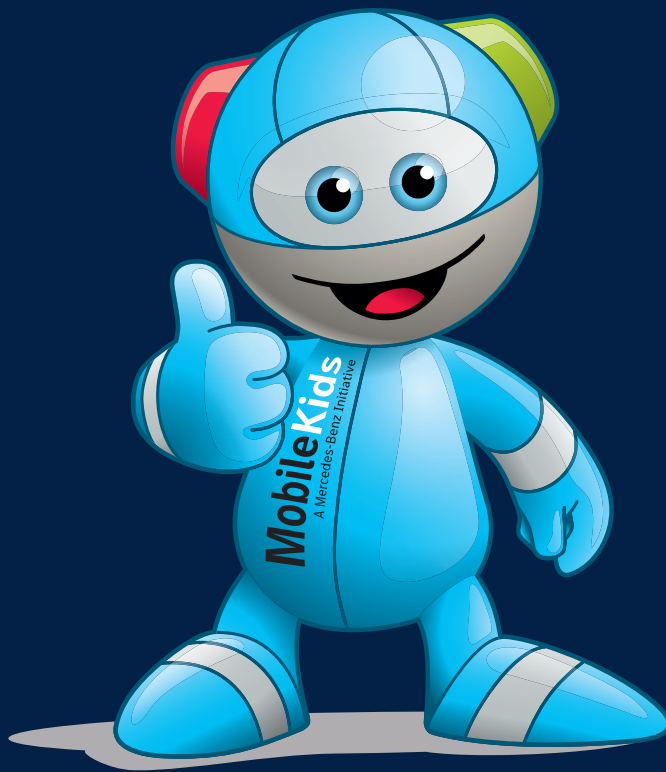


Learning unit compact

“Cycling on the road“:
Becoming a skilled cyclist



Introduction

MobileKids trains girls and boys between the ages of six and ten in safe and responsible behaviour on the road. This Mercedes-Benz initiative is an entertaining, informative, and advertising-free concept that focuses on risk prevention for children. MobileKids takes a holistic approach: It not only has content that is customised for children, but it also has content with which adults receive support to better protect and prepare children. In this way, the young and the old can work together to ensure greater safety on the roads and master their day-to-day traffic behaviour with ease.

To achieve this goal, MobileKids provides teachers, for example, with free learning material without ads, which has been developed jointly with the University of Koblenz and Landau and Klett MINT Stuttgart. Teachers can use this material in road safety lessons.

This learning material is a follow-up to the German MobileKids brochure (ISBN 978-3-942406-25-3). The content and further information are available on: www.mobilekids.net

This unit is primarily aimed at students in grades 3 and 4 (8-10 year olds). Before the students actually put the relevant traffic rules into practice, they are prepared for road traffic in this teaching unit through motor skills exercises and practical bicycle training.

Even though children start riding a bicycle at the age of 4 or 5, they are not ready to face road traffic. Experiences acquired by students as pedestrians are not directly transferable to bicycles. The bicycle is much faster and demands different responses. But children are unable to cope with multiple challenges in road traffic. On an average, children only develop most skills needed for cycling in traffic when they turn 8.

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At a glance

Students come to the 3rd grade with varying levels of motor skills. And so the practical bicycle training starts with motor skills exercises. Here children ought to learn to control their bicycle. Other basic skills needed in cycling such as looking around, giving hand signals, braking, and dodging obstacles are taught. The teacher can decide individually according to the progress of the class how intensive each training session should be.

It is important that the children internalise: The basic requirements for safely riding a bicycle in road traffic are having a roadworthy bicycle and wearing a helmet.

The add-on activity involves an excursion with children where the focus will be on learning traffic signs.

