

MECHANIMALS

Lesson Two

Staying Focussed as a Pedestrian.



Target audience: BGE (S1-S3)

Lesson aim: To encourage young people to consider the range of distractions that can impact on pedestrian safety

Learning objectives:

- Students will be able to describe common distractions experienced by pedestrians
- Students will develop an awareness of their own behaviour and the impact on their own personal safety
- Students will be informed about ways to stay safe as a pedestrian

Timing	45-50 minute lesson	Key words	Distractions
Resources	PowerPoint presentation, work sheet, optional – Ipad	Preparation	Familiarise yourself with the recommended reading

Lesson outline	Description	Resources	Class set up	Timing
Intro/recap	Intro/recap the Mechanimals resource	Tablet	Whole class	5 mins
Key Vocabulary	Defining what a distraction is?	N/A	Whole class	2/3 mins (Not included in time)
Starter/ Activity 1	Spot the distraction	Jotter/Tablet	In small groups	15 mins
Activity 2	Beats v Mechanimals	Jotter/Tablet	Individual	15 mins
Activity 3	True or False	Jotter/Tablet	Individual	10 mins
Plenary	Recap		Individual	5 mins

Before you begin

It is important to establish a safe learning environment where students feel comfortable to share and discuss. Be mindful that some young people may have had negative experiences around the topic either themselves or someone close to them. This can be addressed by regular check ins/ options to sit out parts.

Introduction/recap – The Mechanimals

This is lesson two, however useful to recap on the importance of road safety learning. Collisions on our roads remain one of the main causes of accidental deaths among children and young people in Scotland. This resource has been developed to help equip students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to make positive choices on and around our roads.



Play the Mechanimals intro film

Key Vocabulary

Before continuing with the lesson you can ask the class if anyone knows what the term means. Once discussed share the definition with the class. This will ensure the class have a shared understanding as this word features heavily in the lesson.

Key Definitions

Distraction - A thing that takes your attention away from what you are doing or thinking about. (*n*) – *Oxford Dictionary*

Starter/task1 – Spot the distraction

15 mins

In Lesson 1 we explored hazards. Lesson 2 will build on this by focussing on pedestrian distractions.

Mechanimals love when we are distracted. It makes it much easier for them to cause us harm.



Show Mechanimals distraction film

This could act as a discussion starter around pedestrian distractions.

Questions that could be posed around these clips:

- On a scale of 1-10, how likely is this to happen in real life?
- What other things can distract you from the road?
- In pairs, create a list of the top 3 things that could distract a pedestrian

Activity 2 – Beats v Mechanimals

15 mins

In this activity, students watch a short film featuring a girl listening to a remix of a song. Hidden within the music are real road sounds, car engines, horns, brakes, and shouts of warning. After viewing, the class discuss how many of these sounds they noticed, revealing how easily important road cues can be missed when we're distracted or 'lost in the moment'.

Encourage discussion about pedestrian distractions. Why should you have the sound lower or an ear clear when walking near Mechanimals? Is talking on your phone as dangerous as listening to music? How many accidents are caused by distractions?

Important information for teachers to consider

Statistics around young people and accidents

To support further, 2024 figures are shared below:

- 161 people were reported as killed in 2024, 7 per cent (13) below the 2014-2018 average of 174.
- 1,978 people were reported as seriously injured in 2024, 27 per cent (749) below the 2014-2018 average of 2,727.
- 3 children were reported as killed in 2024, meaning the average for the 2022-2024 period was 4 a year, this is 35 per cent (2) below the 2014-2018 average of 6.
- 160 children were reported as seriously injured in 2024, 38 per cent (99) below the 2014-2018 average of 259.

When discussing: important things to remember/mention (taken from Road Safety Scotland)

From podcasts to music and chatting, phones and headphones are now used more and more by people while out walking.

Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Any distractions can make you less aware of your surroundings
 - Like judging where other people are on the pavement
 - Or a vehicle's speed and distance if you're crossing a road
- Headphones can mask the sound of vehicles coming
- You'll also be less aware of your environment and your personal safety
- Electric vehicles make no engine noise, so be sure to look properly before crossing
- If you have to use your phone, it's better for everyone if you stop first and put your phone away before crossing any roads

Activity 3 – True or False

Students can indicate either in their jotter or by raising a hand whether they think they answer is true or false.

1. **True or False:** It's safe to walk and text at a crossing if you've looked both ways.
2. **True or False:** You can wear earbuds and hear traffic just fine.
3. **True or False:** It's better to stop on the pavement and text than doing it while you're crossing.
4. **True or False:** It's fine to cross the road with friends when you're all speaking loudly to each other.
5. **True or False:** It's good to make eye contact with drivers and make sure they stop before crossing.
6. **True or False:** You should never just assume drivers see you, even on a marked crossing.
7. **True or False:** You don't need to wait for the green man light at a crossing.
8. **True or False:** It's fine to skateboard across the road.
9. **True or False:** A text from your pals is more important than looking both ways as you cross.
10. **True or False:** Drivers will be expecting it and stop if your dog drags you across the road.

Answer key:

1. **False** – always be alert at crossings for Mechanimals.
2. **False** – when you can't hear properly you're more likely to be hit by a Mechanimal.
3. **True** – It's better to stop and use your phone, then put it away before you start moving again.
4. **False** – you should stop talking and focus on crossing the road for a moment.
5. **True** – it's good to make eye contact with drivers and wait.
6. **True** – always assume that they might not have spotted you.
7. **False** – it's always better to wait for the light, you never know when a Mechanimal might be speeding nearby.
8. **False** – you should get off your skateboard or scooter so you're fully in control.
9. **False** – the text will still be there at the other side.
10. **False** – drivers aren't always focussed and their Mechanimal takes time to stop.

Practical advice for pedestrians

Be smarter than your smartphone. Don't walk distracted.

- Whether it is getting directions, listening to music, checking social networks, or browsing the internet, we are more dependent on our mobiles than ever before. This requires us to be aware of the distractions this can cause.

Take action against distractions

- Pedestrians distracted by phone conversations or other activities are more likely to take greater risks when crossing the road.
- A way to increase your safety as a pedestrian is not using your mobile phone whilst walking, especially when near or crossing roads. Studies have indicated that messaging and handheld mobile phones are linked with accident rates and near misses.
- Be a safe pedestrian – if you need to use your phone whilst walking, stop, use your phone, then put it away out of sight. Keep focused on where you are going and not on your phone.
- If you are listening to music when out walking/jogging near a road, either have one ear clear from sound, or have the overall sound much lower so you can hear the environment around you.

Conclusion/plenary

5 mins

Revisit the Lesson aim and objectives with the students, ask for examples of common distractions and ways to avoid these. Thus, deepening their understanding of personal safety.

This can be done via questions, or in the form of an exit pass.