

This lesson plan looks at rules, risks and collisions. Road collisions used to be referred to as 'accidents' but it's now recognised that they're mostly foreseeable and preventable, and should therefore not be referred to as such. This lesson involves discussion, questioning and debate. It works best when teachers, as much as possible, allow the children the freedom to debate and even argue the issues raised. Teachers should act as catalysts to stimulate debate, mediators to calm any 'heated' arguments, and guides towards satisfactory conclusions.

## Learning objectives:

1. Understand road safety related risks.
2. Understand that breaking rules means taking risks.

## Outcomes:

Pupils will have found out why road traffic collisions are no longer referred to as 'accidents' (as they are mainly foreseeable and preventable). Pupils will be aware of the need for rules, and that when you break a rule you take a risk. Pupils will have discovered that sometimes rules conflict and that they will have to make decisions on the best and safest course of action.

## You'll need:

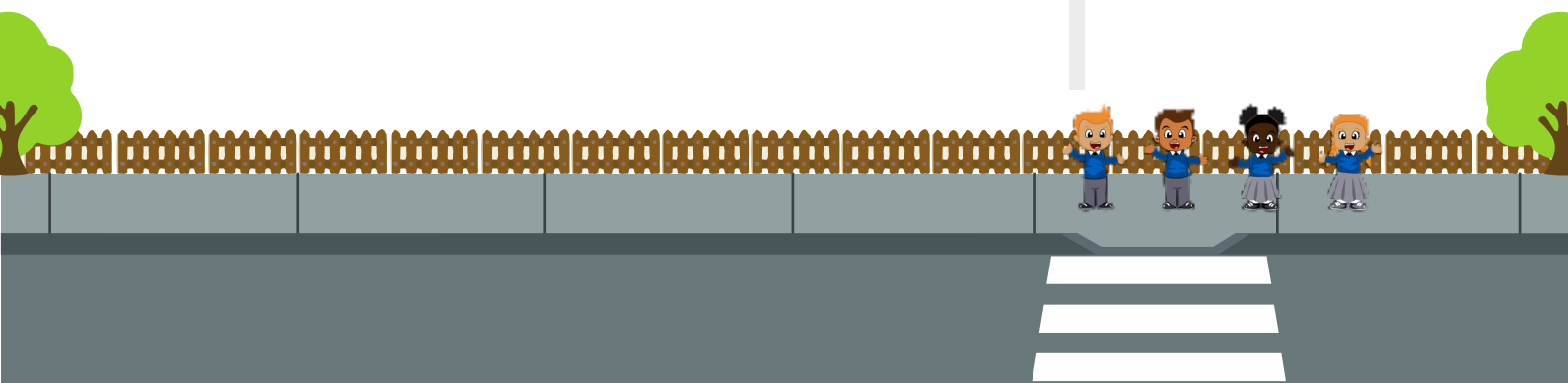
- Teacher guidance notes and scenarios

## Curriculum links:

- Reading – comprehension:
  - Understand what they read by predicting what might happen from details stated and applied
  - Distinguish between statements of fact and opinion
  - Explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read, maintaining a focus on the topic and using notes where necessary
- Debate
  - Provide reasoned justification for their views
- Writing composition (homework activity)

## This resource contains:

- Teacher guidance notes
- Extension lesson plan
- Sample letter for parents/ carers and homework activity



## 1: Accidents and causation factors (10 minutes)

### Whole class:

- Discuss: What does the word 'accident' mean (event that happens by chance, misfortune, especially causing injury)?

