



Farm and countryside safety

Lesson objectives:

To highlight the importance of staying safe in the countryside and on the farm. To highlight the dangers of climbing on round bales, trespassing and littering.

Curriculum links:

- **Science** Living things
Environmental awareness and care
- **Geography** Natural environments
Human environments
- **SPHE** Myself

Teacher guidelines

The fatality rate in agriculture is far higher than other workplace, with the young exceptionally vulnerable to fatalities and injury on Irish farms. In 2019, 19 people died in farm accidents (HSA, Ireland). The most common cause of farm accidents in Ireland is from tractors and other farm machinery. Tractors, vehicles and machinery accounted for a total of 81% of all children farm accidents between 2010-2019 (HSA, Ireland). With that said, some children in Irish classrooms may be affected by farm and countryside accidents, and as such, this may be a sensitive subject for some children. It is suggested that the teacher introduces students to the basic concept of farm and countryside safety before starting the lesson.

Keywords and concepts introduced in previous modules:

rivers lakes ponds streams environment barrel silage slurry

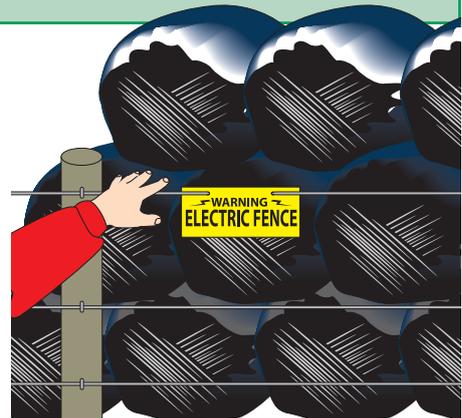
Water can be found in many places in the countryside including lakes, ponds, streams, rivers and containers on farms. It is important to stay away from water as we never know how deep it is. You can get into difficulty very easily when playing near water.

Keywords for this lesson:

bales electric fences litter disease trespassing

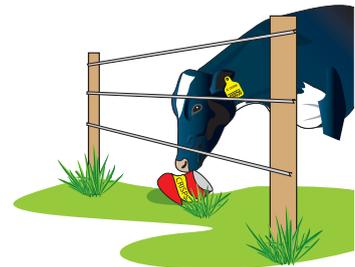
Be safe around hay, straw and bales

Baled silage is now made on over two-thirds of all farms in Ireland. If round **bales** must be stacked the maximum height of the stack should be two-to-three bales high, while square bales should be stacked no more than one and a half times the width of the base. Many farmers erect **electric fences** around areas where round bales are stored. If you touch these fences, you will get an electric shock which can injure you. Farmers put up these fences to keep animals out so do not climb over them as you may damage them or get hurt. Farmers must also prevent access to danger areas of heights. Do not climb on bales of hay, straw or silage as you could fall between them and get trapped.



Protect our countryside from litter

Litter is bad for our environment. We have a responsibility to protect our countryside now and for future generations, so make sure you do not harm animals, birds, plants or trees by littering. Litter and leftover food does not just spoil the beauty of the countryside, it can be dangerous to wildlife and farm animals and can spread **disease**. You should take your litter home with you. Litter can be dangerous to animals as they may think that it is food, eat it and choke.



No trespassing

When we visit the countryside we should respect it, the people working there and the animals that live there. The best way to protect you, your family and everyone working or visiting the farm is to know where hazards occur. Children should never be allowed in to a farmyard unless supervised by an adult. Do not walk through fields where crops are growing as you could damage them. Use gates where possible and adhere to **warning signs**. If you try to climb over hedges or fences you could damage them and hurt yourself. If there is a **'No trespassing'** sign, do not enter the field or area as this sign means that you are not allowed in. The farmer does not want anyone to get hurt or injured on the farm.



