

My decisions, my destination

Discussion guide

The below responses are a general guide for themes and issues explored in each activity. The answers and discussion generated in your group may differ from this guide and may also be influenced by a students' prior knowledge and personal experiences.

Activity 1

1. Can you recall the last time you went to a party or were hanging out with friends and had to make plans to get a lift home? Describe the situation here

- » Personal responses may vary from parties, gatherings, events, festivals etc.

2. Looking back, what was your plan to get home?

- » Personal responses may include having a parent pick them up, organising a lift home with a friend, organising a taxi or ride hailing app or using public transport.
- » Students who are at an age to drive may also talk about driving themselves home.

3. Thinking about your plan, what could have changed that would have made your plan unsafe or fall through?

Circumstances can include:

- » The driver may be under the influence of drugs/alcohol.
- » The driver is showing signs of fatigue.
- » The designated driver may be unlicensed.
- » The taxi or ride hailing vehicle did not show up on time.
- » Miscommunication between them and the driver or change of circumstances and there is no lift home.
- » There are too many people to fit in the designated driver's vehicle safely.
- » If the student is at an age to drive themselves home, they may have participated in unplanned drinking/drugs at the party.
- » You generally feel unsafe about the situation – trusting your intuition is ok.

4. What other plans could you make that would ensure you could get home safely?

Other plans may include:

- » Making sure you have access to a ride hailing app account to get a ride home (the account may be theirs or belong to a friend or parent).
- » Organise another reliable friend or parent to pick you up at the party/event as a Plan B.
- » If no safe transport options are available, stay the night if it's safe and possible.



For the better

Activity 2

1. What do you see Andrew doing while he is talking to Josh and Emily?
 - » Taking a drink from a beer/alcoholic drink bottle and finishing it before placing it on the kitchen benchtop.
 - » Grabbing his car keys after telling Josh and Emily he must go home and study - implying he is driving home.
2. What does Emily say to Andrew as he grabs the car keys?
 - » Emily says, "Good to see you're drinking and driving" in a sarcastic tone to which Andrew replies, "only second one of the night".
 - » Note for further discussion: She doesn't continue the conversation to caution Andrew.
3. Josh doesn't question or say anything to Andrew about his choices or behaviour. What might stop someone from saying something to a friend in this situation?
 - » Peer pressure - he may not want to look uncool in front of his friends.
 - » He may be embarrassed to question his friend's behaviour
 - » He may think that Andrew's behaviour is fine.
4. Andrew tells Josh and Emily that it is only his second drink of the night. What might make this a dangerous or illegal situation?
 - » Andrew may be lying - he may have had more drinks.
 - » At this age, Andrew is an inexperienced driver and likely, an inexperienced drinker. He may not realise that 2 drinks could still impair his ability to drive.
 - » If Andrew is a P Plate driver it is illegal for him to drive, as the legal blood alcohol limit for P Platers is 0.00.
 - » Andrew may be unaware that he is also under the influence of other substances (e.g. the drink could have been spiked).
5. If you were in Josh or Emily's shoes, what could you say to Andrew to try and make him rethink his choices?

Dialogue to question his choices:

- » 'I don't think you should drive right now, even after a couple of drinks'
- » 'Do you know that the legal blood alcohol limit for P Platers is 0.00?'
- » Any conversation that would discourage him from driving.
- » Suggest other ways to get home
- » 'Why don't I give you a lift instead?'
- » 'My mum said I can call her if I need a lift, she can give you one too'
- » 'We can call an Uber instead'

Activity 3

1. Claire calls shotgun and she and James run to the car. What visual clue appears that tells us more about Andrew the driver?
 - » We see a green P Plate displayed on the windscreen of Andrew's car.
 - » This tells us Andrew has had his licence anywhere from 6 - 24 months.
2. What other information about Andrew did you learn about in video 2 that Claire is not aware of?
 - » That Andrew has had a couple of drinks so is over the legal blood alcohol limit of 0.00 for a P Plate driver.
3. What was Claire's initial Plan A to get home and why did it not go to plan?
 - » Claire's initial plan was to get home by calling a taxi
 - » The plan fell through because the taxi was running late and she had to be home at a time previously agreed with her mum.
4. Do you think Claire had a Plan B? What could her safe Plan B and C be?
 - » It appears that Claire didn't have a Plan B as she only asked Andrew for a lift when she saw him leaving the party.