### Group work:

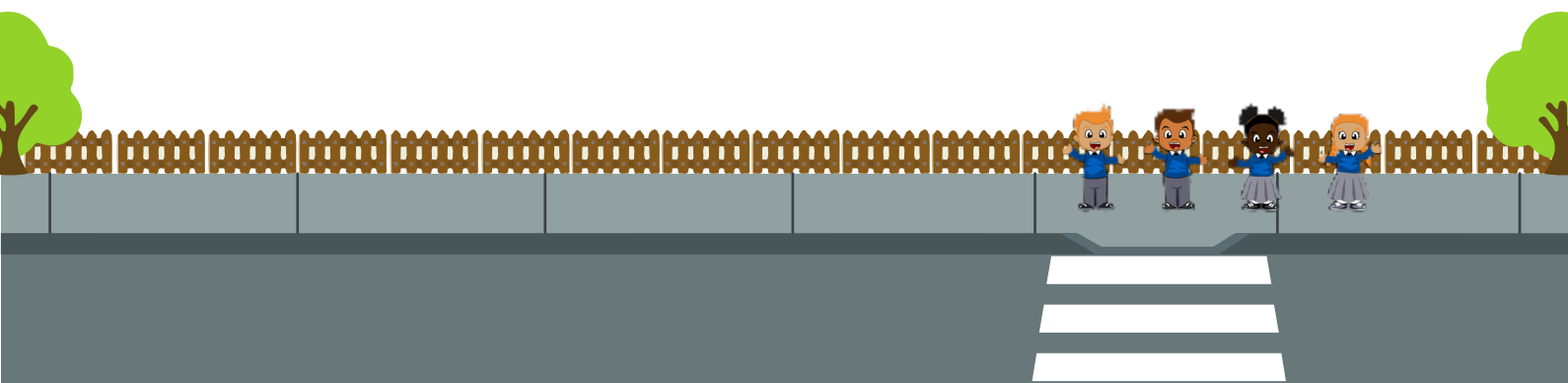
- Each person in the group describes an accident they have had or seen, and then the group chooses one of these to focus on.
- The group chooses someone to take notes.

### Ask:

- What caused the accident?
- What was going on at the time that might have been a contributory factor?
- What could have been done to prevent the accident?
- What could have been done to minimise the injury?
- Group to choose one person to present the findings to the rest of the class.
- Record the results on the classroom whiteboard.

### Conclusion (whole class):

- So, is an accident really by accident?
- Road accidents are now referred to as incidents, crashes, or collisions.



## 2: Rules: Traffic movement observation activity (10-15 minutes)

### Whole class:

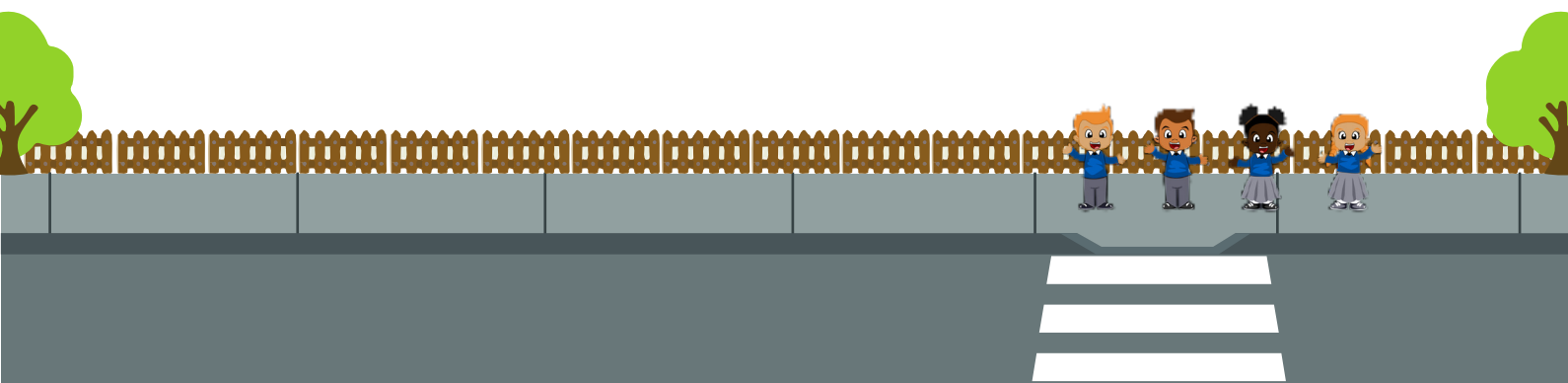
- Activity in pairs:
  - One child is the 'journey pupil' and the other is the 'observer'. Each pair plans a route from where they are sitting to a secret destination in the room. When you say 'go', the journey pupil starts to make their way to the secret destination. The observer counts how many times they must stop to let others pass, and how many times they bump into someone. They also observe whether or not journey pupils get impatient.

### Ask:

- Would some simple rules have reduced the congestion and any conflicts?

### Conclusion:

- Do rules, for example the Highway Code, help?
- What happens when people break the rules?
- So, is an accident really by accident?