Suggested activities:

- Photocopy the activity sheet, on page 49
- On the way home from school, look out for litter. Are there some areas worse than others? Why do you think this is the case? What could be done to raise awareness of littering?
- Investigate which types of litter rot more easily than others. Examine biodegradable and non-biodegradable products making a list of common items under each category
- Take the students outside and collect any rubbish they can see, examine the types of litter and how they can be disposed of e.g. dry plastic recyclables or food waste (compost)
- Watch the film 'Wall-E' about a rubbish collecting robot
- Watch Agri Aware's 'Once Upon a Farm' and discuss the potential dangers of bales on farms
- Discuss areas where you might find a 'No trespassing' sign
- Design a 'No trespassing' poster or farm safety sign to show dangerous areas such as water, dump areas and where animals are
- For extension material, see Module 4
- Sign your class up to participate in the "Farm Safe Schools" interactive programme. For more information on how to register your class, visit: www.farmsafeschools.ie

Learning outcomes:

At the end of this lesson, students should understand the potential dangers of bales of hay and straw. They should also understand the importance of the 'No trespassing' sign seen on farms and in the countryside.

Additional resources:

- www.agriaware.ie/farmsafety
- Check out Agri Aware's 'Once Upon a Farm' video on YouTube
- www.agrikids.ie

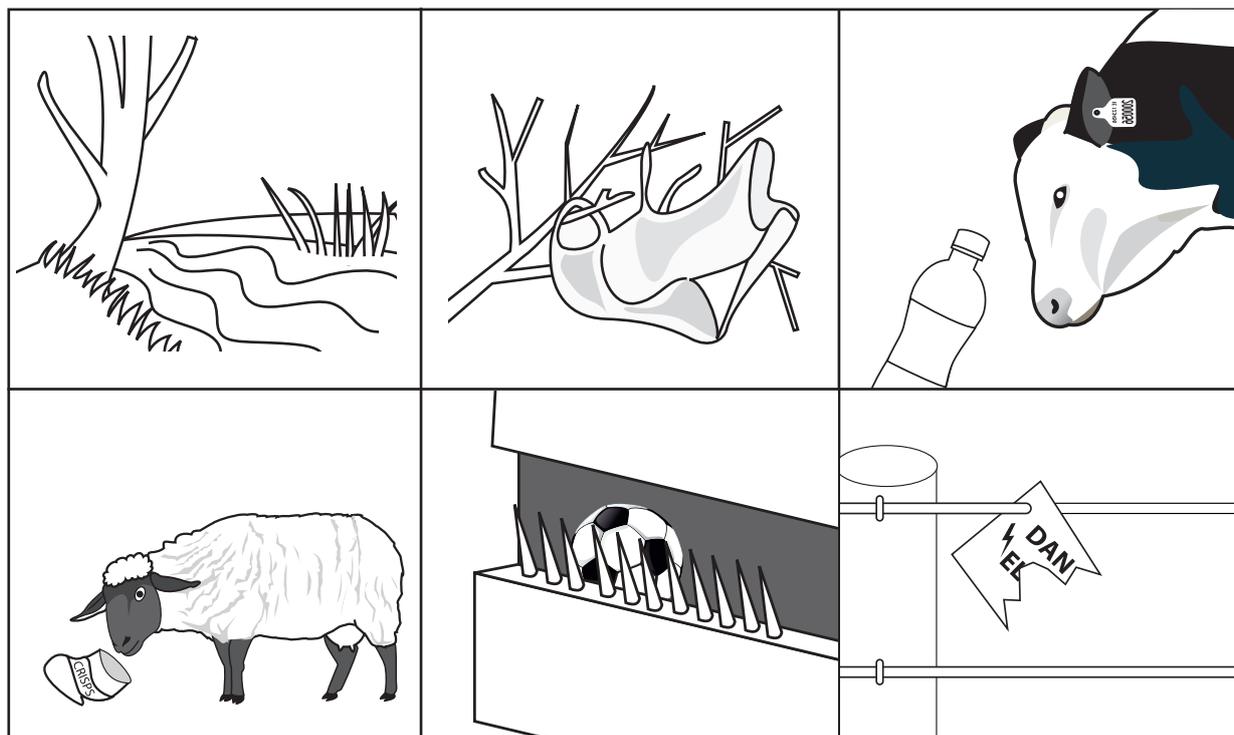


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Name: _____

Date: _____

1 Examine the picture and circle the ways in which the countryside is becoming polluted and dangerous



2 Read the sentence below. Decide if they are True or False

'No trespassing' means that you can enter the field. T/F

You can get an electric shock from some farm fences T/F

We should never climb over hedges or fences when the farmer is not there T/F

Litter is also known as rubbish or waste T/F

It is ok to throw out rubbish in the countryside T/F

Littering can be dangerous for animals T/F

*To be used with teacher guidelines, page 18