



TOPIC: Bicycle Maintenance

GRADES: K-4

OBJECTIVES

- Learn the proper fit
- Understand the basics of bicycle maintenance

PROCEDURE

- Inspect and identify the parts on your bicycle, or if you don't have your bicycle handy, use the chart from the ABCs of Bicycle Care worksheet.
 - Tires
 - Brakes (could be hand brakes, coaster brakes, or combination of both)
 - Chain
 - Seat
 - Handlebars
 - Reflectors
 - Additional: horn, bell, lights for front and back
- Complete the attached ABCs of Bicycle Care Worksheet as you go along.
- Tell students that every time they ride their bicycle, they must check the ABCs.
- Explain the following ABCs to students
 - **A= AIR in the tires**
 - **Question:** Can you tell if there's enough air in the tires just by looking?
 - **Answer:** No, you need to squeeze them. Tires should feel firm, not squishy.
 - **Question:** How can you put air in the tires?
 - **Answer:** Use a tire pump. Have adult supervision to make sure the pump is correctly attached and detached from the tire valve. It's okay to ask for help.
 - **Question:** What do you think would happen if you rode on flat tires?
 - **Answer:** Your ride won't be smooth and your tire rims can get damaged.
 - **B= BRAKES**
 - Know where your brakes are located.
 - Smaller bicycles usually come equipped with **COASTER** brakes – pedal backwards and coaster brakes will stop the pedals from turning. Try it with your bicycle!
 - Bigger bicycles may come with **HAND** brakes. Your hands need to be big enough to squeeze the brakes hard enough to make them stop the tires from turning.
 - And some bicycles may have both, to allow you to practice using hand brakes while also knowing you can stop with the coaster brakes.
 - **LEARN WHAT KIND OF BRAKES YOU HAVE.**
 - **Question:** Is it safe to stop your bike by putting your feet on the ground when you're riding?
 - **Answer:** Not at all. You can get injured, especially if you're riding at a fast pace.

- **C = CHAIN**
 - The chain on your bicycle is an important feature that keeps all the parts moving when you're riding.
 - The chain on your bicycle should not be loose, and it shouldn't have rust or dirt clogging it up. If you touch it and it's dry, a little lubricant can help it work more smoothly. An adult must supervise this.
- **S = SEAT**
 - The seat needs to be at the proper height, and since kids grow a little every day, it's important to adjust the seat periodically.
 - Straddle your own bicycle, without sitting on the seat at first. Attempt to sit on the seat, but both feet should be able to just touch the ground. Newer riders should have both feet fairly flat on the ground, while more experienced riders can have the balls of both feet on the ground.
 - Inspect your own bicycle, how does the seat move up and down, and how does it lock in place? Adult supervision is necessary for this.
 - **Question:** How do you know if your bike is too big?
 - **Answer:** If you cannot touch the ground with both feet when sitting on the seat, it's too big. Lower the seat. If the seat is already at its lowest position, you're not ready for that bicycle yet.
 - **Question:** Should your knees be straight or bent?
 - **Answer:** Both! The foot that's closest to the ground should be pretty straight, and the foot that's on the upper pedal should be bent. If BOTH knees are really bent, the seat needs to be raised.
- **THINGS THAT SHOULD ALSO BE OKAY WITH YOUR BICYCLE**
 - **Handlebars** should sit straight, and not be crooked.
 - **Reflectors** should be on the spokes of both tires, in your pedals, and one on the front and one on the rear. All bicycles come with them- make sure yours are there and not broken off.
 - **A horn or bell** – these don't come with your bicycle, but are great to have to warn other cyclists, runners, dog walkers, etc. that you are approaching. It's important to note that vehicle drivers won't likely hear your horn or bell, especially if their windows are closed.
 - **Lights for the front and rear**- NOT so you can ride at night! Lights on during the day can help drivers see you better from farther away. Kids should not ride their bicycles at night or in darkness.
- **WHAT ELSE NEEDS TO BE DONE?**
 - To keep your bicycle in good shape, what do YOU need to do with it after riding?
 - Put it in the garage, shed or storage area every time.
 - **Question:** what can happen to your bike if you leave it out?
 - **Answers:** Could get rusty from rain, could get run over in the driveway, someone could steal it, etc.

SUMMARY

This lesson plan teaches student how to maintain their bicycles. They will learn the ABCs through a question and answer-style discussion with either teachers or parents. Students will be able to keep their bicycle in good working order and check those ABC's every time!