



GRADES 4-5 PEDESTRIAN SAFETY LESSON 3A: CROSSING INTERSECTIONS SAFELY

KNOWLEDGE BUILDING (20-25 MIN)

Overview

The instructor will review steps to crossing the street, define and discuss “intersections,” and emphasize the importance of learning to cross intersections with an adult or responsible older sibling.

This lesson is intended to orient students to key elements of intersections, such as signs, signals and crosswalks in preparation for the skill building activity where they will practice crossing intersections. Students in this grade level may already be familiar with some of the concepts; instructors can use their discretion on how much time is needed and on which concepts to place emphasis. **Remember that skill building activities are essential to children applying what they learn about how to cross intersections safely. Please see lesson 3B for skill building activities to accompany this lesson.**

At this age, children are still developing the cognitive abilities required to make safe pedestrian decisions, and concepts related to crossing intersections may be too complex for some children. Children develop the ability to understand and make decisions about their safety at different rates. Ultimately, parents/caregivers should make the decision about when their child is able to walk without supervision. This lesson encourages supervision and discussion with adults as students learn more complicated safety skills.

This lesson includes a discussion guide for two videos, “Late for School” and “Texting While Walking” to emphasize some of the key learning points in this lesson.

These lessons include a parent/caregiver tip sheet that may be sent home with students upon completion of lesson and skill building activities to encourage reinforcement of skill-building. Parent/caregiver tip sheets are available in multiple languages and can be accessed at phila.gov/safe-routes-philly.



Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Recognize that they should practice crossing an intersection with an adult
- Be able to identify and explain the meaning of traffic signs and signals
- Understand the complexities of crossing at an intersection

Materials

Appendix A: Visual Aids

- Crosswalks
- Stop Sign
- Traffic signal
- Pedestrian Signal – Walk
- Pedestrian Signal – Don't Walk/ Countdown
- **Appendix B:** Fill in the blank
- **Appendix C:** Fill in the blank answer key

Optional materials

- **Appendix D:** "[Late for School](#)" (1:23 minutes)
- **Appendix E:** "[Texting While Walking](#)" (1:17 minutes) video guides



LESSON PLAN

1

INTRODUCTION

1. Introduce the lesson by having students define in their own words what an intersection is (a place where two or more streets meet each other) and discuss their experience with crossing them. Students could work in pairs before reporting to the larger group or complete a quick writing activity.
2. Review steps to crossing the street from Lesson 2. Tell students all the same steps apply to crossing an intersection, but they will also learn additional things to pay attention to in this lesson.
3. Discuss why students need to know how to cross intersections safely. Responses may include:
 - a. For my own safety / So I don't get hurt
 - b. To show adults that I know how to be a safe pedestrian (so they will let me walk to places by myself).
 - c. To be a role model to younger children and other community members

MAKE IT INCLUSIVE!

- Explain crossing elements for people with a disability, such as curb ramps and accessible (audible) pedestrian signals. Accessible pedestrian signals use vibrations or sounds to alert pedestrians with vision impairments when the walk sign turns on.
- For students with color blindness, encourage students to watch for the position of the light in the signal that is lit and understand what each position means.
- Explain why some people need more time to cross. They may have shorter legs, use a mobility device like a cane or wheelchair or may be older.

2



MAIN LEARNING ACTIVITY – INTERSECTION BASICS

1. **Discuss with students how crossing at intersections is different than crossing midblock.**
 - a. Sometimes adults may cross in the middle of the street or "midblock" because it's more convenient. For example, they might want to get to a destination in the middle of the block, and it's easier to cross at that location than to walk to the intersection. While this might seem a good solution, there are a lot of reasons that make this unsafe:

- i. Drivers will not be expecting you to cross.
- ii. Visual barriers, such as parked cars, may block your view and drivers' ability to see you.
- iii. It's hard to judge how fast cars are coming and how much time there is to cross in between moving cars.


b. Intersections are usually the safest place to cross a street, but there are special rules you need to know and follow. Drivers can turn or go straight at an intersection. At the same time, pedestrians are crossing parts of the intersection. Everyone at the intersection needs to listen to signs or signals to know how to travel in the intersection safely.

