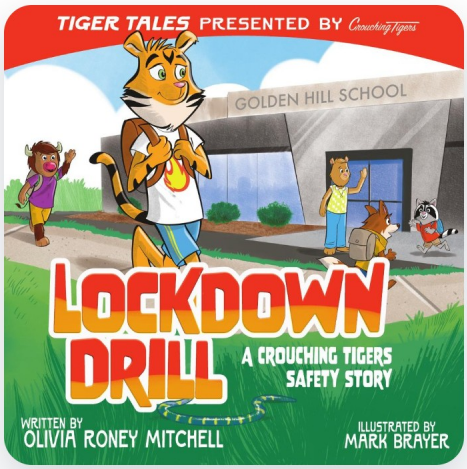

LOCKDOWN DRILL

Teacher Guide

Lockdown Drill: A Crouching Tigers Safety Story is designed to help young children practice an important school safety procedure in a calm, simple, and age-appropriate way.

Your prep checklist

- [ ] Talk with your school administrator about your school's lockdown procedures.
- [ ] Know where your classroom's Special Safety Spot is.
- [ ] Print the Special Safety Spot Poster and hang it in your safety spot.
- [ ] Send families the **Before the Drill** parent letter.
- [ ] Read *Lockdown Drill* with your class, then practice (pages 3–5).
- [ ] After the drill, send the **After the Drill** letter and the Family Guide.

THE FOUR SKILLS CHILDREN PRACTICE

1. **Calm bodies**
2. **Locked lips**
3. **Listening ears**
4. ♡ **Together, we are safe**

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Before you begin

Before reading *Lockdown Drill* or completing a lockdown drill with your class, take a few minutes to prepare.

Speak with your school administrator

⚠ **Do not conduct a lockdown drill independently without first speaking with your school administrator.**

Every school or program has its own emergency procedures, communication policies, and requirements for conducting lockdown drills. Before using this book with your class, confirm that you understand and are following your school's procedures.

This may include notifying families before and/or after the drill, coordinating with other classrooms or staff, knowing where your classroom should go, and completing any required documentation.

Know your Special Safety Spot

Before reading the book, **you should already know where your classroom's Special Safety Spot is located.** Your Special Safety Spot should be based on your school's established lockdown procedures, not the book. If you are unsure where your class should go, speak with your school administrator before beginning.

What makes a good Special Safety Spot?

In most lockdown procedures, the safety spot is out of sight of the classroom door and any hallway windows, so the room appears empty from the hallway. When the door is locked and the lights are off, no one passing by should be able to see your class.

Try this: before your drill, stand in the hallway and look in through the door window. If you can see your safety spot, talk with your administrator before practicing.

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Print your Special Safety Spot Poster

We recommend printing the **Special Safety Spot Poster** included with these resources and placing it in your classroom's designated Special Safety Spot **before introducing the book to your class**.

The poster gives children a simple visual reminder of where to go when they hear "Lockdown" and helps connect the Special Safety Spot they see in the story with the safety procedures in their own classroom.

Remember: The poster should be placed in the location already designated by your school or program. It is not intended to determine where your Special Safety Spot should be.

Ready? Let's practice!

1

STEP 1

Read the book

Gather your class together and read *Lockdown Drill: A Crouching Tigers Safety Story*.

Children take their cues from the adults around them. Read the story and lead the drill in a calm, matter-of-fact way, just as you would introduce any other school safety procedure. Your steady tone helps children feel secure and makes it easier for everyone to focus on practicing the plan. Allow children to listen to the entire story before beginning your classroom drill.

THE WORDS FROM THE BOOK

"We practice Lockdown Drills to keep us safe if someone or something that doesn't belong is at our school."

When children ask why, use these exact words. Hearing the same simple sentence in the book, in the classroom, and at home helps children understand the plan without frightening details.

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STEP 2

2 Answer questions

After reading, give children an opportunity to ask questions.

Keep your answers **short, honest, calm, and age-appropriate.** Use the **Kid FAQ** on pages 8–9 for suggested responses to some of the most common questions children may ask.

Remember: children don't need to understand every possible reason for a lockdown. They need to understand **what to do** and know that the adults at their school have a plan to help keep them safe.

STEP 3

3 Show your Special Safety Spot

Now it's time to connect the story to your classroom. Tell your class:

"Just like Volcano's class has a Special Safety Spot, we have one too!"

Show children exactly where their Special Safety Spot is and make sure everyone understands where to go. You might even have children point to the spot or repeat together:

"That's our Special Safety Spot!"



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4

STEP 4

Complete your lockdown drill

Now practice! Follow **your school's established lockdown procedures** from beginning to end. Encourage children to use the four skills they learned in the story:

1. **Calm bodies:** take a deep breath and keep your body still and slow.
2. **Locked lips:** "lock" your lips with an invisible key and stay very quiet.
3. **Listening ears:** listen to your teacher and follow directions right away.
4. **Together, we are safe:** move quietly to your Special Safety Spot and stay there with your class until your teacher says the drill is finished.

5

STEP 5

Celebrate & play!

When the drill is successfully completed, **celebrate!** Tell children they did a great job practicing an important safety skill. Then transition into a familiar, fun activity.

