

LESSON 4: Rules of the Road

LESSON OVERVIEW

In this two-part lesson, students will learn about pedestrian and bicycle safety laws and consider real-life scenarios where these laws apply. Students will begin by reading information about pedestrian and bicycle safety laws and examining whom the laws are meant to protect. When working with the scenarios, students will consider hypothetical traffic situations and determine who was at fault. Finally, students will write short opinion pieces to justify their decisions and will participate in a classroom discussion.

OBJECTIVE

- Learn and apply pedestrian and bicycle laws.

TOPIC

Rules of the Road/
Pedestrian and Bicycle Laws

STANDARDS SUPPORTED IN THIS LESSON

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Grade Four

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Grade Five

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1: Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Writing Standard

Grade Four

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

Grade Five

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

Speaking and Listening Standard

Grade Four

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Grade Five

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

California Health Education Content Standards

Injury Prevention and Safety – Grade Four

Standard 7: Practicing Health-Enhancing Behaviors

- 7.4.S: Follow safety rules and laws at home, at school, and in the community.

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National Health Education Standards for Grades Three to Five

Standard 7: Practicing Health-Enhancing Behaviors

- 7.5.1: Identify responsible personal health behaviors.
- 7.5.2: Demonstrate a variety of healthy practices and behaviors to maintain or improve personal health.
- 7.5.3: Demonstrate a variety of behaviors to avoid or reduce health risks.

MATERIALS NEEDED

California Pedestrian Laws handout (1 per student)

California Bicycle Laws handout (1 per student)

Teacher Supplemental Information

Note: This supplemental information is taken directly from California law while the student handouts are written for grades four and five reading levels.

Example Scenarios pages

White board or chart paper

PREPARATION TIME

Day One: 10 minutes

Day Two: 5 minutes

ACTIVITY TIME

Day One: 50 minutes

Day Two: 50 minutes

PREPARATION ACTIVITIES

Day One:

- Make copies of *California Pedestrian Laws* and *California Bicycle Laws* handouts (may want to copy front-to-back).
- Make copies of the *Rules of the Road* worksheet.
- Assign each student a partner to work with on the *Rules of the Road* worksheet.

Day Two:

- Make copies of *Example Scenario #1*, *Example Scenario #2*, and *Example Scenario #3*.

STEPS FOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Day One:

What's the Law? (10 minutes)

- Ask, "What are examples of pedestrian and/or bicycle laws?" Possible answers may include pedestrians having the right of way in crosswalks, and the requirement that children wear a bicycle helmet. Write answers on the white board or chart paper.
- Ask, "What are the consequences of breaking the law?" Possible answers may include fines, tickets, and incarceration.
- Tell students that there are many laws that apply to pedestrians and bicyclists. In this activity, students will examine some of those laws.

Rules of the Road (30 minutes)

- Pass out copies of *California Pedestrian Laws* and *California Bicycle Laws* handouts. Tell students that laws can sometimes be hard to make sense of. Explain that today students will try to understand several laws and determine whom the laws protect (e.g., pedestrians, bicyclists, or motorists).
- Pass out the *Rules of the Road* worksheet. Tell students that they will work in partners to complete the worksheet. Assign each pair a law to examine in more depth. Give students time to complete the worksheet.

VOCABULARY

Cul-de-sac—A street closed at one end and rounded at that end.

Hazard—A danger.

Illuminated—Lit up.

Incarceration—Being kept in jail or prison.

Intersection—A point at which two or more roads meet.

Violation—A disrespectful act or breaking of a law.