2. Discuss and define elements of a stop-controlled intersection.

-  **a.** Display Visual Aid: Stop sign] **Stop signs** tell drivers that they need to first stop and see if it is clear to continue. Not all sides of the intersection will have a stop sign. Make sure drivers stop all the way before crossing the street.
-  **b.** [Display Visual Aid: Crosswalk] **Crosswalks** are painted areas on the road that show pedestrians where they should walk to cross an intersection. Most intersections in Philadelphia have painted crosswalks.
- c.** **Curb ramps** are small ramps that connect the sidewalk to the crosswalk. They allow people in wheelchairs or pushing strollers to safely move into the crosswalk.



3. Introduce a signal-controlled intersection.
Instead of stop signs, some intersections have traffic signals. Drivers and pedestrians look at these signals to know when it is their turn to move across the intersection.

4. Discuss and define "traffic signals" and "pedestrian signals."

-  **a.** [Display Visual Aid: Traffic Signal] Traffic signal colors tell drivers when they need to slow down, stop, or go.

- i. Red / Top Light – means stop.
- ii. Yellow / Middle Light – slow down, signal is changing.
- iii. Green / Bottom Light – means go, but always look first to be sure it's safe.

b. Pedestrian signals help pedestrians know when it is their turn to cross. Sometimes these signals make noise to help people who can't see know when it is their turn to cross. *Remember to always obey the pedestrian signals. If you don't listen to the signals, you might get into a crash and get hurt. An adult can help you understand what the pedestrian signal is telling you.*

-  **i.** [Display Visual Aid: Pedestrian Signal - Walk] When the white walking figure lights up, it is your turn to cross. **This doesn't always mean that all traffic has stopped, especially turning vehicles. You need to be sure you are still looking in all directions and listening for traffic when you cross.**
-  **ii.** [Display Visual Aid: Pedestrian Signal - Don't Walk/Countdown] The red hand signal tells you it is not safe to cross. You should stop at the edge of the sidewalk and wait until the signal changes.
- iii.** If the red hand signal is blinking or flashing, it means that time is running out for you to cross the street.
 - If you have already started crossing and you see the flashing red hand, you should keep crossing.
 - If you are still standing on the sidewalk, you should stop and wait at the edge until the signal changes to the white walking person signal.
- iv.** Sometimes pedestrian signals have countdown numbers to help pedestrians know how much time is left to cross the street.

- c. Explain that when there is no pedestrian signal, students should use the traffic signal to determine when to cross.**

i. *Not all intersections in Philadelphia have pedestrian signals. If there is not a Walk/Don't Walk signal, look for the color of the traffic signal. If the light is green, you're allowed to walk and cross the street in that direction. You must look left-right-left and check to make sure traffic is stopped before crossing. You also need to look over your shoulder to make sure there are no turning cars. If the light is red, stop and wait. Practice crossing at these types of signals with an adult.*

- 5. Check for student understanding by facilitating discussion about the elements of an intersection and the messages that different signs and signals provide for pedestrians and drivers.**

3

MAIN LEARNING ACTIVITY, PART 2: CROSSING THE INTERSECTION

- 1.** Discuss how to safely cross an intersection.
 - a.** Stop as soon as you reach the intersection. If there is a curb ramp, stop at the edge of the sidewalk before the ramp starts.
 - b.** Look for signs and signals to tell you when it is your turn to cross.
 - c.** Look and listen for traffic. Look left-right-left, then in front and behind you for cars coming from other directions in the intersection. If you see cars, repeat the process until the intersection is clear.
 - d.** Keep your head up and walk in a straight line in the crosswalk. Keep looking in all directions for cars as you are crossing.
 - e.** It's important to not be distracted while crossing. Put your phone away, turn down your music, etc.

- 2.** Emphasize the importance of practicing these skills with an adult.

a. Assess for understanding: Use the fill in the blank exercise in Appendix C to check for understanding.

