, and you'll buzz in to tell me if it is TRUE or FALSE!

Family A Adult 1: We're so ready

Family B Adult 1: No, the (*Family B's Last Name*) are so ready.

Family A Adult 2: We will crush you!

Family A Kid 1: Ugh. Stop being so dramatic.

Family B Adult 2: We will crush *you*!

Family B Kid 1: This really isn't about competition.

Family B Kid 2: Yeah, like, safety is kind of important.

Host: Question 1.... It is okay to walk on the tracks when there are no trains around?

Family A Adult 2: (*hitting the buzzer*) I KNOW!

Family A Adult 1: False!

Co-host: Exactly, it is FALSE. It is NOT okay to walk on the tracks when there are no trains around! One point for the (*Family A's Last Name*) family!

Family B Kid 2: Trains come at any time—

Family B Kid 1: In any direction—

Family A Kid 2: And on any tracks.

Family A Kid 1: Good thoughts guys, that's so true!

Family A Adult 1: Stop talking to them.

Family B Adult 1: They are the competition!

Host: Next question...

Co-host: I will always hear a train approaching?

Family B Adult 2: (*hitting the buzzer*) Oh! I know! I know!

Family B Adult 1: TRUE!

Family B Adult 2: I was going to say—

Host: Oh, sorry, (**Family B's Last name**) family, that is incorrect.

Family A Adult 1: Glad I didn't buzz in, I was going to say that.

Family A Kid 1: Don't be so mean, Dad.

Host: That means...

Family A Kid 2: (*hitting the buzzer*) This is FALSE.

Family A Kid 1: Ugh. Yeah. Trains don't always have to blow their horns. And some places are even quiet zones. Trains are way quieter than you think.

Family B Kid 2: Which means the trains do not sound their horns. So, it's good to just remember if you see a tracks, you should think train.

Family B Adult 1: Quit it! You're giving away valuable information that might be useful going forward.

Family B Adult 2: Alright family! Get your heads in the game!

Director: Cut cut cut! (*Character's Name*) Tell them WHY this statement is false. The statement is I WILL HEAR A TRAIN APPROACHING. And the answer is FALSE.

Production Assistant: Trains can be incredibly quiet, and you might not here an oncoming train in time to get out of the way. It is that simple.

The **FAMILY B'S KIDS** and **FAMILY A KIDS** applaud/ fist bump the assistant.

Director: Now let's get back to this. We're on in five... four...

Co-host: If a train comes, I can move out of the way in time.

FAMILY A KID 2: Hard FALSE.

Family B Adult 2: Oh! Oh! She didn't buzz in let's steal—

Family A Adult 2: (*Buzzing in at the last second*) HA! Beat you to it!

Host: (*FAMILY NAME*) gets the point.

Family B Adult 1: Come on family! Think on your feet!

Family B Kid 2: Hey! (to **FAMILY A KID 2**)

Family A Kid 2: My name is (*Family A Kid 2 character name*).

Family B Kid 2: You obviously know trains move much faster than you do, but did you know that the average freight train travels about 55 miles per hour? And some go even faster. A transit train can go 100 miles per hour!

Family A Kid 2: Huh. Cool fact.

Family A Adult 1: Stop talking to the enemy.

Host: People, you are wasting time. Can I please move on now?

Co-host: A train will stop in time to avoid hitting a person.

Family B Adult 1: (*buzzing in*) That would be FALSE.

Host: That is correct. This brings our score to (*Family Last name*) 2, (*Family Last Name*) 1.

Director: Cut cut cut. We need to make this more interesting. For one extra point, do you know how long it takes for a train to stop?

Family B Kid 1: (*buzzing in*) Duh. A mile or more.

Family A Kid 1: Which is basically eighteen football fields.

Family B Kid 1: Oh that's neat. I always remember it as 88 feet... *per second*.

Family A Kid 2: So basically all that to say is it can take a LONG TIME for a train to stop.

Family B Kid 2: It's hard to imagine taking a whole football field to stop, much less imagine 18!

Host: So, a train *will stop*, but it may not be able to stop in time to avoid hitting someone on the tracks. Do I have it all right now? And the score is now... **(Family Last Name) 2, (Family Last Name) 2**. I think.

Co-host: Can I start now?

Production Assistant: Let's go People! And we're on...

Director: (*Furiously*) I know you're not taking my lines...

Co-host: I am safe if I get close to a stopped train.

Both families buzz at the same time

Family A Adult 1: That is—

Family B Adult 1: (*frantically buzzing in*) FALSE! I said it first!

Family A Adult 1: He cut me off! *To Host(s)* Is that allowed?

Host: *whispering to Director* Is that allowed?

Director: *whispering to Production Assistant* Is that allowed?

Production Assistant: Uh... the important thing to remember here is that it is never safe to get close to a train, even if it is stopped. It is trespassing and that's illegal.

Family A Kid 1: Yeah. A stopped train can start moving at any time.

Family B Kid 1: And if the train starts moving unexpectedly, you might get hurt.

Production Assistant: Uh... so they both get a point?

Director: They BOTH get a point.

Host: So here we are... tied again.

Co-host: Moving along... You'll notice that all these statements were false. That's because they are misconceptions. (*gesturing to both families*) Define a Misconception.

Director: Cut cut cut! Let's get back to trains.

