

# Lesson 5: School Bus Safety

**Time:** approximately 40 minutes

*This curriculum does not cover every possible scenario that a child may encounter as a pedestrian, but instead addresses the basic skills needed to be a safe pedestrian. Teachers should use their discretion as how to appropriately break material to accommodate their daily schedule. Studies have demonstrated that skill-building activities are the most effective way to promote student retention of pedestrian safety skills. While the “Activity” portion may be postponed to a future class period if needed, it is an essential component to this curriculum and all lessons should be complemented with the reinforcement of safe pedestrian behavior. More time can be spent on practicing the behavior if children are already familiar with the core material.*

## Lesson Objectives:

The objective of this lesson is to teach students safe school bus riding behavior, as well as safe boarding and exiting techniques.

The students will be able to

- Demonstrate safe behavior while waiting, boarding, riding, and exiting the school bus
- Identify “danger zones” around a school bus and responsibilities of people on the school bus

## Applicable National Standards of Learning:

- Physical Education Standard 1: Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
- Physical Education Standard 5: Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings.
- Health Standard 5: Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Health Standard 7: Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

## Materials:

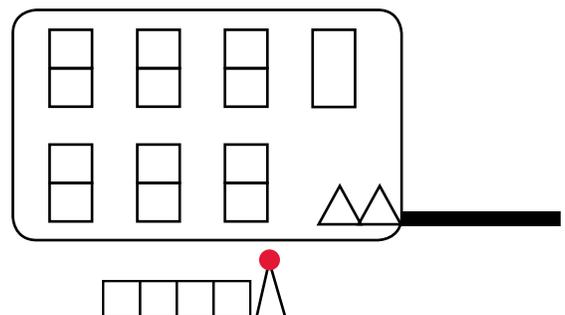
Chairs, cones, beanbags, yard stick, masking tape, rope, or other materials to create a school bus

Parent/Caregiver Tip Sheet

**Preparation:** Using the materials listed above, make a model school bus.

You will need to arrange several chairs into rows of two, leaving one chair by itself on the left side of the front row as the school bus driver’s seat. Use cones, beanbags, or other placeholders to represent the school bus door. Use a yard stick to represent the cross bar.

You can also create a school bus stop using chairs to form a bench and cones with signs.



## Lesson Outline

### Introduction: (5 minutes)

The teacher will

- Identify reasons for riding the school bus
- Explain how school buses are used, their benefits, and why they deserve respect and caution

### Discussion & Teacher Modeling: (10 minutes)

The teacher will

- Discuss and simultaneously model proper school bus safety behavior

#### 1. Identifying Danger Zones

## Sample Script

Buses are long vehicles that carry many passengers along a fixed route.

Why do we ride the bus?

- *To get to school, to go on a field trip, to travel to a store, etc.*

There are many different types of buses, depending on how they are used.

What types of buses might people use?

- *School buses, city buses, cross-country buses, etc.*

Buses are wonderful in many ways, but because of their size, they deserve respect and caution. Today, we are going to explore school bus safety!

Let's pretend that this is a school bus and a school bus stop (use diagram from the preparation portion of this activity plan). This seat is the driver's seat, the chairs are the passengers' seats, the space between the chairs is the aisle, and the cones are the door. The long yardstick coming from the front of the school bus is a long metal bar that folds out from the front to the side of the school bus. It is called the crossbar. It makes you walk out far from the front of the school bus so that the driver can see you if you must cross the front of the school bus.

Before you board a school bus, it is important to know the danger zones. Danger zones are unsafe areas around the school bus where the school school bus driver can't see us.

Look at our school bus and imagine school buses you have ridden.

Where do you think the most dangerous areas around a school bus could be?

- *At least ten feet in front of the school bus, behind the school bus, the sides of the school bus*

What should I do to keep away from these danger zones?

- *Always stay a safe distance away (5 big steps)*

Watch as I move 5 big steps away from the bus.

