

Walk to School Day Curriculum Grades K-6

Some general pedestrian rules for elementary school teachers:

Crossing a Street

1. Stop at the curb.
2. If there is a visual barrier, like a car, find a better spot to cross.
3. Look to the left, to the right, and again to the left for traffic.
4. Cross only when it is safe, and look both ways for vehicles as you cross.
5. Walk in a straight line to the other side of the street.

Do's and Don'ts for Crossing the Street

1. Don't chase a ball into the street.
2. Don't cross from between two cars.
3. Don't cross alone.
4. Don't cross at an angle.
5. Don't run.
6. If a car passes while you are looking left or right, start again.
7. Cross with an adult.

Crossing an Intersection

1. Use the crossing button if the intersection has a traffic signal (and if a button is available).
2. Wait for the walking person, "WALK" symbol or grn light before crossing.
3. Look left, right, left again, and then BEHIND you before crossing.
4. Scan to the left, right, front and behind you as you cross.
5. Stop if you see a car turning into the crosswalk. Do not try to beat it.
6. Stay in the crosswalk, if there is one.
7. When finished crossing, step up onto the curb.

Do's and Don'ts for Crossing the Intersection

1. Don't run across the intersection.
2. Wait for any turning car to pass.
3. Don't cross alone.
4. Don't cross at an angle.
5. Cross with an adult.

Ideas by Subject:

- **Art or computer class:** Create posters promoting Walk/Bike to School Day and safe driving and walking and/or biking messages.
- **English:** Write press releases and public service announcements to promote Walk/Bike to School Day. Write essays or keep a journal about your experiences walking or riding.
- **English:** Have students write a poem or story involving a journey to school. Have them describe the things they see along the way, how it feels to be walking and biking. Have them discuss the safety hazards they may encounter along the way. How could their walk be more pleasant?
- **Oral History:** Assign children to speak with their grandparents (or parents) about their childhood experiences getting to school. Have them draw a picture and write a story about what they learned. Tell them to ask their grandparents how long it took them and what the conditions were like. Have the children write a paragraph comparing how they get to school now with how their grandparents got to school.
- **Creative Writing** – Personify the bike – Write a creative story as though you were the bike – (The Adventurous Bike, The Neglected Bike, The Mountain Bike, The Childhood Bike, The Useful Bike, The Mode of Transportation Bike)
- **Debate** – Divide classmates into teams to research and argue for the transportation merits of: the bike, walking, and/or public transportation.
- **Reading:** Read Aloud Bike Books – Go Fly a Bike: the Ultimate Book of Bicycle Fun, Freedom and Science (Haduch), Bicycle Book / History (Gibbons), Kids Easy Bike Care / Science (Cole), Mike and the Bike / Adventure (Ward), Sally Jean the Bicycle Queen / Recycling Bike Parts (Best), Gracie Goats Big Bike Race / Facing Fears (Mirabella)
- **Map Skills** - Have kids map their ride to school. Map their week. (Consider: What if the bike was the only form of transportation you had for one week? How would you get around? How many miles would you travel (use the scale to convert inches to miles)? How much exercise would you get? How much extra time would you spend? What new things might you notice from the seat of a bicycle?)

Ideas by Grade Level:

Kindergarten

Objective: Students will understand how walking and bicycling promote good personal and environmental health!

Class Discussion: This discussion will both allow students to interact and share personal experiences with one another, and learn about key concepts. The discussion is broken into two simple parts:

1) Discuss how students get to school. Do they walk? Ride their bikes? Take the bus? Get driven in a car by their parents? Carpool? (explain carpooling; it means riding in the same car with others who aren't related to you).

2) Discuss how walking and bicycling help keep our bodies and the earth healthy. Introduce to them the "Fantastic Four" reasons to walk and ride:

1. Cutting down on pollution
2. Getting exercise
3. Cutting down on traffic
4. Having fun

First Grade

Objectives: Students will learn basic pedestrian safety rules through fun activities!