4

WRAP UP

- 1.** Give students 1 minute to think about one thing they learned in this lesson that they will share with a family member or friend. Instruct students to turn to a neighbor and discuss for 2 minutes. Ask a few students to volunteer to share what they will discuss with their family member or friend. Student answers may resemble:
 - a.** Intersections are the safest place to cross, but I should be careful because cars and other pedestrians are traveling in many directions.
 - b.** Crossing at the midblock can be unsafe because cars are not expecting me to cross. It also can be hard to see cars at the midblock.
 - c.** Intersections sometimes have signs or signals to help me figure out when it's my turn to cross.
 - d.** If there are no pedestrian signals, I can use the traffic signals to figure out when to cross.
 - e.** An adult or older sibling can help me cross intersections. I can practice with them.
 - f.** I should always talk with an adult about which streets are okay for me to cross.
- 2.** Encourage students to share what they learned with their family members and friends.

APPENDIX A: Visual Aids



Crosswalk



Stop Sign



Traffic Signal



Pedestrian Signal – Walk



Pedestrian Signal – Don't Walk/Countdown



APPENDIX B

FILL IN THE BLANK

Directions: Match the word to its definition.

- 1 _____ help people understand when it's their turn to cross.
- 2 Yellow lights tell drivers to _____ .
- 3 If the hand is flashing on the pedestrian signal, pedestrians should _____ if they are already crossing and _____ if they have not started to cross.
- 4 _____
For people using a wheelchair, pushing a stroller, or pulling a cart, help them to the sidewalk.
- 5 _____ , and _____ are found at intersections that tell pedestrians, drivers, and cyclists when to stop, go, and slow down.
- 6 _____ tell pedestrians where to cross.

Curb ramps

Traffic signals

Pedestrian signals

Slow down

Crosswalks

Keep crossing

Wait for the walking person

APPENDIX C

FILL IN THE BLANK ANSWERS

PAGE 7 ANSWER KEY:

1. Pedestrian Signals
2. Slow Down
3. Keep Crossing, Wait for the Walking Person
4. Curb Ramps
5. Traffic Signals, Pedestrian Signals
6. Crosswalks

APPENDIX D

LATE FOR SCHOOL VIDEO GUIDE

Directions: To reinforce the messages in the lesson and test student understanding, instructors can show the Safe Routes Philly videos and use the discussion guides below.

Video Title: [Late for School \(1:23\)](#)

Topic Area: Crossing intersections safely

Play the first section of the video, until you see the screen that says “Was that Safe or Unsafe?” and then hit pause to discuss the behaviors with your students, recording their answers on the board if you choose.

The first section is unsafe for the following reasons:

- The child runs into the street without stopping at the curb to look left, right, left
- The child ignores the instructions of the crossing guard

Play the next section of the video until you see the screen that says “Was that Safe or Unsafe?” and then hit pause to discuss the behaviors with your students, recording their answers on the board if you choose.

The second section is safe for the following reasons:

- The child stops at the edge of the curb
- The child waits for the crossing guard to wave him through the intersection before crossing

Play the final review section to remind students that they must always listen to the instructions of their crossing guards, even if they are running late.

APPENDIX E

TEXTING WHILE WALKING VIDEO GUIDE

Directions: To reinforce the messages in the lesson and test student understanding, instructors can show the Safe Routes Philly videos and use the discussion guides below.

Video Title: [Texting While Walking \(1:17\)](#)

Topic Area: Crossing intersections safely

Play the first section of the video, until you see the screen that says “Was that Safe or Unsafe?” and then hit pause to discuss the behaviors with your students, recording their answers on the board if you choose.

The first section is unsafe for the following reasons:

- The child is paying more attention to her phone than walking safely
- The child only briefly pauses to look up at the traffic signal before crossing through the intersection
- The child enters the intersection without looking left-right-left

Play the next section of the video until you see the screen that says “Was that Safe or Unsafe?” and then hit pause to discuss the behaviors with your students, recording their answers on the board if you choose.