Family A Adult 1: Yeah, I need a better question. One I am ready for!

Co-host: But that's in the script.

Host: Uh, let's go to commercial.

Family B Adult 2: But what about the question? The one you just said... define misconception?

Family A Kid 2: Yeah, I think we should be able to get a point for that.

Family B Adult 2: (*whispering to Family A Kid 2*) I don't know the answer.

Family A Kid 2: Oh! A misconception is an opinion that is not correct because of faulty thinking.

Family B Adult 2: Good to know! So with trains, misconceptions are things we BELIEVE are true...even when they're not.

Family A Kid 2: Exactly!

Production Assistant: Okay people... we're in commercial in five... four...

Director: Stop taking my lines!

Scene 3: Commercial Break 1

Characters:

- Sponsor
- Actor 1
- Actor 2
- Actor 3
- Director
- Production Assistant

Set/Props:

- OPTIONAL: Acting Blocks
- Photos of TRESTLE, BRIDGE, TUNNEL

Notes for Reading: Stage directions will be written in ITALICS either on the line for the actor or between the lines for reactions/actions of other actors.

Focus shifts to the commercial playing space.

Sponsor 1: HELLO EVERYONE! It's me (**CHARACTER NAME**) with (**COMPANY OR BUSINESS NAME**) We're proudly sponsoring today's episode of *Train Safety Savvy*, and we're here to show you how to safely cross some train tracks!

If you will be using DEMONSTRATING ACTORS, this is where they will come in. If you're working with a smaller class, you can have FAMILY A KID 1, FAMILY A KID 2, FAMILY B KID 1, and FAMILY B KID 2 act as the demonstrators.

Sponsor 1: Show us our first safe place to cross!

Actor 1: You should only cross at designated crossing places.

Actor 2: A sidewalk. *Mimics walking normally along a sidewalk, then takes a big step to indicate stepping across tracks.* These will be clearly marked places for pedestrians.

Actor 1: You can also use a Pedestrian Overpass. Can I get some help here?

DIRECTOR and PRODUCTION ASSISTANT come out with two chairs/stools/acting blocks.

Actor 1: This is a marked path that takes you up and over the tracks. Pst... don't forget to strike your set!

Director and PRODUCTION ASSISTANT hurry back to take their things.

Actor 3: Another good place is a pedestrian underpass. Pst... I need you guys!

Director and Production Assistant run back out, linking their arms making a bridge. Actor 3 walks under their arms.

Actor 3: A pedestrian underpass is where pedestrians walk in a designated space under the tracks.

Actor 2: But most importantly, it is never safe to be on a train trestle, bridge, or in a tunnel. *(Each of the actors demonstrating holds up a poster/picture with these three places)* The train is wider than the tracks—

Sponsor 1: By over three feet!

Actor 2: So, there is no room for anything—

Sponsor 1: Or anyone!

Actor 2: Else. So stay at least fifteen feet back!

Host: Psst... Let's get back to the show!

Sponsor 1: Right. That's all the time my company has paid for, but be sure to check us out at *(Business or company name)*

Focus shifts back to the game show, where FAMILY A KID 1, FAMILY A KID 2, FAMILY B KID 1, and FAMILY B KID 2 can be seen talking together.

Scene 4: Back to the Show!

Characters:

- Family A
- Family B
- Host
- Co-host
- Director
- Production Assistant

Set/Props:

- Buzzer for each family

- Tables (if using) for Family
- Clipboard for Production Assistant, earpiece, or coffee mug (options)

Notes for Reading: Stage directions will be written in ITALICS either on the line for the actor or between the lines for reactions/actions of other actors.

Focus shifts back to the game show, where FAMILY A KID 1, FAMILY A KID 2, FAMILY B KID 1, and FAMILY B KID 2 can be seen talking together.

Family B Adult 1: All together now!

Family A Adult 1: Huddle up you all!

Host: Welcome back to Train Safety Savvy! I'm your host—

Co-host: No, that's your co-host and I'm your other co-host—

Host: Again?

Co-host: Fine. Let's skip to the questions.

Host: For this round, I'm going to read a series of statements, and you'll buzz in to tell me which one—if any—are false.

Co-host: That's right. It's all-or-nothing in this lightning round, so get ready to play!

Host: Statement one: Trains, *even passenger ones*, do not run on a schedule—they can run at any time of the day or night. They can run on any tracks, at any time, in any direction.

Co-host: Tough one.

BOTH FAMILIES can be seen discussing the question.

Family A Adult 2: (*Buzzing in*) We're going to say, ALL TRUE.

Co-host: That is correct. Trains DO NOT run on a schedule: they DO come at any time of the day or night. Even trains that are scheduled regularly are not always in the same place at the same time. They can run on any tracks, at any time, in any direction.

Host: Statement two: Trains cannot swerve to avoid something in their path the way cars can. They do not have steering wheels the way cars do. A train can only follow the tracks.

BOTH FAMILIES can be seen discussing the question.

Family B Adult 2: (*Buzzing in*) And we're also going to say, ALL TRUE.

Co-host: Wow. That is correct. This is neck-and-neck!

Host: For the final, tie-breaking point of the round... People often think that they are safe to be near the tracks if there is no train. People think they will hear an approaching train in time to move a safe distance away from the tracks.