Class Discussion: This discussion will both allow students to interact and share personal experiences with one another, and learn about key concepts. The discussion is broken into two parts: a short oral survey and an in-depth conversation.

1) Conduct a brief oral survey. Ask students to raise hands if they sometimes bicycle, walk, skate, scooter or carpool to get around to stores, friends and relatives' homes, school or lessons.

2) Hold an interactive conversation about walking and bicycling to school. Cover the following questions:

- Are students allowed to walk or bike to school on their own in 1st grade?
- If students can't walk or bike to school, what are the reasons?
- Will students be able to walk or bike to school on their own when they get older?
- Name some other places students walk and bike.
- What are some safety concerns to look out for while walking or bicycling to school?

Create a Safety Poster

1. Have students get into pairs (or put them into pairs).
 2. Assign each pair a safety rule.
 3. Have them write down the safety rule and illustrate it.
- You could give the students a large piece of poster paper for each rule and then display these posters in the class (or hallway), OR
 - Give them smaller pieces of paper and make the rules into a class book.

2) Question Game

1. This game works best by first dividing the class into two teams. To make it more fun, have each team pick out a team name.
2. Read each question out loud and call on the first team to raise their hand after the question has been read. For each correct answer a team gives they receive a point.

QUESTIONS:

Q: Name three reasons to walk?

A: Fun, exercise, to get places, to save money, doesn't pollute (suggested answers)

Q: Why do we look to the left a second time?

A: Cars coming from the left are going to be on the side of the street closest to us.

Q: Explain the difference between a sidewalk and a crosswalk.

A: A sidewalk is a place next to the street made for pedestrians. A crosswalk is an area that crosses the street at an intersection where pedestrians can cross the street.

Q: Who should drivers make eye contact with before you cross the street?

A: Drivers should be making eye contact with you!

Q: On a busy street, where is it safest to cross?

A: It is safest to cross in a crosswalk at the corner of the intersection.

Q: What should you do when there is a green light or a walk signal?

A: You need to first check for yourself to make sure that it is safe to walk.

Drivers could be turning left, or could be going through a red light that might cross through your path.

Q: What would you do if you look to the left a second time and you see a vehicle coming?

A: After the vehicle passes, you need to start over and look left-right-left and ahead and behind you one more time.

Second Grade

Objectives: Students will be able to identify the three steps to the “Stop, Look, and Listen” method.

1) Ask students to raise their hand and share where they like to walk, and if they have to cross the street.

2) “Stop, Look, and Listen” Lesson

- If I want to cross a road, should I walk directly into the road? NO.

1. Stop. The first step is to stop before going into the street.

- Now that I am stopped, what do I need to check for? Traffic, cars, etc.

How can I check for traffic? How can I tell if a car is coming?

2. Look. The second step is to look for traffic.

3. Listen. The third step is to listen for traffic.

1. Stop

2. Look

3. Listen

Class Activity: Simon Says is a fun and familiar game that, in this case, will be played with a great “Stop, Look, and Listen” twist.

The class must stand facing the instructor. Leave an arm’s length in space between students. During the game you must not do anything unless

“Simon Says” precedes the instructions. Model the movements for students to copy. If you make a mistake keep playing, no one is out.

1. Simon Says stick out you left arm.
Check that all students know left from right
2. Stick out your right arm.
Check that students did not move
3. Simon Says put your arms down.
4. Simon Says look to your left for traffic.
5. Simon Says look to your right for traffic.
6. Look back to your left.
Check that students did not move
7. Simon Says look to you left to check for traffic

Third Grade

Objective: Students will be introduced to the human causes of pollution, and will discuss opportunities to prevent it.

Climate change has emerged as one of the most challenging issues of our time. To briefly summarize this complex issue, our planet’s atmosphere is overloaded with heat-trapping carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels, which threatens large-scale disruptions in climate. Scientists estimate that the earth’s climate has already been raised 1.9 degrees, and we are already feeling the effects through longer droughts, more severe storms, and melting ice caps that could raise sea levels up to three feet by 2100 or sooner.