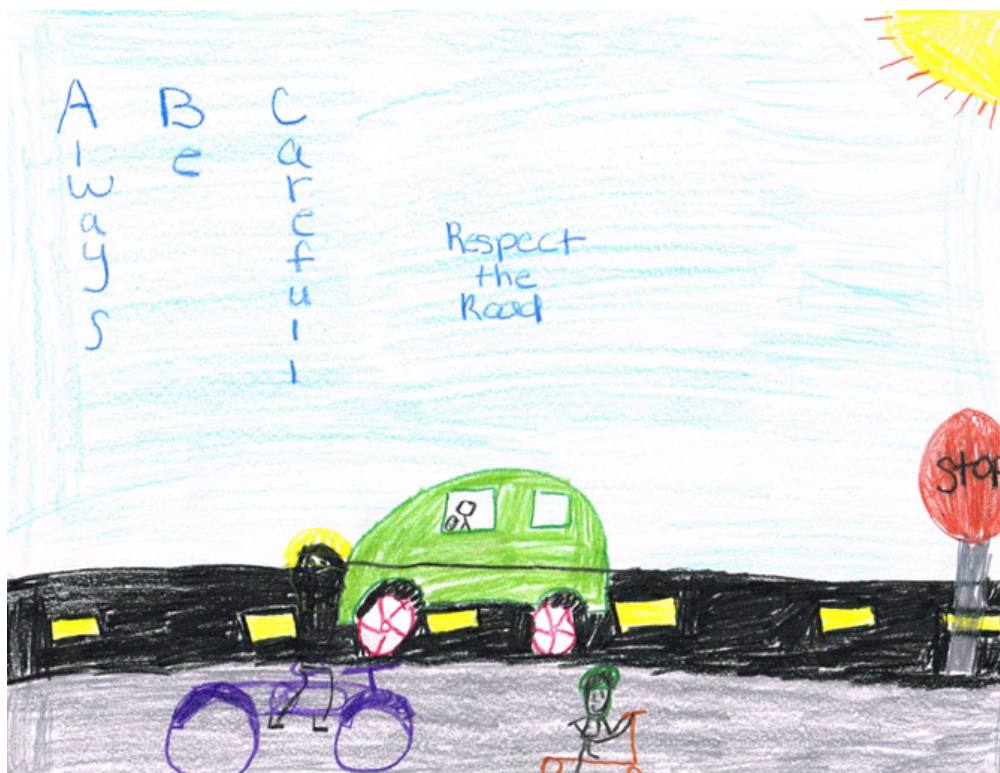
LESSON 4: Rules of the Road

Review the Rules (10 minutes)

- Go through the six sections on the *California Pedestrian Laws* and *California Bicycle Laws* handouts. Ask students to explain the meaning of each law and briefly discuss whom each law protects. Call on the students that studied each law to present their work.

Note: You may wish to only review a few of the laws instead of all six.

- Collect the *California Pedestrian Laws* and *California Bicycle Laws* handouts or ask students to keep them in a safe place. They will need them for part two of this lesson.



Emily S., Palm Springs, California

Day Two

Applying the Rules of the Road (30 minutes)

- Begin by asking students to share what they learned about pedestrian and bicycle laws during part one of this lesson.
- Tell students that today they will apply what they learned about pedestrian and bicycle laws to real-world situations. Each student will evaluate three situations. For each situation, students will read an example scenario and answer questions about who was at fault.
- Pass out the *California Pedestrian Laws* and *California Bicycle Laws* handouts that were used in Day One of this lesson. Remind students to use evidence from the laws to support their answers to the prompts. In their answers, students should both state their opinion about who is at fault and back up their opinion with evidence.

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Taking Sides: Rules of the Road (20 minutes)

- Bring the class back together. Review each example scenario and call on several volunteers to explain how and why they determined who was at fault. If students disagree, encourage a respectful debate.

Ideas for Extending the Lesson

- Using the *California Pedestrian Laws* and *California Bicycle Laws* handouts, have students write their own real-life scenarios. Have students share their scenarios and determine who was at fault in each situation.
- Have students make posters to teach about important pedestrian and bicycle laws. Hang the posters around the school or in the neighborhood.
- Using either the scenarios included in the lesson or scenarios that students write, have students participate in a mock courtroom. After considering a scenario, have students take “affirmative” or “negative” positions and present their case to a judge and a jury.
- Explore your city’s municipal code regarding riding bicycles on sidewalks. Try to find answers to the following questions: “Are there age minimums set by the city regarding bicyclists on the road?” “Is bicycling on the sidewalk allowed in both residential and commercial districts?” and “Are there any details about how bicyclists are expected to yield to pedestrians?” Discuss your findings with students and brainstorm ways in which the municipal code might affect their bicycling habits.
- Teach students about bike trains and elicit help from students and their families to start a bike train in your community. http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/walking_school_bus/bicycle_trains.cfm
- Introduce the Bicycle Safety Training and Resources available at the Safe Routes to School Bike to School Page. <http://www.casaferoutestoschool.org/whats-happening-in-california/national-bike-to-school-day/>
- Invite a local bicycling club or bicycle shop representative to discuss bicycle-related issues, such as, equipment, maintenance, careers, or community events.