BOTH FAMILIES can be seen discussing. BOTH families race to their buzzer.

Family A Adult 1: TRUE! These are all true!

Family B Adult 1: But even though it's true people think that, it's not the case!

Family B Adult 2: It's never safe to be near tracks. Since trains don't run on a schedule, it's hard to know when one will be coming by.

Co-host: And they do move fast, so you do not want to be in their way!

Host: Good point. If we're staying off of tracks and far away from them—at least fifteen feet—then we're taking control of being safe.

Director: Cut cut cut!

Production Assistant: Okay, why don't we go to commercial so you guys can all talk amongst yourselves.

Scene 5: Commercial Break 2

Characters:

- Sponsor
- Director
- Production Assistant
- Actor 1
- Actor 2
- Actor 3

Set/Props:

- Advanced Warning Sign
- Crossbuck Sign
- Emergency Notification System Sign

Notes for Reading: Stage directions will be written in ITALICS either on the line for the actor or between the lines for reactions/actions of other actors.

The focus shifts to the commercial area, where we catch SPONSER 2 in the middle of vocal/physical warmups—the bigger the better!

Sponsor 2: Oh! Hello there everyone, I'm (**Character Name**) with (**Character's affiliation**) I'm here to play a game—

Director: Cut Cut Cut! No game-within-a-games! That can't be right.

Production Assistant: Okay everyone. Commercial only, okay?

Sponsor 2: Okay... so... I'm here to present our new and improved train signs!

Actors come out, each holding a railroad crossing sign.

Sponsor 2: We are selling these each for the low price of only... \$14.99! OR you can BUNDLE AND SAVE.

Director: Cut cut cut! You cannot, and I mean cannot, sell train signs! Where did you even get these?!

Production Assistant: Can our commercial go to a commercial?

Sponsor 2: Why not?

Director: People *need those*. They need to learn what they mean and what to do if they see them. You cannot put a price on safety.

Production Assistant: Although that is a very low cost—

Director: Cut!

Production Assistant: What are you cutting--?

Director: You.

Actor 1: I do not get paid enough for this.

Actor 2: Why don't we just tell them what the signs mean.

Actor 3: That's way more helpful.

Actor 1: So, the sign I'm holding is called an **Advance Warning Sign**.

Actor 2 quickly jumps in to help by advertising—showing off the sign to the audience while Actor 1 continues talking.

Actor 1: It warns you in advance.

Actor 2: That is a horrible explanation! Let me try. You hold this.

Hands the sign back to Actor 1.

Actor 2: When you see this sign, it means that there are railroad tracks ahead that cross the road. Whenever you see this, you should be aware that there is a train tracks, and that a train could come through at any time.

Actor 3: On any tracks and in any direction. Like we learned from the show we're interrupting.

Actor 2: The next sign I'm going to show you is—

Actor 1: Oh! I know that one! That's a crossbuck! It marks the location of the crossing! Like saying, "Hey everybody! Here's the tracks!"

Actor 3: Can I please do one now?

Actor 1 and 2: Sure.

Actor 3: Emergency Notification System Sign.

The other actors say, "oooo" and "ahh"

Actor 1: A VERY important sign! If you're ever in trouble near a train track and no train is approaching, look for this sign.

Actor 2: This blue and white sign has a phone number.

Actor 1 points it out.

Actor 2: It's a unique phone number and different at EVERY sign. And you can call that number if you need help—like if your car gets stuck on the tracks or you see something blocking the track. When you call, give the dispatcher the crossing ID number.

Actor 3 points it out.

Actor 3: That's this one! It's also a unique number, so it's different at every sign.

Actor 2: When you give that number, the dispatcher will know exactly where you are and will be able to send the kind of emergency help you need.

Actor 3: So if you see something that doesn't seem right—like something on the tracks—

Actor 1: Or if you or anyone you're with needs help!

Actor 3: Look for the blue and white sign!

Director: Wow, that's great to know!

Actor 1: (to the DIRECTOR) Yeah, and if you can't find the blue and white sign, you can always call 911.

Sponsor 2: Can we get back to the show now? If I cannot sell my signs, at least I can watch the show!

Director: Okay people! We're on in five...four...

Scene 6: The Grand Finale!

Characters:

- Host
- Co-host
- Production Assistant
- Family A
- Family B

Set/Props

- Buzzer for each family
- Tables (if using) for Family
- Clipboard for Production Assistant, earpiece, or coffee mug (options)

Notes for Reading: Stage directions will be written in ITALICS either on the line for the actor or between the lines for reactions/actions of other actors.

Host: Welcome back to the show I'm still (*CHARACTER NAME*) and am your host—

Co-host: Co-host! You're a co-host! Like me, (*CHARACTER NAME*) also a co-host!

Host: In this final, lightning round, we'll be testing your knowledge of a very important aspect of train safety... TRESPASSING.

Co-host: Families, you've both proven that you are train-safety- savvy, but can you conquer our toughest round yet?

Host: That's right! —this one tests your knowledge of the law.

Co-host: But you don't need a law degree for this; just more facts to keep you informed of staying safe around tracks and trains.

Host: Here we go—

Production Assistant: Psst! Psst! THE RULES. Tell them THE RULES.

Co-host: I would be so much better at your job.

Host: We have the same job.