The second section is safe for the following reasons:

- The child stops at the edge of the curb and puts her cell phone at her side so she can pay attention to the traffic light
- The child stays on the curb and does not cross until she has a green light

Challenge your students to find things the girl could have done better in the safe video clip. (Even though she had a green light, she could have looked left, right, left to make sure no cars were coming).

Play the final review section to remind students that they should never enter an intersection without putting their phone or game down, stopping at the edge of the curb and looking left, right, left.



GRADES 4–5 PEDESTRIAN SAFETY LESSON 3B: CROSSING INTERSECTIONS SAFELY

SKILL BUILDING ACTIVITIES (10–30 MIN)

It is important for children to practice safe pedestrian behaviors that they learned during the knowledge building lessons for them to develop motor skills and replicate these behaviors in their everyday life.

Research indicates that knowledge-building alone does not transfer to behavior change. For students to develop safe pedestrian behaviors they need to be given the opportunity to practice specific skills. Ideally, the practice opportunities will be performed in a real context (i.e. outside of a classroom or gym) but any practice opportunity is better than none.

The Safe Routes Philly Pedestrian Safety Skill Building Activities listed below provide three options for skill-building activities at increasing levels of real-world context:

- **Demonstrate understanding by playing “Red Hand, Walking Person” game:** Classroom, gymnasium, or on school grounds
- **Practice safely crossing the model intersection:** Gymnasium or on school grounds
- **Take a supervised walk in a nearby neighborhood with adult volunteers:** On nearby neighborhood roads

Each activity option includes details on space, time, materials and staff support required.

Prior to the activity, the instructor should review the Lesson 3 Knowledge Building materials and provide a brief review for students and model any behaviors/ body movements that will be part of the Skill Building activity.

These lessons include a parent/caregiver tip sheet that may be sent home with students upon completion of lesson and skill building activities to encourage reinforcement of skill-building. Parent/caregiver tip sheets are available in multiple languages and can be accessed at phila.gov/safe-routes-philly.

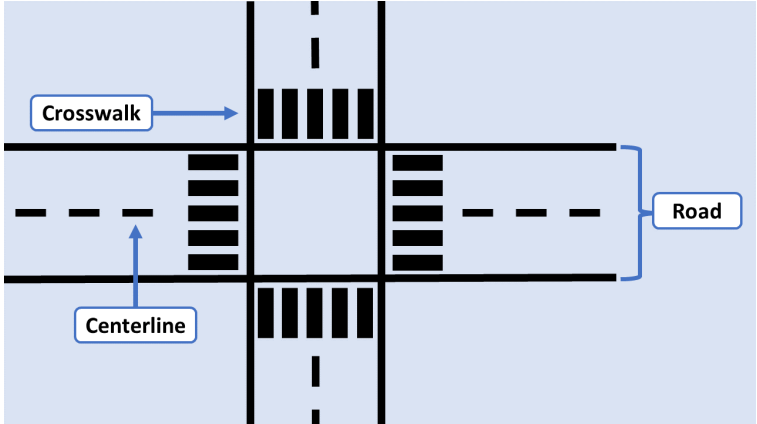


SKILL BUILDING INSIDE

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	DETAILS
<p>Demonstrate understanding by playing “Red Hand, Walking Person” game</p> <p>(10 minutes)</p>	<p>LOCATION: Classroom, gymnasium, or virtual classroom</p> <p>MATERIALS: Printed pedestrian signal visual aids from Lesson 3 Knowledge Building lesson</p> <p>STAFF SUPPORT: No additional staff support needed.</p> <p>INSTRUCTIONS: Students will practice some of the things they have learned about crossing intersections by playing a variation on the game, “Red Light, Green Light.” Since they have learned about pedestrian signals this variation is called “Red Hand, Walking Person.”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have all students to line up shoulder to shoulder across a clear, open area or opposite the instructor.2. The instructor will call out “Red Hand” for students to freeze at the “edge” of the street.3. The instructor will then call out “Walking Person” for the children to begin moving safely walking. Students must look Left-Right-Left and Front and Back before walking (not running) in a straight line while continuing to look. If they do not do these things, they are out!4. The first student or students to reach the instructor at the “other side of the intersection” is declared the “Crossing the Intersection Champ!” This student could help call out the instructions for the next round.