Target group	 From 3rd grade (from 8 years)
No. of participants	 If there are more than 5 children, for larger groups organise more supervisors, e.g. parents, as far as possible
Place	 Schoolyard/traffic training area
Time required	 At least 2 classes
Material required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 bicycle and 1 bicycle helmet for each child • Maybe chalk for drawing lines • Boards or planks • Foam dice • Whistle • Traffic cones (at least 6) • Baton • Picture cards (letters, numbers, objects ...) <p>Add-ons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • possibly cameras or smartphones • Writing pad, paper, colored pencils • Worksheet for sketching traffic signs (see under material)
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up and map the training stretch • Place the traffic cones • If required set up the board/plank as a curb
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students develop their motor skills on the bicycle. They learn to control their bicycle safely and correctly in certain situations. • Students behave as careful, safety-conscious, and accident-conscious cyclists. • They can anticipate certain risks in road traffic and are thus able to avoid accidents. • They can recognise and correctly interpret the traffic signs that are important for cyclists and apply them in practice. • Students increasingly ride their bicycles independently in traffic and thus expand their bicycle riding range.
Interdisciplinary elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics: Angle calculation • Sports: Motor skills and movement training • General studies: Reading maps, exploring the home town • Art: Drawing/sketching traffic signs

Implementation

Introduction

This teaching unit is especially useful for children if they already have the following basic riding skills.

- Keeping the bicycle going straight:
Students should be able to ride on a pre-drawn line even at a slow pace.
- Looking around:
Children should also be able to turn their head backwards while driving. They need to know that this will allow them to decide whether changing the lane is possible. However, they are not allowed to leave their lane for the time being.
- Riding with one hand:
Children should be able to ride their bicycle with one hand to indicate a lane change or turn.

The required riding skills will be reviewed as a small warm-up exercise in the beginning. Children ride behind each other and all of them follow the same routine: After getting on their bicycle, looking behind, and starting safely, they must follow the drawn line. A traffic cone indicates the point at which they should look around. While doing so, they must not leave their lane. They indicate with their hand that they want to turn left, they do so, then return to the starting point and re-join the group.

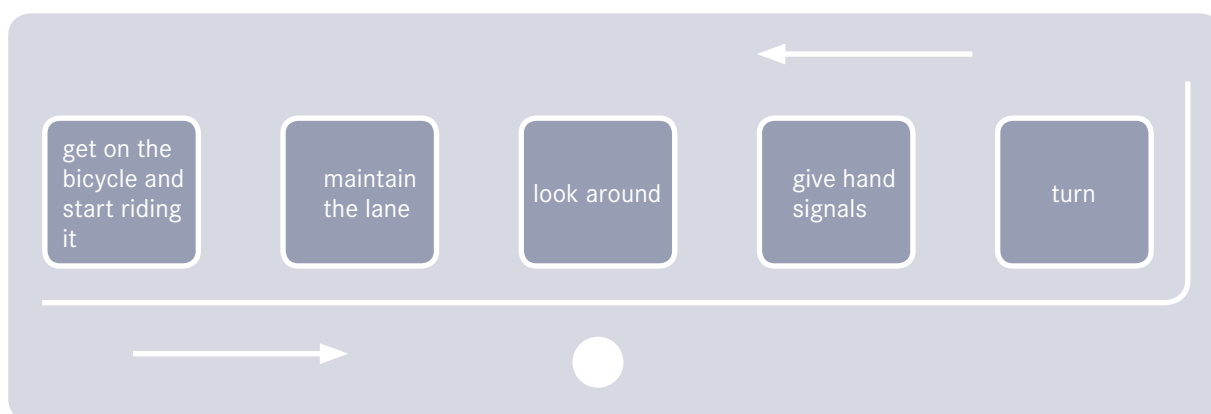
If this is accomplished, the routine is varied by asking the students to turn right.

As explained earlier, children should know that they can check what is happening behind them by looking around. Ultimately, they are only allowed to turn when they are not being overtaken by a car or a faster bicycle. The action of looking around can be practiced and reviewed whereby the teacher holds up a symbol poster. The children should recognise the symbol and name it out loud.

Additional training points

Other training sessions take place on points that are already set-up and mapped. How many points can be practiced in parallel or whether they are practiced one after the other depends on the number of children, their skill level, and the number of people supervising them. Some points require an adult to be present, while children can practice independently on other points.