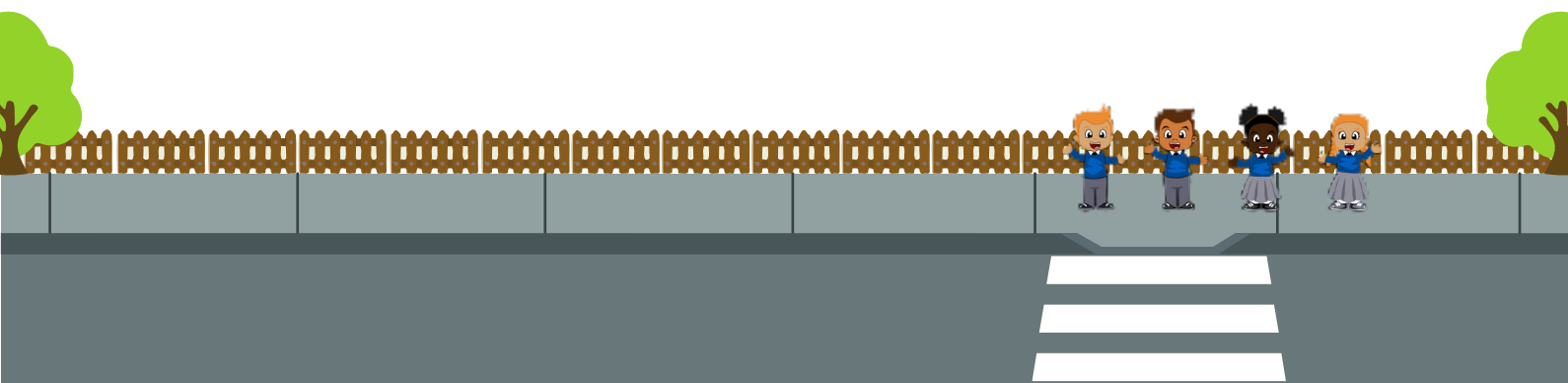


## 3: Risks (25–30 minutes)

### Whole class 'What if...?' activity:

- The children should work in small groups to decide what they would do in different scenarios (below are some examples). Give each group a different scenario, and a certain amount of time to reach a consensus (they may have to agree to disagree, or compromise). Ask a member of each group to feed their answer back to the whole class. Does the rest of the class agree with their decision?
- 'Feeling scared'**. I was walking to the shops with a friend. Up ahead, on the corner, was a crowd of pupils from the secondary school. I think they were in Year 9. They were taking up the whole pavement and talking and laughing. Without even speaking, my friend and I started walking more slowly. We could walk past them or try to cross the road, although we didn't need to cross over. The road was very busy and there was not really a safe place to cross.
  - 'Cycling home'**. I usually cycle home from school. It's quite busy because of the school traffic. On one particular day, a friend was coming back to my house to play the Xbox. He didn't have his bike with him and he asked me for a lift on mine. He's really cool, and everybody wants to be his friend. I thought he might laugh at me if I said 'No'.
  - 'Getting a lift'**. When I go out with my friends our parents all take it in turns to give us a lift. This is great, except Amy's dad is not a very good driver. He thinks he is, but he sometimes scares me. He drives fast and doesn't seem to drive safely. If we say anything to him he just laughs and teases us by going faster or swerving about. We are all going to the cinema on Friday, and it is his turn to give us a lift.

**Conclude:** Incidents are often not caused by one person making one big mistake, but by more than one person making little mistakes that don't seem important at the time.



## Accidents

1. Discuss what the word 'accident' means.
2. Split the class into groups and ask them each to discuss an accident they have had. One pupil in each group to take notes.
3. Each group to choose one person's accident to feed back to the rest of the class. Discuss the contributory factors and ask if an accident is really by accident?



## Rules

4. Take part in the traffic movement observation activity.
5. Ask and discuss whether having simple rules in place would reduce congestion and any conflicts.
6. Conclude by discussing whether rules, such as the Highway Code, help people stay safe. What happens when rules are broken? Consider again, whether an accident is really by accident.



## Risks

7. Split the class into groups, give each a different scenario and ask them to discuss what action they would take.
8. Conclude, in a whole class discussion, that accidents are not always caused by one person's big mistake but by multiple people making little mistakes that don't seem important but amount to a serious incident.