## Lesson Outline

## Sample Script

### 2. Waiting for a School Bus

Okay, now that I know to always be cautious around a school bus, let's think about what I should do while I am waiting for the school bus.

How should I wait for the school bus?

- *Sit or stand by the school bus stop (on the sidewalk away from the road)*
- *Do not run or play around the school bus stop*

### 3. Boarding a School Bus

Let's think about what happens next when the school bus is arriving at our stop. Picture this school bus approaching our stop. It slows down. It stops at the school bus stop. The door opens. We will stand to the side of the door. When the school bus driver signals that it is safe, we may get on the school bus.

Watch as I walk up the steps and use the handrail to help me climb the steep steps.

Let's think about how a school bus may be different from other vehicles. Who can tell me some differences between a school bus and a car that we usually ride?

- *There is a school bus driver in charge.*
- *There are more seats.*
- *School buses sit up higher than cars.*

### 4. Safe Behavior When Riding a School Bus

Once someone steps onto a school bus, they are called a **"passenger."**

Passengers have responsibilities just like pedestrians. To be a good passenger, it is important to follow rules on the school bus.

What are some rules we should follow on the school bus?

- *Find your seat quickly*
- *Stay seated when the school bus is moving*
- *Do not bother the school bus driver while the school bus is moving*
- *Be polite to other passengers and talk quietly*
- *Keep your hands and any materials you may be carrying on your lap*

Watch as I enter the school bus and follow these rules to be a safe school bus passenger.

## Lesson Outline

5. Exiting a School Bus
- Explain how to safely exit the school bus
  - Explain safety precautions when crossing in front of the school bus

## Sample Script

When the school bus driver has arrived at our destination, like our house or school, we wait until the school bus is completely stopped before we get out of our seat.

Once the school bus has stopped, we then quickly, but without running, get off the school bus. Why is it important to not dawdle and take a long time to get out of seats and off the bus?

- *The school bus driver may not know you are getting off until you stand*
- *The school bus driver may drive away without letting you off if you don't act like you are getting off*

Great! Once the school bus has stopped moving, it is time to get out of our seats and **move toward the exit**. Watch as I move toward the exit of the school bus and hold the handrails.

After I exit the school bus, I have to remember to move out of the danger zone.

How do I move out of the danger zone?

- *Take 5 big steps away from the school bus*

Sometimes, we will need to cross the street to get to our destination. I am going to demonstrate what you should do if you did have to cross the street after exiting the school bus:

First, I will walk to the edge of the extended crossbar.

Who remembers what the crossbar is and why it keeps us safe?

- *It is the long metal arm that stretches out along the side of the school bus. It shows us where to walk in front of the school bus so the driver can see us*

I will be sure to **make eye contact with the school bus driver** to make sure he/she sees that I need to cross in front of the school bus. I can do this by waving or nodding at the driver.

Next, I will **move around the school bus's crossbar**, NOT under or over, and cross in front of the school bus. How should my body look when I am walking in front of the school bus and crossing the street?

- *My head should be up, looking and listening for traffic*

At the far edge of the school bus, I will **stop and look left-right-left** to see if there are vehicles coming. I will also look at the school bus driver for a sign that it is OK to cross. When it is clear, I will **walk to the other side of the street**.

What should you do if you drop something getting on or off the school bus?

- *We should tell the school bus driver that we dropped something and ask for help to retrieve it. We should not run after it or try to pick it up because the school bus driver will not see us.*

## Lesson Outline

### Activity Options:

The students could...

- Practice safe school bus behavior, sing and dramatize the “Safety on the School Bus” song, and play “Stump the Teacher/Student” game to demonstrate understanding of concepts (20 minutes, *see sample script*)
- Practice safe school bus riding practices using the model school bus created in the preparation portion of the lesson (10-20 minutes)
- Practice safe school bus riding practices with parent volunteers by using a real school bus provided by the school district (20-30 minutes)

### Closure: (5 minutes)

The teacher will

- Review the steps for being safe while riding a school bus

*After the review, teachers are encouraged to invite a school bus driver with his/her school bus to allow students to practice the safe behavior. Parent and other adult volunteers are recommended to make this first-hand experience more valuable and safe for the children.*

## Sample Script

### ACTIVITY OPTION A:

Now, it’s your turn! Each of you is going to get the chance to show me what school bus safety means.

