

Teacher Guidance Notes

Year 5

‘Accidents Happen’

Learning Outcomes

- Pupils will have found out why road accidents are no longer referred to as ‘accidents’ (as they are mainly foreseeable and preventable)
- Pupils will be aware of the need for rules and that breaking rules is taking risks
- Pupils will have discovered that sometimes rules conflict and they will have to make decisions on the best and safest course of action

This entire lesson is centred on discussion, questioning and debate, and works best when teachers, as much as possible, allow the children the freedom to debate and even argue the issues raised. Teachers should act as catalysts to stimulate debate, mediators to calm any ‘heated’ arguments, and guides towards satisfactory conclusions.



Traffic Movement Observation Activity

Children should work in pairs – one is the ‘journey pupil’ and the other the ‘observer’. Each pair plan a route from where they are sitting to a ‘secret’ destination in the room. When you say ‘GO’ the journey pupil begins their journey. The observer counts how many times they had to stop to let others past or bumped into someone. They also observe if journey pupils get impatient.

Ask – would some simple rules have reduced the congestion and any conflicts?

‘What if……?’ Activity

Children should work in small groups. Below are some sample scenarios – you will probably be able to think of some more ‘situations’ where it is difficult to think about road safety when deciding what to do. Give a different scenario to each group – give them time to reach a consensus as to what they would decide to do (they may have to agree to disagree or reach a compromise). Ask one of the group to feed back to the whole class – does the rest of the class agree with their decision?

1) ‘Feeling Scared’

I was walking to the shops with a friend. Up ahead on the corner was a crowd of pupils from the secondary school, about Year 9s I think. They were taking up all the pavement and talking and laughing. Without even speaking my friend and I started walking more slowly. We could walk past them or try and cross the road, although we did not need to cross over. The road was very busy and there was not really a safe place to cross.



2) ‘Cycling Home’

I usually cycle home from school. It’s quite busy because of the school traffic. I must do the first bit on the road but then there are some good cycle tracks. I’m supposed to push my bike on the pavement for the first bit but I’m a good cyclist and its fun feeling the traffic whoosh past as well. On this particular day a friend was coming back to my house to play the X-box. He didn’t have his bike with him and he asked me for a lift on mine. He’s really cool – everybody wants to be his friend – and I thought he might laugh at me if I said ‘No’.

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3) ‘Getting a Lift’

When I go out with my friends our parents all take it in turns to be taxi drivers. This is great, except Amy’s dad is not a very good driver – he thinks he is – but he sometimes scares me – he drives fast and doesn’t seem too safe. If we say anything to him he just laughs and teases us by going faster or swerving about. We are all going to the cinema on Friday and it is his turn to give us a lift.

In the ‘real world’ ‘accidents’ are often not caused by one person making one big mistake, but by more than one person making little mistakes that don’t seem important at the time. Ask the children to make up some scenarios.

You can use the example below. Or, better still, as an extension lesson, you could set up the scene in the playground using a car and an old bicycle and ask the children to do an ‘accident investigation’ to find out who was to blame (**see separate worksheet**).



Whose fault?

A child cyclist cycling on the pavement with a heavy shopping bag on the handle bars and his school-bag over one shoulder (so off-balance) and shoe laces undone (shoe lace gets caught round the pedal) topples off the pavement into the road into the path of an oncoming car. The driver should have been concentrating and seen the hazard, but maybe he was on the mobile phone, or fiddling with the CD player, or the sun was in his eyes and he wasn’t wearing his sunglasses. So, whose fault was it? To make matters worse the cyclist had his helmet and hi-vis jacket in his school-bag (because he thought he didn’t look cool in them) and the driver had forgotten to do his seat-belt up (because he was in a hurry)!

They were both severely injured.

Would following the rules have prevented the ‘accident’? (Probably). So, was it really an ‘accident’?

Would wearing the safety equipment (seat-belt and cycle helmet etc.) have prevented the accident? (No, though the hi-vis jacket might have enabled the driver to see the cyclist sooner. But they may well have prevented serious injury!)