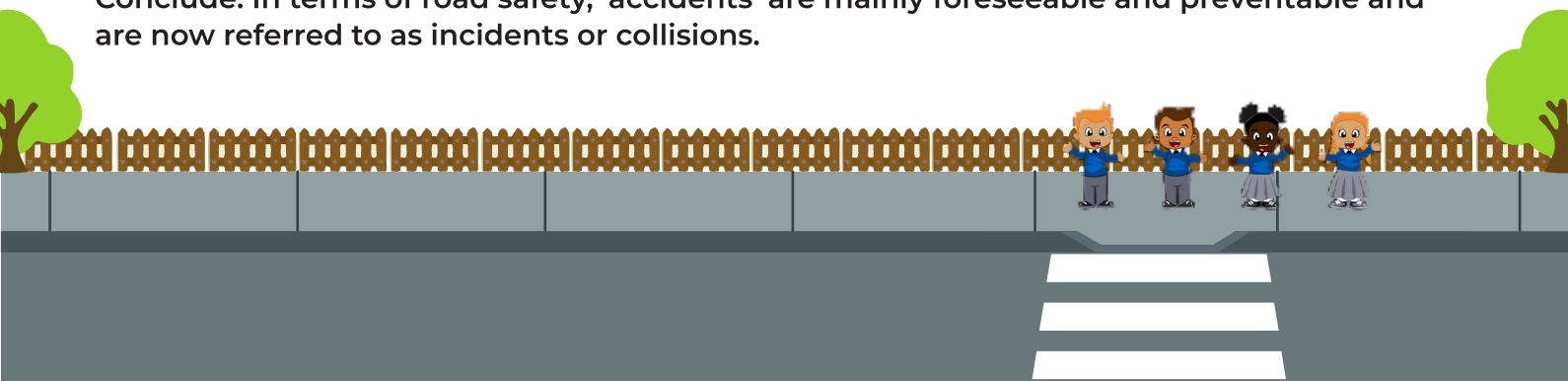


## Whose fault? Extension lesson plan

9. Using the extension lesson plan on pages 6 and 7, ask pupils to conduct a Crash Scene Investigation (CSI).
10. Discuss as a class whether following rules would have prevented the incident and whether it was really an 'accident'? What could be done to reduce the likelihood of it occurring and to keep pupils safer (helmets, high visibility vests etc)?



Conclude: In terms of road safety, 'accidents' are mainly foreseeable and preventable and are now referred to as incidents or collisions.



**‘Whose fault?’ A CSI crash scene investigation. Pupils must consider how accidents can happen, the consequences for all involved, and how they can be avoided. Alongside this, discuss and explore whether incidents 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 on the factors that contributed to the accident.

## The scenario

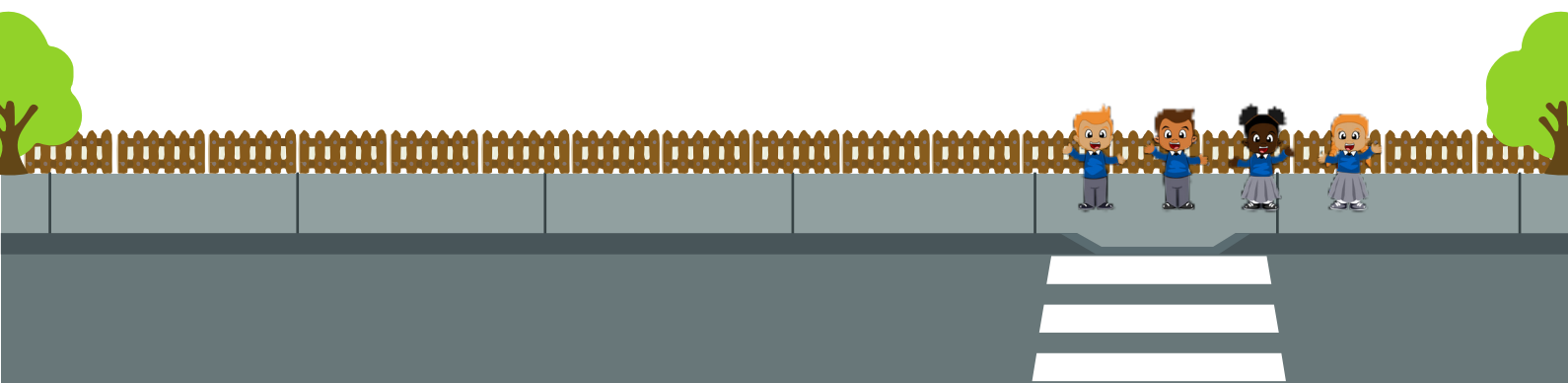
The CSI pupils are told that they have two extra clues in addition to what they can see: the accident happened at 3.45 in the afternoon, and it is a bright, sunny day.

