

# LESSON 6: Silent Safety Signals

## LESSON OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will learn about how pedestrians and bicyclists use silent signals and eye contact to communicate and stay safe. This lesson will begin with an exploration of nonverbal ways that we gain information from each other. Students will discuss how we silently communicate with each other and will consider how punctuation acts as a silent communicator (when we read, we read the words but punctuation gives us silent information about how to read the words). Students will learn about bicycle hand signals and will participate in a hand signals game outside. Students will also learn about eye contact and participate in an eye contact game involving a basketball. The end of the lesson will include an “I used to think\_\_\_\_, Now I think\_\_\_\_” reflection.

## OBJECTIVES

- Learn how nonverbal communication helps us stay safe when walking and bicycling.

## TOPIC

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety  
(Physical Education Focus)

## STANDARDS SUPPORTED IN THIS LESSON

### Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

#### Language Standards

##### Grade Four

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.2:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

##### Grade Five

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.2:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

### California Physical Education Content Standards

#### Manipulative Skills

##### Grade Four

- **1.17:** Keep a hand dribbled ball away from a defensive partner.

##### Grade Five

- **1.14:** Dribble a ball (by hand or foot) while preventing another person from stealing the ball.

### California Health Education Content Standards

#### Injury Prevention and Safety – Grade Four

##### Standard 1: Essential Concepts

- **1.16.S:** Identify ways to reduce risk of injuries from fires, around water, while riding a motor vehicle, as a pedestrian, on the playground, and from falls.

##### 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 1: Essential Health Concepts

- 1.5.4: Describe ways to prevent common childhood injuries and health problems.

### 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

- *Bicycle Hand Signals* handout (1 per student)
- *Silent Safety Signals* worksheet (1 per student)
- Chart paper (1 piece)
- Sidewalk chalk, cones, or a basketball court
- Basketballs
- Jump ropes
- Index cards (1 per student)

*Note: If you have difficulty locating the chalk, cones, basketballs, or jump ropes, consider asking your school's Physical Education teacher or requesting that your students bring these materials from home.*

## PREPARATION TIME

10 minutes

## ACTIVITY TIME

60 minutes

## VOCABULARY

**Eye Contact**—When two people are aware of looking directly in each other's eyes.

## PREPARATION ACTIVITIES

- Make copies of *Bicycle Hand Signals* handout and *Silent Safety Signals* worksheet.
- If you do not have a basketball court, find a cement area to use for the outside activities. Draw boundaries with chalk or set up cones. Set up a space that will be large enough for your entire class to move around in at once.
- On the top of the piece of chart paper, write the following two sentences:  
"Is it time for breakfast?" Jennifer asked. "Let's eat, Grandpa!"

## STEPS FOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

### *Silent Communicators* (10 minutes)

- Ask students how they communicate with each other. After students mention how they communicate (for example, talking, texting, social media), encourage them to think about other ways in which we communicate.
- Ask, "How can you communicate with someone without saying or writing down words?" Have students demonstrate how they might silently communicate with each other (for example, waving, raising eyebrows, bowing, etc.).
- Ask, "Why might you need to communicate with someone without saying a word?" Have students share several ideas. Remind them of the ways you silently communicate within the classroom.
- Tell students, "When we read, there is something that acts like a silent communicator." Take out the chart paper with the sentences written on it. Ask students to read the sentences out loud. Then ask, "What do you see written on the paper that we do not say out loud?" (Punctuation).

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- Ask, “What information does punctuation give us?” Tell students that punctuation acts as a silent communicator: when we read, we read the words but punctuation gives us silent information about how to read the words. In the sentences on the chart paper, punctuation silently tells us that someone is talking (quotation marks), that a question is asked (question mark), and to pause while reading (periods and commas). Point out how the last sentence would be much different without the comma (“Let’s eat, Grandpa!” vs. “Let’s eat Grandpa!”).