Family A Kid 2: Can we like, get started now?

Family B Kid 2: Yeah, I'd really like to be done in time to hit the mall—

Family A Kid 2: Oh, maybe we'll come along?

Family B Kid 1: Sure.

Family A Kid 1: Great.

Host: The rules! Oh yes. So, for this round, you will have to answer open-ended questions. So put your thinking caps on and—

Co-host: Please define **trespassing**.

Family B Adult 2: (*Buzzing in immediately*) Oh! It's breaking the law!

Host: Well, yes, trespassing is against the law, but the question was to **define trespassing**. The question now goes to the (**Family A last name**). (**Family A last name**) family, can you define **trespassing**.

The family is in a huddle discussing among themselves.

Co-host: (*FAMILY NAME*), we need an answer.

Family A Adult 1: Trespassing is going somewhere you are not supposed to go.

Family A Adult 2: Like walking into a neighbor's house without permission.

Family B Kid 2: And walking on railroad tracks without permission is trespassing too.

Co-host: Correct! That's one point for you!

Host: What is our current score?

Co-host: *To Director*. What is the score?

Director: Cut—cut—cut!

Production Assistant: The score is 3-2.

Family A Adult 1: In your FACE!

Director: Settle down, we're on in 5...4...3...

Host: For our next question about the laws around tracks and trains, Property **surrounding the tracks** is called **what?**

Both families are seen huddled.

Co-host: *begins humming "Jeopardy" theme music.*

Production Assistant: I think that is copyright music...

Director: Cut-cut-cut. We cannot use that tune.

Co-host: What should I hum then?

Director: Get the answer to the question! That is literally your job!

Host: I'll take it from here. We need an answer in 10 seconds!

Family B Kid 2: *quietly* Railroad Property. (*FAMILY B, Adult 1 buzzes in*)

Host: What's that?

Family B Kid 2: The answer. Railroad Property. The area surrounding a track is called **railroad right-of-way**. Trains and equipment on the tracks have the right of way.

Family A Kid 1: Yeah, and it includes any green space like grass around or between sets of tracks.

Family A Kid 2: Oh, and it also includes service roads that run alongside some tracks.

Family B Kid 1: Cool, didn't know that.

Co-host: *beat*. So... who gets the point?

Production Assistant: Both?

Family A Adult 1: BOTH?

Family B Adult 1: BOTH?! My daughter answered first!

Family A Adult 1: YEAH! But MY kids gave the most information!

Family B Adult 1: Oh, I'm sorry, but I didn't know the question was (*mocks Family A Adult 1*) "give the most information."

Director: Cut—cut—cut!

Production Assistant: The points were acquired fairly on both teams. Both teams get a point!

Family A Adult 2: But—

Family B Adult 2: But—but—

Production Assistant: Final decision!

Director: Next Question! *To Production Assistant*. At this rate, we are never going to finish this game!

Production Assistant: Alright people, let's move it along!

Scene 7: Lightning Round

Character:

- Family A

- Family B
- Co-host
- Host
- Director
- Production Assistant

Set/Props:

- Buzzer for each family
- Tables (if using) for Family
- Clipboard for Production Assistant, earpiece, or coffee mug (options)

Notes for Reading: Stage directions will be written in ITALICS either on the line for the actor or between the lines for reactions/actions of other actors.

Co-host: To speed this up, I'm going to ask a yes or no question. Can a stopped train **move without warning?**

Family A Kid 1: Oh, absolutely!

Family B Adult 2: (*buzzing in*) They didn't say yes! They didn't say yes! He didn't answer the question.

Co-host: Uh... I think we will take it.

Family B Adult 1: I want him fired! That's not fair!

Family A Adult 2: Oh, grow up! He answered the question!

Family B Kid 2: It's never safe to play around trains or train tracks.

Family B Kid 1: And that includes stopped trains.

Co-host: And moving on before one more person has a chance to interrupt me—

Host: The question is—

Co-Host: Really? Now is when you interrupt me?

Host: It's in the script. It's my turn.

Co-Host: Oh fine, just get on with it already.

Host: Is there any object that is safe to put on the tracks?

Family B Adult 2: What kind of question is that?

Family A Adult 1: Yeah, I mean, that is totally unsafe.

Family A Adult 2: Right? Any object—even a very small one is dangerous to have on a track.

Family B Kid 2: It could fly off and hurt someone.

Family B Kid 1: And if you're able to get that close to the tracks—

Family B Adult 1: You're trespassing.

Family A Kid 2: You're breaking the law.

Family A Adult 1: So... uh... who gets the point?

Host: (*to director*) It appears we have reached an impasse...

Co-host: Stop trying to show off with your fancy word!

Host: Impasse? That isn't fancy! It just means, like, uh—

Production Assistant: They have a point. Even if one family answers—the other just adds on important safety notes. And this game **is about** safety.

Director: Should we rock paper scissors for the scores?

Production Assistant: I think that is an even worse idea.

Director: So, if we give a point for **each right answer** and **each** important way to stay safe around trains and trackss, what would the score be.

Host and co-host furiously right on a notepad.