## Investigators are encouraged to find clues

A boy has been riding his bicycle home from school with a large, heavy bag on one shoulder that contains, amongst other things, his cycle helmet and a high visibility jacket. There is a carrier bag of groceries on his handlebars. He was listening to music through his headphones. 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, it 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 involved 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 childminder's house.

The CSI pupils are asked to collect evidence that establishes why the incident happened and who was to blame.



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

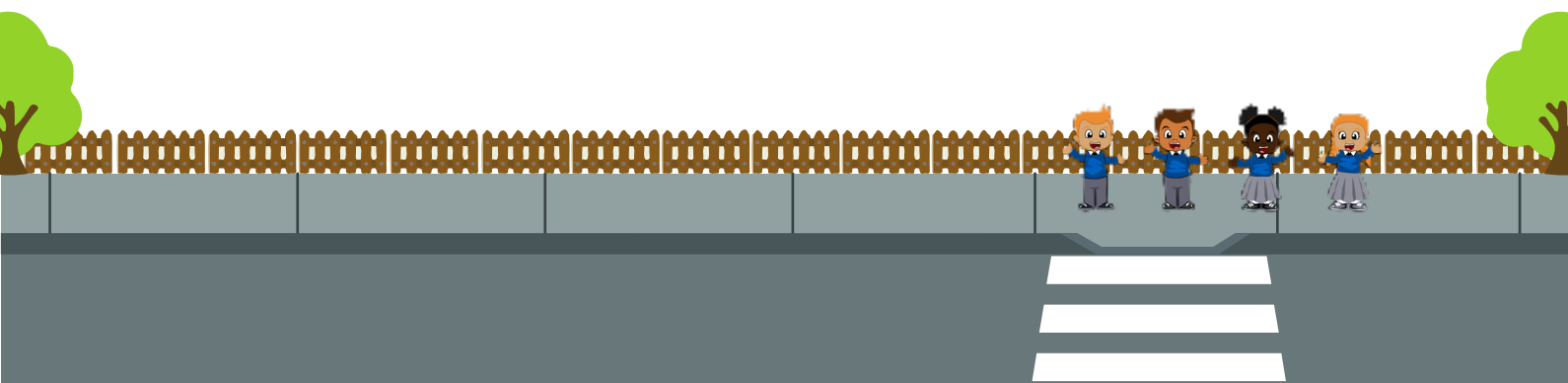
- The parents – asking the child to get shopping without an appropriate saddlebag or backpack; allowing the bike to be in such poor condition; not making the child wear his helmet and high visibility jacket or checking his cycle skills and road behaviour.
- Friends – peer pressure. He may not have wanted 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 contributing to him speeding?

## Was the accident really an accident?

- Accidents are unforeseeable and cannot be prevented. This could easily have been prevented if everyone was following basic rules of safety and the rules of the road.
- The police no longer refer to them as road traffic accidents (RTAs) – they are road traffic collisions (RTCs), and the children have been collision investigators because 6% of injury incidents on our roads are caused by human error and so they can be prevented.
- Breaking rules is taking risks and taking risks can have major consequences. Sometimes rules seem unimportant, such as doing up your shoelaces or not handling the CD whilst driving, but could either of these have been the cause of this incident?
- Often, a crash isn't caused by just one person making one big mistake. Instead, lots of little seemingly unimportant things added together can make things go very wrong.





Dear parent/carers,

Today the children in class have been involved in a road safety lesson that covered the following learning objectives and outcomes:

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## Outcomes:

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## Homework today is to:

Write a short story about your journey to school, considering good road safety behaviour in order to avoid a road traffic collision.

The staff and governors of .....  
would like to thank you for your support and help in reinforcing the road safety messages  
that your child has learnt in our new road safety education initiative.

Yours sincerely

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