



In Association
With



Road Safety in the Primary Curriculum

Year 5

Extension Lesson Plan - 'Whose fault?' A crash scene investigation - CSI

Objectives

- To consider how accidents can happen, how they can be avoided and the consequences for all involved
- To consider if accidents really happen 'by accident'

The Set

The set depicts a car and a bicycle in collision – the people involved have been taken to hospital.

The children will be 'collision investigators' and will be encouraged to search for clues to the factors contributing to the accident.

The Scenario

The CSI pupils are told that they have two extra clues in addition to what they can see – that the accident happened at 3.45 in the afternoon and that it is a bright, sunny day.

Investigators are encouraged to find the following clues:

A child has been riding his bicycle home from school with a large, heavy bag on one shoulder, which contains amongst other things, his cycle helmet and a high-vis jacket. There is a carrier bag of groceries on his handlebars. He was listening to music through his ear phones. His shoelaces were undone (one trainer has been pulled off because the laces are caught around a pedal). The bike is in poor condition and according to witnesses was far too small for him. He has cycled off the pavement and into the path of an oncoming car.

The driver was on his way back from a longer than expected business lunch which may have included alcohol. In the car is an open briefcase, a diary, a mobile phone, a CD, a business card, an umbrella and a pair of sunglasses. He was taken away by ambulance with injuries to his head and there is a patch of blood on the windscreen. There is a child car seat in the back of the car, but no child. The diary shows that his business meeting was in a pub and that he would have been late to his next appointment at the time of the collision. He is also trying to fit in collecting his child from school and dropping her off at the child-minder's.

The CSI pupils are asked to collect evidence to establish why the accident happened and who was to blame.

DISCUSSION

How did the actions of the cyclist and driver contribute to the accident?

The cyclist

- Was not wearing his hi-vis jacket – why? Would this have prevented the accident happening? (Probably not, but the driver might have seen him sooner)
- Was not wearing his cycle helmet – why? Would this have prevented the accident happening? (No, but would reduce the likelihood of head injury)
- Had cycled off the pavement into the road – why? (Not concentrating perhaps, or lost control of the bike or brakes failed?)
- Had carried a bag on the handlebars and another on one shoulder (causing him to be off-balance and the bag on the handlebars was covering the brakes)
- Had ridden the bike in poor condition (soft tyres, poor tread, brakes not working – all could make the bike difficult to control)
- Had impaired concentration and hearing (was listening to music through his ear-phones)

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So, was it the cyclist's fault?

The driver:

- Was not wearing his seatbelt – why? Would this have prevented the accident happening? (No, but he might not have been so badly injured, especially to his head)
- Had not allowed enough time for a safe journey – was he hurrying? (If so, he might have been speeding – clue that he was late is in his diary and that the pupils were told the time of the accident)
- Had a pub lunch, so might have had some alcohol (even one drink can influence you're driving)
- May not have been concentrating (could have been changing the CD, getting something out of the brief-case, using his mobile phone (which is against the law), looking at his diary – all distracting!)
- Should have been wearing his sunglasses to keep the sun out of his eyes (pupils were told that it was a bright sunny day and the sunglasses were still in their case)

So, was it the driver's fault?

Could anyone else be partly to blame for influencing the child's behaviour?

- The parents – asking the child to get shopping without appropriate saddlebag or backpack; allowing the bike to get in such poor condition; not making the child wear his helmet and hi-vis jacket or checking his cycle skills and road behaviour
- Friends – peer pressure – he may not have wanted to look 'silly' wearing a cycle helmet

Could anyone else be partly to blame for influencing the driver's behaviour?

- Friends or workmates – did they persuade him to drink alcohol at lunch?
- His boss – was he expected to fit too much into the day causing stress and possibly speeding?

Was the accident really an accident?

Accidents are unforeseeable and cannot be prevented. This could easily have been prevented if everyone involved was following basic rules of safety and the rules of the road.

The police don't call them road traffic accidents (RTAs) any more – they are called road traffic collisions (RTCs) and the children have been 'collision investigators, because 6% of injury incidents on our roads are caused by human error, so can be prevented.

Breaking rules is taking risks and taking risks can have major consequences. Some- times 'rules' seem very unimportant, such as keeping your shoelaces done up, or not handling the CD whilst driving but could either of these have been the cause of this 'accident'?

Often it isn't one person making one big mistake that causes a crash, but lots of little seemingly unimportant things added together that make things go very wrong.