1) Facilitate a class discussion. Here are some possible discussion questions, and following teaching points:

1. In life sometimes we have choices about how we get around and what we do. What are some choices that we make every day or that our parents make for us? (Examples of answers: the kinds of foods that we eat, the kinds of toys that we buy, how we get to school, what we read etc.)

2. Sometimes we make choices that affect the planet that we live on in a good way or bad way. Unfortunately so many people are making so many bad choices that it is affecting the water and air. Who has heard of the word pollution? What kinds of things do we do that cause pollution in our local

communities? (Examples of answers: drive cars, use electricity, throw trash away instead of recycling it)

3. Who has heard of global warming, or climate change? What is it? Climate change is something that is happening to the climate—our weather—around the world.

Class Activity: The Pollution-Prevention exercise is easy, fun, and will help students make small, personal changes to help the planet.

1. Put up three signs in different parts of the room that say: “I already do it”, “I wouldn’t do it”, and “I might do it”.
2. Read actions to the class from the Pollution-Prevention Actions (for teacher) sheet. Instruct students that whenever they hear an action they will think about if they already do this action, if they might do it, or if they would definitely not do it. Then they will go stand in the part of the room that indicates their opinion.
3. After each action, discuss with students why they chose one of the three choices. Why would they choose to do this activity? Is it easy to do? Why wouldn’t they do this activity and what is stopping them from doing it?
4. When activity is finished, ask students to choose from the list of actions that they just heard and commit to doing this action over the next week.

List of pollution prevention actions:

Walk or bike to school, carpool to school, carpool to sports practice, invite a friend to walk to school with me, turn the lights off when I’m not using them, turn the water off when I brush my teeth, put on a sweater instead of turning on the heat, compost food scraps, recycle.

Fourth Grade

Objective: Students will discuss the various amounts of CO₂ emitted in their travel to school.

Class Discussion: The amount of carbon dioxide that a car emits depends on its fuel efficiency. Fuel efficiency is the measurement of how much fuel a car needs to travel, and is measured in miles per gallon, mpg. The fuel efficiency of a car is related to the car’s weight, engine, size and type, and maintenance. The more fuel efficient a vehicle is, the less it will pollute and the fewer greenhouse gas emissions it will emit. A bus is less fuel efficient than a car because it weighs a lot more and has a much bigger engine.

However, a bus has much higher passenger miles per gallon rate than a car. Passenger miles per gallon, pmpg, is the mpg of a vehicle multiplied by the number of people in the vehicle. The higher the pmpg rate, the less greenhouse gas emissions are emitted per passenger.

1. Ask students to write down or discuss all of the ways that make cars different from each other. (Answers may vary from color to size to how many gallons per gallon they get.)
2. Ask students what miles per gallon means, and what the word fuel-efficient means. (Fuel efficiency is the measurement of how much gas a car needs to travel, and is measured in miles per gallon, mpg.)
3. Explain how walking and bicycling are most fuel-efficient modes of transportation possible! Ask students to describe the many ways that walking or riding to school helps the planet.

Fifth & Sixth Grade

Class Discussion: Why do so many children get driven to school? In many areas it is estimated that 20 to 30% of peak morning traffic is school related. The reasons are obvious: The journey between home and school has become longer and more treacherous because of decades of auto-oriented suburbanization. Parents are concerned that their children will be exposed to dangerous strangers. Sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike paths are scarce.

1. Ask the class how many people usually walk or ride (or scoot, skateboard, etc.) to school.
2. Ask how many people regularly carpool (carpool means more than one family sharing a ride).
3. Ask students who don't walk or bike to school what kinds of barriers there are to walking and biking
4. Discuss what makes a route safe. Some things to consider are roads with fewer cars, roads with bike lanes and streets that have a crossing guard.
5. Ask students who do walk or bike how safe they think their routes are.