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Right of Way at a Crosswalk

- (a) The driver of a vehicle should yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within any marked crosswalk or within any unmarked crosswalk at an intersection, except as explained in the rest of this section.
- (b) Pedestrians need to act safely. No pedestrian may suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle. No pedestrian may unnecessarily stop or delay traffic while in a marked or unmarked crosswalk.
- (c) The driver of a vehicle approaching a pedestrian within any marked or unmarked crosswalk should act carefully and reduce the speed of the vehicle or take any other action relating to the operation of the vehicle as necessary to keep the pedestrian safe.

Pedestrians Outside a Crosswalk

- (a) Every pedestrian on a roadway other than within a marked or unmarked crosswalk at an intersection should yield the right-of-way to all vehicles upon the roadway that are near enough to pose a hazard.
- (b) Drivers need to act safely. This section does not excuse drivers from taking responsible actions for the safety of any pedestrian upon a roadway.

Pedestrians on a Roadway

- (a) When walking upon any roadway outside of a business or residence district, pedestrians must walk as close to their left-hand edge of the roadway as possible.
- (b) Pedestrians may walk close to their right-hand edge of the roadway if a crosswalk or other means of safely crossing the roadway is not available or if existing traffic or other conditions would make it unsafe for the pedestrian to cross the road.

Youth Bicycle Helmets

Everyone under 18 years of age needs to wear a helmet at all times when riding a bicycle, scooter, or skateboard. Helmets also need to be worn when wearing in-line or roller skates. The helmet needs to be properly fitted and fastened.

Operation on a Roadway

- (a) Bicyclists may occupy the center of a lane when conditions such as a narrow lane or road hazard do not provide enough space for a motorist to pass at a safe distance within the same lane. If the lane widens so that there is enough room for safe passing within the lane, then the bicyclist should move to the right to allow that movement.
- (b) Bicyclists must make left and right turns in the same way drivers do, using the same turn lanes. If the bicyclist is traveling straight through an intersection, he or she should never pass on the right-hand side of vehicles that might turn right, but should stay far enough left to allow right-turning vehicles to pass on his or her right.

Equipment Requirements

- (a) Bicyclists will only ride a bicycle on a roadway if it has functioning brakes.
- (b) Bicyclists will only ride a bicycle that has handlebars that are at a level that is below their shoulders in order to grasp the handlebars at the normal steering grip area.
- (c) Bicyclists will only ride a bicycle that is of a size that they can stop the bicycle safely, supporting the bicycle in an upright position with at least one foot on the ground, and restarting it in a safe manner.
- (d) A bicycle that is ridden after dark must have the following equipment: a white light on the front of the bicycle; a red reflector on the rear of the bicycle; a white or yellow reflector on each pedal, shoe, or ankle; and a white or yellow reflector on each side forward of the center of the bicycle and a white or red reflector on each side to the rear of the center of the bicycle.

Teacher Supplemental Information

California Pedestrian Laws¹ (Excerpted from DMV handbook)

Right of Way at Crosswalk (§ 21950)

- (a) The driver of a vehicle shall yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within any marked crosswalk or within any unmarked crosswalk at an intersection, except as otherwise provided in this chapter.
- (b) This section does not relieve a pedestrian from the duty of using due care for his or her safety. No pedestrian may suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle that is so close as to constitute an immediate hazard. No pedestrian may unnecessarily stop or delay traffic while in a marked or unmarked crosswalk.
- (c) The driver of a vehicle approaching a pedestrian within any marked or unmarked crosswalk shall exercise all due care and shall reduce the speed of the vehicle or take any other action relating to the operation of the vehicle as necessary to safeguard the safety of the pedestrian.