SKILL BUILDING OUTSIDE

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	DETAILS
<p>Practice safely crossing the model intersection (15-20 minutes)</p>	<p>LOCATION: Gymnasium or on school grounds</p> <p>MATERIALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Printed pedestrian signal visual aids from Lesson 3 Knowledge Building lesson. Cones, tape, and yard sticks to create traffic signs, traffic signals and pedestrian signals using the visual aids. Tape or rope to create a model 4-way intersection, similar to the example below.  <p>Use masking tape to create a 4-way intersection. Eight long strips of tape are needed for the streets, and short strips are needed for the lane dividers in the middle of the streets.</p> <p>OPTIONAL STAFF SUPPORT: Possibly adult or other student helpers.</p>



SKILL BUILDING OUTSIDE

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	DETAILS
<p>Practice safely crossing the model intersection (15-20 minutes)</p>	<p>INSTRUCTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up model intersection as shown in diagram above. • Remind students that it is best to cross busy or wide streets at the intersection, not midblock. • Remind students to always be careful at intersections. They are complex because drivers and other pedestrians are traveling in multiple directions. • Remind students of the need to practice crossing intersections with an adult or older brother or sister. • Verbally review / demonstrate the steps for crossing a street: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stop at the edge ○ Look and listen for traffic ○ Cross quickly and safely • Remind students to discuss with an adult which streets and intersections they are allowed to cross. Have students take turns practicing the steps to cross the intersection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stop at the edge of the sidewalk while you wait to cross. ○ Look for signs and signals to help you know when it is your turn to cross. ○ Traffic can be coming from four directions, so we need to look front and back in addition to left and right. • Instructors and other adults or older student helpers can serve as the traffic signals (changing from green to yellow to red) and pedestrian signals (Walk/Don't Walk) as students practice crossing the intersection. • Remind students of the reasons why they must practice safe behaviors at intersections. • Instructors should provide positive feedback and gently correct mistakes. <p>VARIATIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students take turns as pedestrians, traffic and traffic signals. • Use trash cans or large boxes to create visual barriers and help students practice moving to the second edge to cross. <p>If time allows, this younger group of students can partner with an older group of children (i.e.: grade level pairings of 4-5 and 2-3 or K-1). The older children can demonstrate safe behavior while teaching and modeling for the younger children.</p>



SKILL BUILDING NEAR TRAFFIC

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	DETAILS
<p>Take a walk in a nearby neighborhood with adult volunteers to practice and reinforce safe behaviors when crossing intersections</p> <p>(20-30 minutes)</p>	<p>LOCATION: Outside</p> <p>MATERIALS: Walking field trip permission slips, signed by all students' guardians</p> <p>STAFF SUPPORT: Adult volunteers (1 adult for every 6-8 students)</p> <p>INSTRUCTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate a route that is accessible for students that may have mobility impairments. Note: Consider assigning staff or older student helpers.• Before leaving school, instructor should verbally review / demonstrate the steps for crossing an intersection:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Stop at the edge. If there is a curb ramp, stop at the edge of the sidewalk, not on the curb ramp while you wait to cross.○ Look for signs and signals to help you know when it is your turn to cross.○ Traffic can be coming from four directions, so we need to look front and back in addition to left and right.○ Cross quickly and safely.• Remind students to always be careful at intersections. They are complex because drivers and other pedestrians are traveling in multiple directions and may be turning.• Remind students of the need to practice crossing intersections with an adult or older brother or sister.• If possible, students should have the opportunity to practice the steps to cross intersections with with STOP signs and signalized intersections.• When crossing intersections, remind students of the reasons why they must practice these safe behaviors.