***[Teacher will allow several students to demonstrate safety on a school bus. The teacher should allow the student to verbalize all movements to encourage internalization.]***

Now I’m going to quiz you on your new school bus safety knowledge. We’re going to play a game:

- **Stump the Teacher/Student:** A student (or the teacher) will stand in front of the class. Other students raise their hands to “stump the student/teacher” (depending on participant) on a scenario that involves school buses and school bus safety. The idea is to get the students to think about different scenarios and to think through the proper solution or behavior in that instance. Once the participant is “stumped,” he/she returns to his/her seat and is replaced by the “stumper” student.

Let’s review all that we have learned today.

Where are the danger zones around the school bus?

- *At least 10 feet in the front, sides, and back of the school bus*

Where and how should I wait for the school bus?

- *At the school bus stop, away from the road*
- *In a calm and controlled manner*

Once the school bus has stopped and the school bus driver has signaled that it is safe to board the school bus, what should I do when entering the school bus?

- *Hold onto the hand rail*
- *Find a seat quickly*

How should I act while riding the school bus?

- *Stay calm and seated, talk quietly, be polite to other passengers, and keep all hands and materials to on your lap*

After the school bus has stopped at my destination, what should I do?

- *Move to the exit, hold the hand rail when exiting, and move 5 steps away from the school bus*

Last, if I have to cross the street, what should I do?

- *Move around the crossbar, make eye contact with the driver, stop at the far edge of the school bus, look left-right-left for traffic, keep your head up, when it is clear cross to the other side of the street*

### Suggested Cross-Curricular Connections:

*These optional activities are included to extend the lesson into other areas of learning. Most activities presented may be completed within a 20-minute time period.*

#### Art

- School Bus Safety Brochure (created individually or in small groups)
  - The brochures can target all portions of school bus safety (i.e., waiting for the school bus, riding the school bus, exiting the school bus, and crossing the street around a school bus).
  - Students can also include artistic representations on their brochure.
  - Brochures can be copied and distributed around the school as reminders for how to stay safe around and on the school bus.
- Visit the National Association for Pupil Transportation [www.napt.org](http://www.napt.org) to learn more about the annual school bus safety poster contest. Encourage students to enter their posters.

#### Math

- Elapsed Time
  - Students can use strategies to determine the amount of elapsed time in hours and minutes using the word problems below. Students can determine time only within a 12-hour period (either a.m. or p.m.) or, if appropriate, they may want to move between a.m. and p.m. to determine elapsed time in 24-hour intervals using both minutes and possibly seconds.
    - Example: Kerri has to be at the school bus stop by 8 a.m. It takes her 5 minutes to brush her teeth, 10 minutes to shower, 20 minutes to dry her hair, 10 minutes to eat breakfast and 5 minutes to walk to the school bus stop. What time will she need to get up? (Answer is 7:10 a.m.)
  - Kerri's school bus ride home departs from school at 3:30 p.m. Kerri arrives home at 4:15 p.m. How long is Kerri's school bus ride? (Remember it takes 5 minutes to walk from the school bus stop back home) (Answer is 40 minutes)

#### Literature & Writing

- The following is an appropriate example of children's literature to use with this lesson in the unit of study:
  - ***Molly Rides the School Bus*** by Julie Brillhart
    - Students will read and discuss this fiction book about a kindergartener's first day riding the school bus.
    - Students will create their own fiction book on school bus safety including appropriate setting, characters, problems, and solutions.

#### Guest Speaker/Hands-On Experience

- Invite a school bus driver to the school to share his/her experiences with the students.
- The students can model safe school bus riding practices on the driver's actual school bus while it is stationary in a parking lot.

# Materials

Parent/Caregiver Tip Sheet