Co-host: Still tied. (*all players groan/roll their eyes*)

Ending

Characters:

- Director
- Production Assistant
- Family A
- Family B
- Host
- Co-host
- Sponsor 1
- Sponsor 2

Set/Props:

- Buzzer for each family
- Tables (if using) for Family
- Clipboard for Production Assistant, earpiece, or coffee mug (options)

Notes for Reading: Stage directions will be written in ITALICS either on the line for the actor or between the lines for reactions/actions of other actors.

Director: Then, that's the answer. *Coming to center stage.* The thing to remember about this whole competition is that it's about knowing the facts and making safe choices.

Production Assistant: That's right! You have the power to make responsible choice around trains and train tracks that keep you and your community safe.

Director: So, all of you win if we help people understand how they can make smart choices.

Family B Adult 1: You're right... I guess I have kind of lost the meaning of what this was all for.

Family A Adult 1: I got into this kind of rigorous train competition to help keep people in the community safe.

Family B Adult 1: Hey, me too.

Family A Adult 2: Maybe we should grab dinner and talk about your experiences?

Family B Adult 2: That's a great idea.

The two families come around from their table and shake hands/introduce themselves in the middle of the room.

Host: So, the winner is...?

Co-Host: Would you keep up already! They're all the winners.

Both Announcers and their actors (if you are using) re-enter the playing space.

Announcer #1: On behalf of (**Company name**), I'm (**character name**) and this has been another crazy competition for the most savvy-safe family!

Announcer #2: The only Game Show that makes safety a number-one priority.

Host: I'm your host, (**character name**) and this is my fellow host—

Co-host: *Beaming with pride.* I'm your fellow host (**character name**).

Host and Co-host together: And this has been another exciting episode of Train Safety Savvy!

All the characters shake hands/high five each other. Family A Adult 2, Family A Adult 1, Family B Adult 1, and Family B Adult 2 go off stage with the Host and Co-host leaving only the Director, Production Assistant, Family A Kid 1, Family A Kid 2, Family B Kid 1, and Family B Kid 2 on stage.

Characters come down stage towards the audience, standing in a line to directly address the audience.

Director: Making safe decisions near trains and train tracks is a responsible thing to do for you and your community.

Family A Kid 2: It's important to remember a few things that have a big impact on your safety and well-being.

Family A Kid 1: To start, whenever you see train tracks, always think train.

Family B Kid 2: Trains come at any time, on any tracks, and in any direction.

Family B Kid 1: They don't run on a schedule.

Production Assistant: Making smart choices keep you safe and keeps you from breaking the law.

Family A Kid 2: Trespassing is against the law.

Family A Kid 1: Trespassing is going somewhere without permission.

Family B Kid 2: It would be like walking into a stranger's house.

Family B Kid 1: And the railroads have the right-of-way around train tracks.

Director: That means that the area around the tracks is also private property. It can be the grass, or even the service roads around train tracks.

Production Assistant: Staying away from these areas keeps you safe and it is the law.

Family A Kid 1: Always cross railroad tracks at marked crossings, including pedestrian overpasses and pedestrian underpasses if available.

Family A Kid 2: If you ever see a crossbuck sign or yellow advanced warning sign, remember that means you're near train tracks.

Family B Kid 1: Stay off.

Family B Kid 2: Stay away.

Director: Stay safe.

THE END

Operation Lifesaver, Inc. is a nonprofit public safety education and awareness organization dedicated to reducing collisions, fatalities and injuries at highway-rail crossings and preventing trespassing on or near railroad tracks. Visit OLI.org for more information.

Grade: 3-5 Ages 8-11

Time Allotment: Five, 45-minute sessions (Each session allocated) *Time allotted for a quick performance or sharing for student actors.*

This lesson plan functions as one full week for use with drama camp and/or a weekly specials class. Lesson Plan is flexible, and you can add it to other material or sub out the order of lessons to better fit with standards of learning and class time needs.

Subject Matter: Drama, Creative Play, Railroad Safety, Community Safety

Key Learning Objectives:

1. Define the term **devising** as a theatrical event created by working together as a group.
2. Identify and define the term **rehearsal** and **technical rehearsal** to understand the process of making theatre.
3. Incorporate *teaching a lesson* as a main goal of some scripts
4. Understand time management strategies for following directions and processing memory.
5. Develop techniques for memorizing lines.
6. Add found objects that ground a character (utilizing props)
7. Demonstrate an understanding of **collaboration** and how characters work in collaboration.
8. Identify and define the terms **set and prop**

Safety Standards of Learning:

1. Identify safe places to cross a train track.
2. Identify key signs and markers to gather information about trains and train tracks.
3. Understand the dangers presented around playing near trains and train tracks.
4. Differentiate between fact and misconception near trains and train tracks.
5. Know what to do in an emergency near a train or train track.

Materials:

- *Train Safety Savvy* PowerPoint PDF for reference and clear safety messages for use as script.
- If using: Print outs from resource guide(s): signs and locations.
- Found objects for props (see suggested list in script).
- Paper and colored pencils for notes/quick signs.
- Clip of Game shows such as: *Family Feud*.

Preparation:

- Familiarize yourself with *Train Safety Savvy* Script and the flexible requirements
 - Plan changes needed with your class in mind.
- Establish a playing space with painters' tape, gaff tape, and/or any other boundary device your students frequently use.