## **Silent Safety Signals (15 minutes)**

- Say, “We use silent communicators all the time. Pedestrians and bicyclists use silent signals to communicate with motorists and each other.” Ask students to share a few ways that pedestrians and bicyclists use silent signals. Ask why pedestrians and bicyclists need silent safety signals (because they are often too far away from motorists and each other to talk).
- Tell students that they are going to learn about the silent signals that help to keep pedestrians and bicyclists safe. Tell students that eye contact is one silent way that pedestrians and bicyclists communicate. Eye contact ensures that motorists are aware of the presence of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Ask students to think about the last time they crossed the street. Have students share any silent signals that they used to communicate with motorists. Explain that in addition to using eye contact to communicate with motorists, pedestrians also communicate through the placement of their bodies. If you see a pedestrian waiting on a corner while watching traffic, you can tell that they are waiting to cross the street.
- Say, “Sometimes bicyclists need to turn left or right. It’s important that they communicate how they will turn. When drivers want to turn left or right, they turn on a turn signal. How do bicyclists communicate how they will turn?” Tell students that bicyclists can communicate using hand signals. Pass out a *Bicycle Hand Signals* handout to each student.
- Show students the hand signals for making a left turn, making a right turn, and stopping on a bicycle:
  - » Left turn—Extend your left arm straight out, parallel to the road.
  - » Right turn—Extend your left upper-arm out to the left, bending your elbow up and pointing your fingertips up; or extend your right arm straight out to your right side, parallel to the road.
  - » Stop—Extend your left upper arm out to the left, parallel to the road and bend your elbow down and point your fingers to the ground.
- Using the *Bicycle Hand Signals* handout for reference, have students get out of their seats and practice each signal. Yell out a signal (“left turn”, “right turn”, etc.) and have students demonstrate the correct movements.

## **Outside Activity #1: Practicing Bicycle Hand Signals (10 minutes)**

- Tell students that you will be going outside to do two outside activities. Remind students to act like they are in class, not recess, when participating in the activities. Tell students to pay extra close attention to directions while outside.
- Take students outside, either to a basketball court or to the yard. Make sure that you have space for students to walk freely and, if you are not using a basketball court, make clear boundaries drawn with chalk or set up with cones. Utilize the Group Activity Schematic #1.

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- Tell students that they will pretend to be riding bicycles. As they move, they will walk normally but will use bicycle hand signals to communicate. Have the students walk in different directions. Students will use hand signals to communicate what direction they will be going (left or right) or to show when they will be stopping.
- By using hand signals, students should try to avoid collisions. If students collide, all of the involved students need to get off of the court.
- If after a time there are only a few students left on the court, you may play again or move onto the next activity.

## **Outside Activity #2: Practicing Making Eye Contact (15 minutes)**

- Utilize the teacher Group Activity Schematic #2 for the eye contact activity.
- Remind students that eye contact is when two people are aware of looking directly in each other's eyes. Tell students that they will practice making eye contact during this activity.
- Students will be divided into two groups. Group #2 is intended to be a smaller group, consisting of no more than five to ten students.
- Group #1 will practice dribbling a basketball across the basketball court. Students will simulate busy motorists traveling on the roadway.
- Meanwhile group #2 will simulate pedestrians trying to cross the street. Student pedestrians will have to stop, look LEFT, RIGHT, and LEFT again, then jump rope across the court.
- Instruct students in group #1 and group #2 to make eye contact with each other as they move around the court.
- To make the activity more challenging, teachers can send "motorist" students across the basketball court faster, using shorter wait periods.

## **Reflection (10 minutes)**

- Bring the class back to the classroom. Ask, "What did you learn in the first activity? How could you use what you practiced when bicycling?" Discuss how students practiced using hand signals and silently communicating with each other.
- Ask, "What did you learn in the second activity? How could you use what you practiced when walking?" Discuss how students practiced looking left/right/left before crossing and silently communicating with each other.
- Hand out an index card to each student. Ask students to reflect on what they learned about silent safety signals. On the index cards, have students fill in the prompt "I used to think\_\_\_\_, Now I think\_\_\_\_\_."
- Call on several students to share their reflections. Collect the index cards and post in the classroom.









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## Ideas for Extending the Lesson

- As homework, have students observe the silent signals that pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists use. Have students fill out the *Silent Safety Signals* worksheet.
- As a class, have students come up with a list of the top five silent safety signals. Break students into groups and have each group create a skit illustrating how pedestrians or bicyclists can use an important safety signal. Arrange for your class to perform their skits for younger students.
- Have students write informational essays about the importance of using silent safety signals on the road.
- As an extension of Lesson 5: Design Your Own Traffic Sign Game, students may have designed a "Safetyville." If so, have students use silent signals while traveling through Safetyville.