Pedestrians Outside Crosswalk (§ 21954)

- (a) Every pedestrian upon a roadway at any point other than within a marked crosswalk or within an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles upon the roadway so near as to constitute an immediate hazard.
- (b) The provisions of this section shall not relieve the driver of a vehicle from the duty to exercise due care for the safety of any pedestrian upon a roadway.

Pedestrians on Roadway (§ 21956)

- (a) No pedestrian may walk upon any roadway outside of a business or residence district otherwise than close to his or her left-hand edge of the roadway.
- (b) A pedestrian may walk close to his or her right-hand edge of the roadway if a crosswalk or other means of safely crossing the roadway is not available or if existing traffic or other conditions would compromise the safety of a pedestrian attempting to cross the road.

¹<https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/pubs/vctop/vc/d11/c5>

Teacher Supplemental Information

California Bicycle Laws² (Excerpted from DMV handbook)

Youth Bicycle Helmets (§ 21212)

A person under 18 years of age shall not operate a bicycle, a nonmotorized scooter, or a skateboard, nor shall they wear in-line or roller skates, nor ride upon a bicycle, a nonmotorized scooter, or a skateboard as a passenger, upon a street, bikeway, or any other public bicycle path or trail unless that person is wearing a properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet.

Operation on Roadway (§ 21202)

- (a) Any person operating a bicycle upon a roadway at a speed less than the normal speed of traffic moving in the same direction at that time shall ride as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway except under any of the following situations:
 - (1) When overtaking and passing another bicycle or vehicle proceeding in the same direction.
 - (2) When preparing for a left turn at an intersection or into a private road or driveway.
 - (3) When reasonably necessary to avoid conditions (including, but not limited to, fixed or moving objects, vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, animals, surface hazards, or substandard width lanes) that make it unsafe to continue along the right-hand curb or edge, subject to the provisions of Section 21656. For purposes of this section, a “substandard width lane” is a lane that is too narrow for a bicycle and a vehicle to travel safely side by side within the lane.
 - (4) When approaching a place where a right turn is authorized.
- (b) Any person operating a bicycle upon a roadway of a highway, which highway carries traffic in one direction only and has two or more marked traffic lanes, may ride as near the left-hand curb or edge of that roadway as practicable.

Equipment Requirements (§ 21201)

- (a) No person shall operate a bicycle on a roadway unless it is equipped with a brake which will enable the operator to make one braked wheel skid on dry, level, clean pavement.
- (b) No person shall operate on the highway a bicycle equipped with handlebars so raised that the operator must elevate his hands above the level of his shoulders in order to grasp the normal steering grip area.
- (c) No person shall operate upon a highway a bicycle that is of a size that prevents the operator from safely stopping the bicycle, supporting it in an upright position with at least one foot on the ground, and restarting it in a safe manner.
- (d) A bicycle operated during darkness upon a highway, a sidewalk where bicycle operation is not prohibited by the local jurisdiction, or a bikeway, as defined in Section 890.4 of the Streets and Highways Code, shall be equipped with all of the following:

²<https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/pubs/vctop/vc/d11/c1/a4>

Teacher Supplemental Information

- (1) A lamp emitting a white light that, while the bicycle is in motion, illuminates the highway, sidewalk, or bikeway in front of the bicyclist and is visible from a distance of 300 feet in front and from the sides of the bicycle.
 - (2) A red reflector on the rear that shall be visible from a distance of 500 feet to the rear when directly in front of lawful upper beams of head lamps on a motor vehicle.
 - (3) A white or yellow reflector on each pedal, shoe, or ankle visible from the front and rear of the bicycle from a distance of 200 feet.
 - (4) A white or yellow reflector on each side forward of the center of the bicycle, and a white or red reflector on each side to the rear of the center of the bicycle, except that bicycles that are equipped with reflectorized tires on the front and the rear need not be equipped with these side reflectors.
- (e) A lamp or lamp combination, emitting a white light, attached to the operator and visible from a distance of 300 feet in front and from the sides of the bicycle, may be used in lieu of the lamp required by paragraph (1) of subdivision (d).

