

Bicycles

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

- 1 What do you think the first bicycles looked like?
- 2 How are bikes like airplanes?
- 3 Are bicycles popular in your country?



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.
Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| _____ 1 steer | Ⓐ very big |
| _____ 2 pedal | Ⓑ almost the same |
| _____ 3 giant | Ⓒ a person who rides a bicycle |
| _____ 4 cyclist | Ⓓ to turn in a certain direction |
| _____ 5 similar | Ⓔ a flat square that you push with your foot |

Reading

Bicycles

- 1 Did you know that the first bicycles didn't have foot **pedals**? **Cyclists** had to run down a hill and jump on the seat. There was no way to **steer** either. These bikes were called "hobbyhorses."
- 2 The next bicycles didn't have foot pedals either. Inventors added hand pedals first. When inventors finally added foot pedals, they also added a **giant** front wheel. These early bikes had metal tires and weren't very safe. People nicknamed them "boneshakers."
- 3 Did you know that riding a bicycle is a lot like flying an airplane? The way that you balance, turn, and glide is **similar** for both. The first flying machines were made of bicycle parts. The Wright Brothers loved bicycles. They had a bicycle shop. In the back of the shop, they invented the airplane. They attached wings to their bicycles. This helped them learn about speed and wind.
- 4 Can you guess which country has the nickname "Bicycle Kingdom"?



Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs, and write the answers below.

- 1 What was the first type of bike pedals?

- 2 What was funny about the first bikes with foot pedals?

- 3 Why do you think people called these bikes "boneshakers"?

- 4 What is riding a bicycle similar to?

- 5 Who used bicycle parts to invent a flying machine?

Bonus Question

Can you guess which country has the nickname "Bicycle Kingdom"?

- The United States
- England
- China
- The Netherlands

Practice

A. Odd One Out

Look at the three words in each list. Two words in each list are related. Circle the one that doesn't belong.

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <p>1 giant
large
glide</p> | <p>2 inventor
creator
either</p> | <p>3 alike
a lot
similar</p> | <p>4 attached
connected
flew</p> | <p>5 bike
turn
steer</p> |
|---|---|---|---|---|

B. Word Jumble

Read the clues and try to unscramble the words. Then gather up all of the **bold** letters. Can you unscramble the mystery word to complete the sentence?

#	Clue	Scrambled	Unscrambled
1	give a different name to a person or object	mecknian	
2	the negative form of "too"	herite	
3	the opposite of "dangerous"	fesa	
4	has two wheels and two foot pedals	yicbelc	
5	very big	ntgai	
6	you make these go around with your feet	dalpes	

A person who rides a bike is a _____ .

Listening

Listen to a recording of this reading.

Fill in the gaps. Listen again and check your answers.

Bicycles

- 1 Did you know that the first bicycles didn't have foot pedals? _____ had to run down a hill and jump on the seat. There was no way to _____ either. These bikes were called "hobbyhorses."
- 2 The next bicycles didn't have foot pedals either. Inventors added hand pedals first. When inventors finally added foot _____, they also added _____ front wheels. These early bikes had metal tires and weren't very safe. People nicknamed them "boneshakers."
- 3 Did you know that riding a bicycle is a lot like flying an airplane? The way that you balance, turn, and glide is _____ for both. The first flying machines were made of bicycle parts. The Wright Brothers loved bicycles. They had a bicycle shop. In the back of the shop, they invented the airplane. They attached _____ to their bicycles. This helped them learn about speed and wind.
- 4 Can you guess which _____ has the nickname "Bicycle Kingdom"?

Answer Key

Lesson Description:

Students learn about the history of the bicycle through reading, speaking, listening, and vocabulary tasks.

Level: Low Int - Int

Time: 1-2 hours

Tags: bicycle, bike, reading, discussion, vocabulary, discovery

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

Answers will vary.

B. Vocabulary Preview

1. d 2. e 3. a 4. c 5. b

Reading

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. You can also play the listening as your students read along. A gap-fill version of the reading is available on page 5. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with.

Comprehension

1. Hand pedals were the first type of bike pedals.
2. The first bikes with foot pedals had a giant front wheel.
3. These bikes were called "boneshakers" because they had metal wheels and were not very safe or smooth.
4. Riding a bicycle is similar to flying a plane.
5. The Wright brothers used bike parts to invent the airplane.

Bonus Answer: China

Practice

A. Odd One Out

- | | | |
|-----------|----------|---------|
| 1. glide | 3. a lot | 5. bike |
| 2. either | 4. flew | |

B. Word Jumble

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|-----------|
| 1. nickname | 3. safe | 5. giant |
| 2. either | 4. bicycle | 6. pedals |

Mystery Word: cyclist

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Listening

1. Cyclists, steer
2. pedals, giant
3. similar
4. wings
5. country

More Facts to Share:

1. In New York City, people can usually get to work faster by bicycle than by car.
2. A cyclist once rode his bicycle across the US with only his back wheel on the ground. This trick is called a "wheelie."
3. There are close to 300 million bicycles in China. However, China is now entering its "automobile age."
4. In 1979, a cyclist crossed the English Channel in a human-powered flying machine. It was part bicycle, part hang glider.
5. When he was a teenager, Lance Armstrong got hit by a truck and fell off his bike. He wasn't wearing a helmet and almost died.
6. About 18 bicycles can fit in one parking spot.

Editor's Note:

Students who complete a task quickly can color in the image on page 2.