We recommend a quick game of **Red Light, Green Light** (page 7). It's a great way to get children moving again while continuing to practice listening, stopping, and following directions.



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After the drill, let families know

Send the **After the Drill** parent letter and attach the Family Guide, *Talking to Young Children About Lockdown Drills*, so families can continue the conversation at home.

Supporting children who need extra help

Some children may feel worried, excited, or unsettled during or after a drill. Stay close, keep your voice calm, and return to the simple message: **the grown-ups have a plan, and your job is to listen to your teacher.**

Children with anxiety, sensory sensitivities, autism, or difficulty staying still may need extra preparation. Talk with your administrator and the child's family ahead of time about what will help, such as previewing the steps together, sitting near you in the safety spot, or a quiet signal they can use to get your attention.

If a child's worry seems to continue after the drill, let your administrator and the child's family know.



AFTER THE DRILL

Classroom Red Light, Green Light

You don't need a large space to play! Have children spread out around the classroom or stand behind their chairs. Explain:

Green Light: Move your body!

Children can march in place, dance, wiggle, tiptoe, or do jumping jacks.

Red Light: Freeze!

Children stop their bodies and voices as quickly as they can.

Once children understand the game, have fun changing the movements:

Green Light: march! **Green Light: tiptoe!** **Green Light: dance!**

Green Light: hop! **Red Light: FREEZE!**

Make it a challenge

Occasionally say **"Yellow Light!"** and have everyone move in slow motion. For older children, have them try to freeze with both feet together, or even on one leg!

Play for about **3–5 minutes**, or as long as it feels helpful for your class. After the game, return to your regular classroom routine.

You practiced your safety plan. Now it's time to get back to learning and playing!

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Kid FAQ

Questions children may ask about lockdown drills

Children are naturally curious and may have questions before or after a lockdown drill. Use these suggested responses to answer questions honestly without introducing scary situations or information children don't need.

"Why do we have lockdown drills?"
We practice Lockdown Drills to keep us safe if someone or something that doesn't belong is at our school. Practicing helps everyone know what to do.

"Is there something dangerous at our school right now?"
No. This is just practice! We practice our safety plan so we know what to do if we ever need it.

"Are the snakes in the book real?"
Snakes are real animals, but the snakes in our story are pretend. We use them to help us learn and practice what to do if something that doesn't belong is at our school.

"Could a snake really come into our school?"
Sometimes animals can end up in places where they don't belong, but that's not what we're practicing for today. The snakes are part of our story to help us learn our school safety plan.

"What are we hiding from?"
We're not hiding from anything right now. We're practicing going to our Special Safety Spot so we know exactly where to go if our school ever needs to use its safety plan.

"Is a bad guy going to come to our school?"
There isn't a bad guy at our school. Today we're just practicing our safety plan. The grown-ups at school have plans for lots of different situations, and your job is to listen to your teacher.

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KID FAQ, CONTINUED

“What if my mommy/daddy/family is outside?”
During a lockdown, you stay with your teacher and your class. The grown-ups at school will tell families what to do. Your job is to stay with your teacher and follow the safety plan.

“What if I have to go potty?”
During a drill, we practice staying in our Special Safety Spot until the drill is finished. If you really need something, quietly let your teacher know.

“What if I’m not in my classroom when a lockdown happens?”
The grown-up you’re with will help you know what to do. Listen carefully and follow their directions.

“What if I’m scared?”
It’s okay to tell your teacher if you’re feeling scared or worried. Remember, we’re practicing so everyone knows what to do, and your teacher is right there with you.

“Why do we have to be so quiet?”
Being quiet helps everyone listen carefully to the teacher and hear important directions.

“Why do we turn off the lights?”
Turning off the lights is one part of our school’s safety plan. When we practice, we practice all the steps so we’ll remember them.

“Why does the teacher lock the door?”
Locking the door is one of the things teachers do to help keep the classroom safe. That’s the teacher’s job. Your job is to go to your Special Safety Spot and listen.

“What happens after a lockdown?”
The grown-ups at school will tell us when it’s finished and what to do next. Then we can get back to our regular day.

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If a child asks a question you aren't sure how to answer

You don't have to answer immediately, and you don't need to add details that aren't appropriate for young children. Try:

> **"That's a really good question. I'm going to find out the best answer for you."**

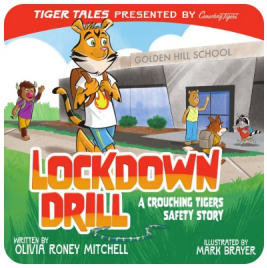
Then check with your school administration before revisiting the question.

Remember

Keep answers **short, truthful, calm, and focused on what the child needs to do.** Avoid discussing weapons, violence, intruders, or frightening "what if" scenarios with the whole class.

THE MESSAGE CHILDREN SHOULD LEAVE WITH

"The grown-ups have a safety plan. We practice it together. My job is to listen to my teacher and follow the plan."



Lockdown Drill: A Crouching Tigers Safety Story was created to help preschool through first-grade children learn about lockdown drills through simple language, story, and age-appropriate safety practice.

crouchingtigers.com/lockdowndrill