Reflectorized Equipment (§ 21201.5)

- (a) No person shall sell, or offer for sale, a reflex reflector or reflectorized tire of a type required on a bicycle unless it meets requirements established by the department. If there exists a federal Consumer Product Safety Commission regulation applicable to bicycle reflectors, the provisions of that regulation shall prevail over provisions of this code or requirements established by the department pursuant to this code relative to bicycle reflectors.
- (b) No person shall sell, or offer for sale, a new bicycle that is not equipped with a red reflector on the rear, a white or yellow reflector on each pedal visible from the front and rear of the bicycle, a white or yellow reflector on each side forward of the center of the bicycle, and a white or red reflector on each side to the rear of the center of the bicycle, except that bicycles which are equipped with reflectorized tires on the front and rear need not be equipped with these side reflectors.
- (c) Area reflectorizing material meeting the requirements of Section 25500 may be used on a bicycle.

²<https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/pubs/vctop/vc/d11/c1/a4>

Student Worksheet

Rules of the Road

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What road law are you studying?

2. Who does the law protect?

3. How does it protect them?

4. Do you have questions about the law?

Student Worksheet

Example Scenario #1

Name: _____ Date: _____

Tameka is playing kickball with Sara, Jaden, and Sam in her cul-de-sac. Sam kicks the ball and it lands in Ms. Hernandez' front yard. Tameka runs down the sidewalk to get the ball.

Meanwhile, Ms. Hernandez is in a hurry to pick up her daughter from daycare. Ms. Hernandez begins to pull out of her driveway and nearly hits Tameka.

Who is at fault? Who should have the right-of-way? Explain your reasoning using pedestrian law. How could Tameka have prevented this near-accident? How could Ms. Hernandez have prevented this near-accident?

Student Worksheet

Example Scenario #2

Name: _____ Date: _____

Roberto is late for school. He leaves his home in a hurry and begins to run to school. He runs to the intersection in front of the school. As he approaches the crosswalk he notices the pedestrian "Walk" signal is illuminated, so he continues to run across the street to school.

Meanwhile, the fifth grade math teacher, Mr. Sang, is on his way to work in his car. He signals to make a left hand turn and makes the turn through a crosswalk location in front of the school. Mr. Sang nearly hits Roberto.

In this situation, who had the right of way? Explain your reasoning using pedestrian law. How could Roberto have prevented this near-accident? How could Mr. Sang have prevented this near-accident?

Student Worksheet

Example Scenario #3

Name: _____ Date: _____

Marta is riding her bicycle to school. There is no one else on the road, so she decides to ride in the far left lane of the two-way street.

Carlos is driving his car to work. Carlos makes a left turn onto the street Marta is on. He does not see Marta and his car hits Marta's bicycle. Marta falls off of her bicycle, but luckily is not hurt.

Who is at fault in this situation? Explain your reasoning using bicycle law. How could Marta have prevented this accident? How could Carlos have prevented this accident?

Sample Student Answers

Scenario #1:

I think Tameka is at fault because the law states that “pedestrians need to act safely” and “no pedestrian may leave the curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle.” Tameka should have looked carefully before running to get the ball. However, the law also states that, “drivers need to act safely.” Ms. Hernandez should have looked carefully before backing out of her driveway.

Scenario #2:

I think Mr. Sang is at fault because the law states that “the driver of a vehicle shall yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within any marked crosswalk.” Roberto was crossing safely in a crosswalk and Mr. Sang should have waited for him to cross before making the turn. Roberto could have looked carefully to make sure no cars were coming before he started walking.

Scenario #3:

I think Marta is at fault because she should have been on the right-hand side of the road. The law states, “Any person operating a bicycle... shall ride as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway.” Marta could have prevented the accident by riding on the right-hand side of the road. Carlos could have prevented this accident by looking carefully before he made the turn.