Day 1: Setting the world and importance of the world

Introductory Movement Learning

1. Ask your students to find the shortest path between the door and their seat. Have one or two student volunteers identifying if there are any shorter paths.
2. Have students identify if they moved in a straight line, or in a series of curves to get to their desired path. Have one or two student volunteers demonstrate the difference their paths look when moving just in curves or just in straight lines.
3. Tell students that they will be creating a game show based on safety around trains and tracks, and they just demonstrated one of the key elements to being safe around tracks and trains. Ask if any students have any ideas about what that element might be.
 - a. **Element: Trains cannot swerve, they can only move in straight lines along tracks.**
 - b. Explain that one of the things they will teach through their acting is this fact.

Further Learning: Explain to students that they have control over their safety around tracks and trains. Trains and tracks have rules, and students get to make choices about their own safety and how to keep their bodies safe. This is an example of **body autonomy: you have control over your body and have the right to make choices.**

“The Game Show”: Introducing the Narrative and content

1. Show students the PowerPoint *Train Safety Savvy*, asking them to play along in answering the true false questions. (*Slides 2-19*)
2. Show the students the next section on misconceptions, (*Slide 20-24*) defining what a misconception is and how it can lead to unsafe choices.
3. Show the students the next section introducing **trespassing**. (*Slides 25-37*)
 - a. Take a moment to point out that trespassing is both dangerous AND illegal. Be sure to mention again that the goal of this script is to **teach a lesson**.
4. Skipping a few slides ahead, show the students the last section (*Slides 41-45*)
 - a. Take a moment to note that these are **true/false questions** phrased as statements. The goal is to make the actor feel like they are really in the moment of the statement.

Further Learning: If your drama students are in an area where there is train and track presence, do an image search using your school’s preferred browser for photographs of places in your community where there are trains and tracks. Suggest adding local names of places to the questions that help students identify their own community. (Examples include: “Where is a safe place to cross the track near John’s Swimming Store?”)

Day 2: Setting the Scene

Materials Needed: Hand out copies of the script. Tell students that today they will have a chance to do a formal staged reading.

1. Establish within the playing space what things need to be.
2. Using gaff or painter’s tape, have students spike their blocking. Gather rehearsal furniture from within the space.
3. Have students explore the space and move furniture around to set up the kind of game show that they are interested in creating.
4. Have students decide:
 - a. What part of the space will reflect “backstage,” (will you be using audience space?) where they will create their commercial breaks, how will they angle the sitting to be able to see everyone?
5. Once students have established their own game show parameters, they can set up the script:
 - a. Cast the students as appropriate.

- b. Introduce the “**Director**” and “**Production assistant**” as the characters that keep the story moving.
- c. Introduce the commercial break. This is a wonderful place to introduce community places and members.
- d. Encourage students to create their own character names and define the family dynamics (Are they siblings? Cousins?)

Game Break: Gibberish.

Set Up: Explain that **gibberish** is a language of made up of nonsense words and sounds. Demonstrate with a call and response: say something in gibberish with a small gesture, and have the students mirror back to you. Have them interpret what you might have been saying to them.

Version 1: Assign one student to choose an emotion and to begin speaking with that emotion in gibberish, using as much gesture and physicality as they can. Their partner is the interpreter. The role of the interpreter is to mimic as many gestures and physicality’s as they can while speaking (translating) into English. **Remind students this is best when done line by line.**

Version 2: Ask a student volunteer to use gestures and physicality and gibberish to have one student imagine that they are:

- A scientist explaining her recent discovery of a 2nd moon.
- A pop singer giving a press conference after falling asleep during his concert performance.
- A child describing what it was like getting her first cavity.
- A chef explaining how to cook his favorite meal, candy spaghetti (or anything else).
- A farmer explaining how to milk a cow in record time.

Game Wrap Up: Discuss with students how gestures and inflection helped us understand the individual characters, and what they were trying to tell us.

Further Learning: Once the students have a good grasp on how to incorporate gesture and words together, have students explore conveying a safety phrase that is key to be safe around trains and train tracks. Try:

- Trains cannot swerve.
- Trains run on any track.
- Trains Run in both directions.
- Playing near trains and train tracks is dangerous.
- Playing near trains and train tracks is illegal.

Remind students that in the next class, they will begin working on creating characters for their game show.

Day 3: Introducing the Players

Materials Required: Scripts.

As students settle in, remind them of some of the key safety messages they learned yesterday such as:

- Trains cannot stop quickly
- Trains cannot swerve
- Trains overhang tracks, and that being near is dangerous.
- Areas around trains are the property of railroads and being on this property is trespassing.

Introductory Game: What are you doing?

Set Up: Have two students stand in front of the class. **Student A** begins doing a simple activity (washing the windows, stirring batter, brushing their teeth). **Student B** asks, "What are you doing?"

Game Play: After **Student B** has asked, **Student A** responds with an activity they *are not doing*. **Student A** sits down, and another student moves into the playing space. **Student B** begins doing the thing **Student A** said, and the new student, **Student C**, repeats the question *What are you doing?* **Student B** then says something they are NOT doing.

Play until all students who would like to participate have had a turn.