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The following points can be navigated independently by children after prior instruction.

- **Riding on bike lanes:**
Students should learn to drive up on lowered curbs. If training is not carried out in a proper traffic training area, the curbs must be replaced with boards or planks. Important: The boards must be fixed properly so that they do not move. By pushing a bike on the curb first it can be found out together in the group which angle is suitable for driving up. If the angle is too acute, the front wheel may slip off.
- **Slalom course:**
Children do the slalom course around set up traffic cones and thereby develop their basic skills on the bicycle.
- **Riding with one hand:**
While riding their bikes, students take a baton from person A and then pass it on to person B. This requires them to ride the bicycle with one hand for a short while and maintain their balance during the handover.

The following training points can only be completed with a teacher or a supervisor.

- **Braking exercise:**
Several students ride behind each other in a marked lane, e.g. the figure eight. They must maintain the right distance from each other, rule of thumb: at least as much as two bicycle lengths. When the whistle is blown, children have to apply the full brake using the front and rear brakes.

Note:

This exercise is also suitable as a game to be played in the interim with the whole class.

- **Responding to instructions:**
Instructions are announced which must be followed by children, e.g. when the whistle blows twice, children must duck briefly on the bike, etc.
- **Dodging exercise:**
A child rides past the supervisor in as straight a line as possible. The supervisor throws a non-rolling object (e.g. a foam cube) into the path, and the child on the bicycle must avoid it.

Securing the outcome of the assignment

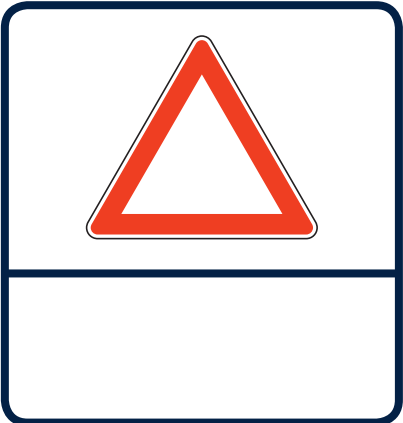
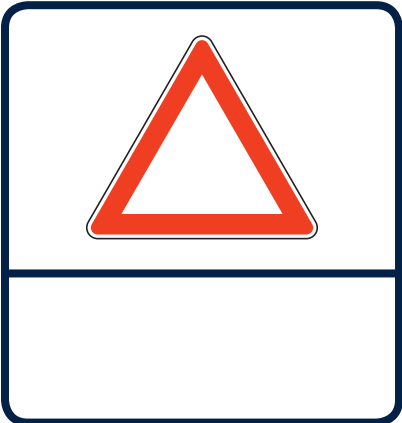
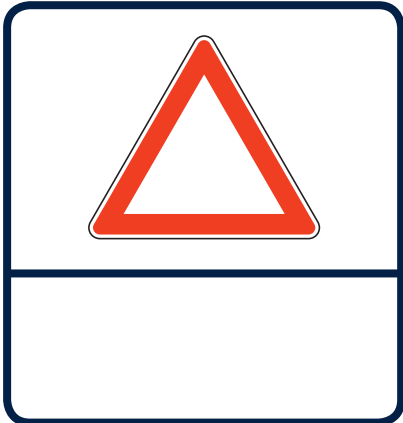
The teacher reflects on the exercises with the children: What was difficult for them, what was easy? Generally students themselves can assess very well in which area they still need practice.

Levelling up

When children become confident about their riding skills, they can go for a short cycling excursion on a route with little traffic. It would be nice to have an appealing destination, such as a park or zoo. Perhaps the class can walk this route first. On the walk all the traffic signs on the route are noted, discussed, sketched, or photographed. Children are informed that traffic signs can be roughly divided into danger signs and signs that specify regulations or bans. For in-depth learning or as homework, students receive the following worksheet, in which they draw and name traffic signs they know. On the next school day, children can compare the individual worksheets and check the worksheets themselves: Who sketched which traffic signs? Are there deviations and differences? - These are checked by the teacher and corrected if necessary.

Material

Traffic signs



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