A safe Plan B or C could look like:

- » Calling her mum to tell her that she may be home late because the taxi is running late.
 - » Contact her parents or guardians to arrange a safe plan to get home.
 - » Ask a parent or trusted driver to be available and contactable at an agreed time just in case Plan A doesn't work out.
 - » Having access to an alternative ride hailing app that allows you to estimate the arrival time of the driver e.g. Uber.
 - » Staying the night at the party with parental permission, if this is safe to do so.
5. Before getting into the car, James offers to drive - why do you think he did this?

Ideas may include:

- » James may be confident in knowing that he has not had any alcoholic drinks and is not fatigued.
- » James may know or sense that Andrew has had alcohol and offered himself driving as a safer alternative.

Activity 4

1. Describe the atmosphere in the car with Andrew, Claire and James. What are they doing and why might their behaviour be dangerous?
 - » The atmosphere is cheerful, but Andrew, Claire and James are laughing and talking a lot and are very preoccupied by the banter.
 - » This behaviour is dangerous as Andrew is not focussed on the road and is allowing himself to get distracted by his passengers.
2. James receives a funny video on his phone, what does he do that puts him and the others in the car in danger?
 - » James removes his seat belt to allow himself to lean forward and show Andrew and Claire the video, putting himself in danger.
 - » He distracts Andrew from focussing on driving, which puts them all in danger.
3. When James receives the video on the phone, what is Andrew's reaction?
 - » Andrew is excited about the video and asks James to show him.
4. Watch the video again and write down the sequence of unsafe decisions made by Andrew, Claire and James.

Andrew's decisions:

- » He decides to drive, even though he has had alcohol.
- » Keeps taking his eyes off the road to engage in conversation with Claire and James
- » Although not shown, the video implies that Andrew begins to speed when he learns that Claire may miss her curfew time.
- » When James receives the funny video on his phone, Andrew asks to see it.
- » He does not speak up about James unbuckling his seat belt.
- » Andrew only has one hand on the steering wheel.

Claire's decisions:

- » Claire contributed to Andrew's distraction by engaging in the loud banter and conversation during the car ride.
- » She tells Andrew that she is going to miss her curfew, which may have indirectly pressured him to speed.
- » She does not assist Andrew to look out for any hazards on the unlit road.
- » She does not speak up about James unbuckling his seat belt nor Andrew being distracted.

Activity 4

James' decisions:

- » James does not push further when Andrew says he is ok to drive and still gets into the car, despite knowing or suspecting Andrew may be under the influence of alcohol. He also does not notify the other passenger of his knowledge or suspicion.
- » James contributed to Andrews distraction by engaging in the loud banter and conversation during the car ride.
- » He unbuckles his seatbelt.
- » He contributes to Andrew's distraction by showing him something on his phone.

5. If you were in Claire's position what could you do or say that would make the drive safer for everyone?

Ideas may include:

- » Encouraging Andrew to drive carefully and to focus on the road.
- » When she gets the message from her mum, instead of panicking and telling Andrew, she could reply to her mum saying she is on her way and providing an estimate arrival time.
- » Assist Andrew on the poorly lit road by looking out for hazards or road signs.
- » When James unbuckles his seat belt, asking or insisting him to put it back on.
- » When Andrew asks to see the video, telling him that it would be dangerous and that he needs to focus on the road.

Activity 5

1. Describe the atmosphere in the car with Josh and Emily. Why is this different to the car that their friends are travelling in?
 - » Emily is clearly focussing on the road, with both hands on the wheel. The conversation is calm and does not distract Emily from the task of driving.
 - » The atmosphere is different because it does not distract Emily. In Andrew's car, the atmosphere could easily distract him.
2. Josh receives the funny video on his phone, what is Emily's response when Josh offers to show her?
 - » Emily refuses to look at the phone by saying 'I'm driving!', which shows that Emily understands the importance of remaining focussed on the road.
3. As a passenger, how could Josh change his behaviour to ensure that they get home safely?
 - » Josh should not have attempted to show the video to Emily.
 - » Josh could tell Emily that he received a funny video and will show her later.
 - » Josh may also choose to help Emily by proactively looking out for any signs or irregularities on the road.
4. Emily and Josh pull over when they see Andrew's car, crashed into a tree. Reflecting on what you know about the situation, what are the possible consequences of the crash for Andrew, Claire and James?

Ideas may include:

- » Severe injury or death.
- » Financial burden as the car is now damaged.
- » Legal consequences for Andrew such as fines or jail time, as he is over the legal blood alcohol limit for a P Plate driver.
- » The emotional, psychological and relational pain their decisions and the outcome may cause to their family, friends and wider community.



RAC Community Education
communityeducation@rac.com.au