Transition: Character Development for Script

1. Have students gather in a circle and distribute script notes from Day 1's class.
2. Help student's break up into two family groups. Choose a Host and a Co-host.
3. Break the students doing directing/production work and commercial work off into groups:
 - a. For the Director/Production Group: Encourage them to produce three interjections to the game show. These can include:
 - i. What to do if an answer is incorrect
 - ii. What their personalities are like (let them describe in simile and metaphor).
 - b. For the Commercial Group: Allow them to take 5-10 minutes to develop the product they would like to sell and create a pitch for how they will use that product.
 - i. IF students are interested in using props from the area, make a note of these.
4. After breaking down into groups for 5-10 minutes, bring the group back together.

Game Break: Quiz Bowl

Explain to students that because the goal of this show is to teach a lesson, they need to know inside and out all the correct safety messages. For this game, they will have the opportunity to play red light/green light with information that their characters will present during the play.

Game Play: Have students who wish to participate line up across the back wall. Explain to students that you will be reading them a series of safety statements that they have learned about throughout the week. Ask students to quickly decide if the statement is a **RED LIGHT** or a **GREEN LIGHT**. If the statement is **RED**, the student SHOULD NOT MOVE. If the statement is **GREEN**, they should go one BIG STEP forward. If they mistake a **GREEN** statement for a **RED**, the student will need to go to he back to start again. The goal is to be the first student to reach YOU at the front of the room. Mix these up to speed the game forward.

Red Statements	Green Statements
Trains always run on a schedule.	Trains cannot swerve.
Trains can always stop in time for you if an engineer sees you from the locomotive.	It takes a train a mile or more to come to a full and complete stop.
Walking near a track is okay if you are far away.	Walking on railroad property, tracks or climbing on equipment is illegal.
Trains will not sneak up on you.	Trains are quieter than we think.
If a train is at a complete stop, you can play on it.	Trains can start very quickly and without any warning.

Remind students that during the next class, they will need to be prepared for a blocking rehearsal.

Day 4- (through however many classes are needed): Blocking Rehearsals

Preparation: Write the word BLOCKING on the white board/smart board.

Introduction to BLOCKING: Give each student a token or trinket (wooden blocks/spools work well for this). Explain to students that the term BLOCKING means stage directions; what they should do on stage and when.

- Ask students to imagine that they were the blocks.
- Ask for two volunteers.
 - Using their blocks, have students demonstrate how they should stand if they were friends.
 - Using their blocks, have students demonstrate how they should stand if they were siblings who were in a fight.
- Pair students together or in groups of 3-4. Have student use their blocks to imagine the blocks as a class trip to the zoo.
 - Which block is the teacher? If they go one way, which way should the other blocks go?
 - What about if one of the blocks gets sick?

Explain to students that these actions that they are going through are **blocking**. They are taking a story and determining when and where they should move.

For the designated amount of time, they will begin a process known as **rehearsal**, where they will learn to memorize their lines while also completing actions as a character.

Further Learning: Have students set up a railroad track with a group of 3-4 using a barrier such as gaff or painter's tape. Use the blocks as people, moving them along the track using the following prompts:

1. How close can you get to a track and still be safe? (Students should use their blocks to model the distance that they believe is far enough back.)
 - a. Being NEAR A TRACK is dangerous. If you see a train or a track, just stay back.
2. What is a safe way to cross the track? (Explain to students that they can use their blocks to create a safe place to cross such as creating a pedestrian overpass)
 - a. Remind students that they will see a Crossbuck or Advanced Warning sign at a crossing.
3. What should you do in an emergency? You should look for what sign at a crossing??
 - a. Remind students to look for the Blue and White Emergency Notification System Sign. Remind students that the sign will be on the pole near the crossing.

Note for Teachers: Rehearsal lengths and times vary from student to student and year to year. This play runs for 20-25 minutes with NO COSTUME OR SET CHANGES. Technical elements will involve simple hand props and signs (discussed later as Day 5, Producing day). You are the director, and you know your students better than anyone. Take the appropriate time for your students. If you need games, please see the following suggested games for FOCUS, COLLABORATION, and IMAGINATIVE PLAY. Use when and where needed.

Focus Games:

1,2,3, BUZZ

- Start in a Drama circle.
- Start off by counting aloud around the circle to get familiar with the counting movement.
- The teacher then calls out a change. For example, replace numbers in the five times table with "buzz" instead of the actual number. This might look like:
 - 1, 2, 3, 4, "buzz", 6, 7, 8, 9, "buzz"
- When the group is able, add another change. For example, replacing numbers in the three times table with the word "flop." In this instance the number fifteen becomes "buzz flop"

Secret Leader

- Start in a Drama circle.
- Explain the game and model to them that one of them will be moving/gesturing and the group will be 'mirroring' their action.
- Send one student out of the space to be the detective and then assign a secret leader.
- With the leader leading the circle and the group mirroring, call the detective back to stand in the center of the circle and try to identify the leader.

Sculptor and Clay

- Start in a Drama circle.
- Put students into pairs and get them to label themselves A and B.
- Working in pairs, one student becomes a sculptor and the other become clay. The sculptor must mold the clay into a statue.
- They can manipulate the arms, legs, head, body, and facial expression to create a statue based on titles, objects or themes the teacher has stipulated. *Note that if a student is uncomfortable, you can create a MAGIC CLAY: the student who acts as a sculptor must keep his hands in the space around the clay, but not touching them. The Clay then has more creative control in the way that it moves around within the confines of the sculptor.*
- The students then switch roles.

