

Walk or Bike to School Day Art

Subject: Art, Language Arts



OBJECTIVES:

- To create posters, signs or banners that can be used for Walk or Bike to School Day
- To generate awareness and excitement around these celebrated days



MATERIALS:

- Large pieces of paper
- Paints or markers
- Newspapers, containers for mixing paint and other painting supplies (if using paint)



SETTING: indoors



ESTIMATED TIME: 1-2 class periods



VOCABULARY: international, fitness



ACTIVITY SOURCE: Marin County Bicycle Coalition, Safe Routes to School Program



OVERVIEW:

This activity can be used to generate excitement around International Walk to School Day (held during the first week in October) and/or Bike to School/Work Day (held during the second Thursday in May). Students will be asked to generate slogans and make posters that publicize one of these two days for their fellow schoolmates.

This lesson can be as simple or extravagant as you'd like it to be. Students might design simple posters to display in the classroom, or larger banners to display around the school. They could even use them when they walk to school with their peers on Walk to School Day. Markers work well with small posters, and tempura paint (though messy) is a great medium for larger banners.

BACKGROUND:

Walk to School Day was created in 1994, when a group in Great Britain, recognizing the alarming trend away from walking to school, piloted the first walk to school week in the summer term with just a few of its schools. The Partnership for a Walkable America brought the celebration to the United States in 1997, as countries around the world also began celebrating as well. In 2007 Walk to School Day changed to Walk to School Month and was celebrated in 42 countries with millions of walkers. Walk to School Day is a cornerstone project of Safe Routes to School Sonoma County, with 50 schools and over 6000 students participating in 2009. *International Walk to School website*

Bike-to-Work Day is an annual event held on the third Friday of May across the United States and Canada that promotes the bicycle as an option for commuting to work. Leading up to Bike-to-Work Day, bicycle advocacy groups encourage people to try bicycle commuting as a healthy and safe alternative to driving by providing route information and tips for new bicycle commuters. *Bike to Work Day, Wikipedia*

LESSON SET-UP:

1. Decide which type of paint or markers you will be using for the posters.
2. Set up the art project by putting out paint, scratch paper and larger-sized paper.

STATE STANDARDS

Visual Arts

2.4: Create a work of art based on the observation of objects and scenes in daily life, emphasizing value changes.

Language Arts

- 1.1: Create a single paragraph.
 - a. Develop a topic sentence.
 - B. Include simple supporting facts and details.

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NOTE: This lesson has been written for Walk to School Day in October, but can be easily adapted for Bike to School Day in May, or a Spring walk to school event.

DISCUSSION:

1. Ask students if they know about International Walk (and Roll) to School Day (*IW2S*). Have one student explain what *IW2S* Day is all about.
2. Explain that October is Walk to School month; students from all of the world will walk and ride to school to show that we can get around without cars.
3. Brainstorm reasons why we celebrate Walk to School Day; you can simplify this with the **Fantastic Four Reasons** to Walk and Ride:
 - ✓ Cutting down on pollution
 - ✓ Getting good exercise
 - ✓ Cutting down on traffic
 - ✓ Having Fun
4. Review the Six Simple Steps for Staying Safe:
 - When walking or bicycling, stop at every curb or edge.
 - Always STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN, especially while crossing. Look left, look right, then left again, before stepping past any curb driveway or edge.
 - Always wear a helmet when riding a bike.
 - Always ride in the same direction as traffic.
 - Learn all traffic signs and signals.
 - Look for the safest place to cross the street. Use crosswalks, crossing signals (lights) and crossing guards.
5. Brainstorm other ways students can stay safe.
6. Explain that the class will be making posters that publicize Walk to School Day. If you have not already sent home letters to parents promoting the day, now might be the time to do so.

ACTIVITY:

Part I: Art Project

1. Have students work in pairs, and give each pair scratch paper, large poster-sized paper and whichever medium you will be working with (markers, tempura paint, etc). If working with tempura paint, set up a separate station with

newspapers for the paint.

2. Students should first come up with a catchy slogan that promotes Walk to School Day. Examples might include “Use your Feet!”, “Talk while you walk”, or “Active kids are healthy kids!”.
3. They should then sketch their slogan and poster design onto a sheet of scratch paper.
4. Then have them make the final poster using bigger-sized paper.
5. Posters could be displayed around the school and throughout the classroom. Students could also carry the posters to school, especially if they will be participating in a walking school bus.

Part II: Writing Lesson

1. Brainstorm specific topics to write about that are relevant to Walk or Bike to School Day. Topics could include:
 - ✓ Ways we can make the community safe for walking and bicycling.
 - ✓ Ways we can get more students to walk and ride their bikes to school.
2. Have students choose a topic from this list and then write a paragraph about it. You can easily tie this lesson to a mini-Language Arts lesson, such as how to write topic sentences or how to write a persuasive paragraph.
3. Have students share their paragraphs with each other or in front of the class.

EXTENSION IDEAS

1. Enlist the support of other teachers at your school and hold a contest that judges the best poster. Give away prizes such as bike helmets or gift certificates to sporting-good stores.
2. Have students announce Walk to School Day and show their posters during a morning assembly.
3. Put posters up in the community to promote Walk or Bike to School Day, such as in cafes, at the school district offices or in local stores.