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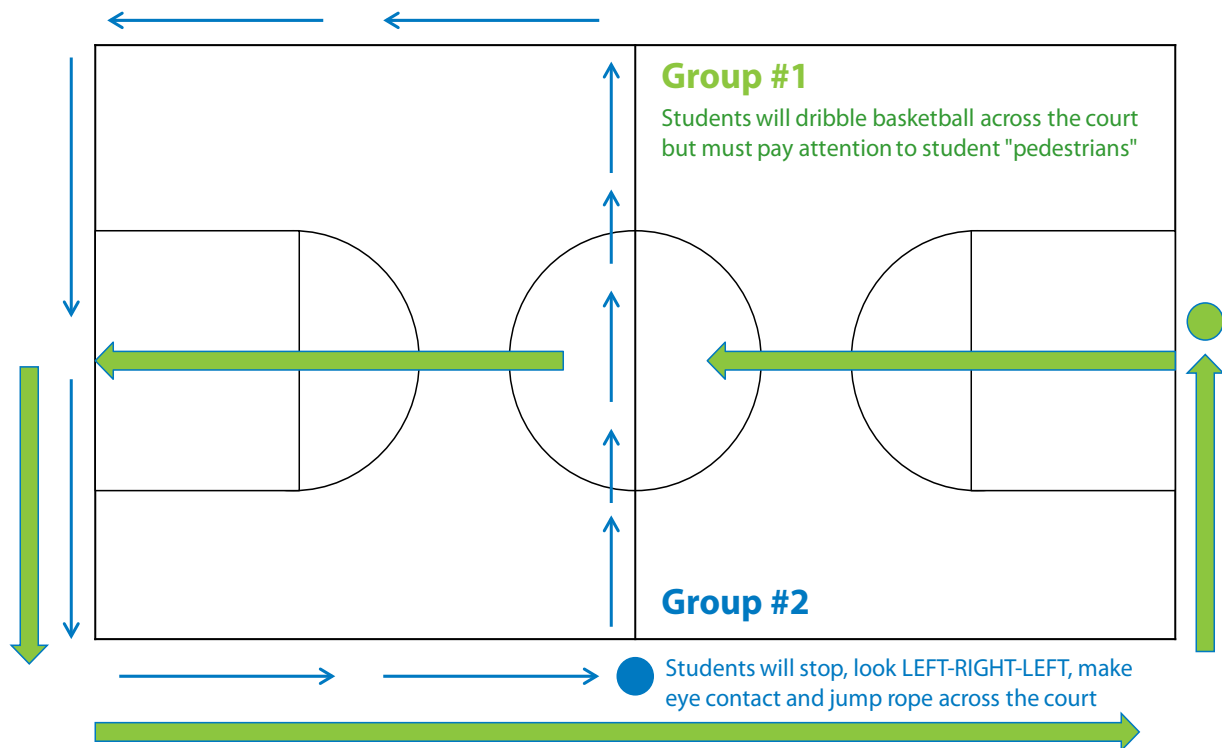
Front View	Hand Signal	Back View
	<b>Left Turn</b> Extend your left arm out sideways.	
	<b>Right Turn</b> Extend your left arm out sideways bent at a ninety-degree angle at the elbow joint, hand pointing upwards and the palm of hand facing forward.	
	<b>Alternative Right Turn</b> Extend your right arm out straight.	
	<b>Stopping or Slowing</b> Extend your left arm out sideways bent at a ninety-degree angle at the elbow joint, hand pointing downwards and the palm of hand facing backwards.	

(Adapted handout from City of Virginia Beach)



# Group Activity Schematic #2

## On the Basketball Court



Safe Routes to School Technical Assistance Resource Center





# Student Worksheet

## Silent Safety Signals

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Spend some time observing the types of silent safety signals that pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists use. You can make observations while you walk, bicycle, or drive in a car.

<b>Pedestrian, Bicyclist, or Motorist?</b>	<b>Type of Silent Safety Signal Used</b>