Collaboration Games:

Change Places if...

- Sit everyone in a Drama circle - this game works best when sitting on chairs.
- A caller would call "*Change places if you have brown hair*" for example. The students who have brown hair would change places as quickly as possible, moving across the circle and sitting on an empty chair.
- The game continues with more "*Change places if...*".
- The caller can be the teacher or nominated students.
 - To make the game harder, remove a chair forcing the students to move quickly to get across the circle
 - To make the game harder, add on a topical-relevant or quizzing statement to the end: "Change places if... you think you can outrun a train," or "Change places if... you know that trains do not always run on a schedule.

Fruit Salad

- Students are on chairs in a Drama circle.
- The teacher explains the game and labels everyone around the circle a type of fruit (apple, peach, banana, orange, etc.).
- Then the teacher takes away one chair and one of the students is in the center of the circle as the caller.
- The student in the middle calls the name of a fruit. Everyone in the circle with that name must swap places and find another chair to sit on.
- At the same time, the person in the middle must try to find a chair.
- The person left standing is the new caller.
- Calling out "fruit bowl" means everyone must change places.
 - Add a characterization for each fruit: "Must Move like that fruit would move"—such as an orange making a rolling motion.

- Can transition into character building game: Have students move *like their character* when some fruit is called (you can pre-assign fruits such as “Hosts are grapes...” which adds a layer of problem solving to the game to remember *which fruit*).

About Me

In this version, you will need a post-it note pack.

- Individuals in the class write something unusual about themselves, a characteristic, or a favorite food. (I can juggle, my favorite author is...)
- Place each sticky note in a bowl.
- Take one answer at a time and read it out. Invite guesses to discover who each answer is referencing. (Stick on the whiteboard when analyzing)

Imaginative Games

Fortunately, /Unfortunately

- Start in a Drama circle.
- Explain that you are going to create a story as a group by going around the circle with each person adding a new line. The only rule is that the lines must alternate between: "**Unfortunately....**" and "**Fortunately....**".
- For example:
 - **Fortunately**, I got the last ticket on this flight.
 - **Unfortunately**, there was turbulence.
 - **Fortunately**, it did not last too long.
 - **Unfortunately**, I spilled my drink.
 - **Fortunately**, I found a tide pen in my pocket.
 - **Unfortunately**, it was out.
- Try to encourage students to keep the story *moving* and avoid adding too many plot/character moments.

Park Bench

This game works best when students must practice the details of character creation—including how they move, talk, and what overarching emotions they might lend to a situation.

This game works best when there is a FREEZE called to have students' tap in and out of the game.

- Explain that there is a park bench and that the students are to take on a character who comes into the scene and interacts with others.
- Start the scene with one person, adding the others at suitable intervals.
- Encourage students to let the scene run a little, before jumping in with their own characters.

Sit, Lie, Stand

- Participants are in threes and at any time one of them must stand, one other sit and the other lie.
- Give a scenario such as a doctor's surgery and then they must improvise a scene following the physical constraints.
- If either of the students changes their position, between the three of them they must have someone sitting, standing, and lying.

- For group cohesion and concentration, you can also have Sit, Lie, Stand be a large-group activity in which students must mirror a leader.
- For group cohesion and concentration, you can also have Sit, Lie, Stand be a focus game by going faster and faster in trying to deduce and interpret the caller's next directive.

Last Day(s): Preparing for Sharing

List of Key Technical Elements

Your class has determined:

1. Name of Show.
2. Name of all Characters.
3. Set and Prop requirements based around the additions to your class.

Setting Needs:

1. Podium for host.
2. Tables/chairs for family.
3. Dedicated space for commercial breaks.
4. Dedicated backstage space so audience can see the director and production assistant's reactions to the game show.

Basic Prop/Found Costume Needs:

1. For Host: Microphone, Jacket.
2. For Director/Production Assistant: Earpiece, clipboard, coffee mug.
3. For Game show contestants: similar-colored t-shirt or costume element to show family unit, object for buzzer (such as a red bowl turned up-side down).

To Prepare for Sharing:

1. Warm up with any of the students' favorite games throughout the week.
 - a. For an added challenge, have students stay in character while they are playing their warmup game.
 - b. Ask students to work through scenarios that may be key elements in staying safe near trains and train tracks.
2. Have students share the most interesting thing they learned throughout working on this play.
 - a. Identify what things students did not know about safety near trains and train tracks.
 - b. Encourage students to get permission to log in to <https://oli.org/info/kids> to learn more about community safety.
3. **HAVE FUN: remind students that the most important part of this play is to teach a lesson. It could help save a life!**

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Resource for use with *Train Safety Savvy Script*

Pages 2-4: Examples of Safe places to cross for use with Commercial Break 1. These include examples of:

- Pedestrian Overpasses
- Underpass
- Designated marked crossings.

These can be blown up and reproduced as needed for your class.

Pages 5-7: Signs for use with Commercial Break 2, Reading signs. Signs included are:

- Advance Warning
- Crossbuck
- Emergency Notification System Sign (ENS).

These can be blown up and reproduced as needed for your class.



Pedestrian Overpass



Designated Crossing



Pedestrian Overpass



Pedestrian Underpass



Advance Warning Sign



Crossbuck



ENS Sign