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PREVIEW | Commuting to School and Work

[1]

■ How much do you already know about the material in this unit? Circle letters or words to correctly complete the sentences. Answers are upside down at the bottom of the page.

1. Hitchhiking is a (safe / risky) way to get from place to place.
2. (Walking / Driving) can be very good for your health.
3. Regular walking tends to (weaken / strengthen) your bones.
4. Bikers should always ride (with / against) traffic.
5. Ride sharing can (reduce / increase) your transportation costs.
6. A commuter is someone who (races bikes in special stadiums / travels to and from work or school).
7. To drive in a carpool lane, a motorist must
 - a. drive a big bus or van.
 - b. have at least one passenger.
 - c. go faster than 55 mph.
8. A hitchhiker
 - a. seeks free rides with strangers.
 - b. carpools with a friend.
 - c. uses public transportation.
9. Hitchhiking can be a danger to
 - a. the vehicle driver.
 - b. the hitchhiker.
 - c. both a and b.
10. A smart way to share a ride is to
 - a. join a carpool.
 - b. team up with another hitchhiker.
 - c. ride on the back of a friend's bike.

Answers: 1. risky 2. Walking 3. strengthen 4. with 5. reduce 6. travels to and from work or school 7. b 8. a 9. c 10. a

LESSON

1 The Dangers of Hitchhiking

A roller coaster zooms up hills and careens down slopes. The riders' hearts are pounding with excitement. Amusement park rides are amusing because riders aren't facing actual danger. Another kind of ride, however, is very dangerous indeed. Every hitchhiker who sticks out a thumb on a public highway puts himself or herself in real jeopardy.

Did you know that hitchhikers are most often teens or young adults? They usually have little money to spend and a strong desire to get around. Do you think "hitching" is a cheap and easy way to get from place to place? Think again. The cost of seeking a ride from a stranger can be high. Sometimes, thumbing a lift can have very serious consequences.

- According to one public safety official, "Some of the most horrendous crimes begin with the victim accepting a ride with a stranger."
- The danger starts even before the ride begins. Hitchhikers standing near a roadway risk being struck by a moving vehicle.
- When they climb into a stranger's vehicle, hitchhikers face the very

real possibility of kidnapping, robbery, and bodily harm—or even death.

- A hitchhiker also can't be certain that the driver hasn't been drinking alcohol or taking drugs. Is this a motorist who can control the vehicle? We all run the risk of a traffic accident every time we get in a car, of course. But the risk is obviously much greater when we know nothing at all about the driver.



On the flip side of the coin are the risks to drivers who pick up hitchhikers. Is that smiling stranger on the roadside a decent person—or a criminal looking for a victim?

There are better ways to share a ride rather than hitchhiking. Travel groups and agencies organize ride-share programs that match riders and drivers. Ride boards through school or work can be another source to find shared rides. Monthly passes and ticket booklets make public transportation yet another low-cost option. You'll get more details about economical transportation ideas as you read this book—ideas for travel that are both inexpensive *and* safe!

■ **Thinking It Over**

1. What is the main point of the reading?
 - a. Hitchhiking can be an economical way to travel.
 - b. Hitchhiking is a dangerous way to travel.
 - c. Hitchhiking with strangers is a grand adventure.
2. Which problem with hitchhiking is *not* mentioned in the article?
 - a. You might hitch a ride with a bad driver.
 - b. It could take a long time to get to your destination.
 - c. It's unsafe to stand alongside a busy road.
3. Which message does the author present?
 - a. Thumbing a ride is dangerous only to the hitchhiker.
 - b. It's a mistake to hitchhike in rainy weather.
 - c. Hitchhiking can be dangerous for both the rider and driver.
4. What does the author suggest as a good alternative to hitchhiking?
 - a. ride-sharing
 - b. walking
 - c. biking

■ **Key Vocabulary:** Circle the word that means the same as the **boldface** word.

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. jeopardy | 2. motorist |
| safety | driver |
| danger | biker |
| travel | hitchhiker |

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 3. consequences | 4. horrendous |
| outcomes | helpful |
| vehicles | huge |
| highways | horrible |
| 5. economical | 6. decent |
| expensive | honest |
| risky | thrifty |
| inexpensive | drunk |

■ **Drawing Conclusions**

What do you think the author means by saying, "The costs of seeking a ride from a stranger can be high"? What might the costs be?

■ **Antonyms:** Draw a line to match words with opposite meanings.

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| 1. criminal | a. unsure |
| 2. economical | b. private |
| 3. public | c. avoid |
| 4. jeopardy | d. victim |
| 5. seek | e. expensive |
| 6. certain | f. safety |

■ **On Your Own**

Can you think of a reason to avoid hitchhiking or picking up hitchhikers that is *not* mentioned in the reading? Write the reason below.

LESSON**2 Taking the Ankle Express**

One day, instead of running for the bus, Liza put on a pair of comfortable shoes and grabbed her backpack. She decided to take the “ankle express” to school. Walking gave her an all-day physical and mental boost. She enjoyed fresh air, scenery, and chatting with neighbors.

Walking is the oldest and most basic means of transportation. When babies learn to walk, their world widens as they explore. But adults tend to lose their enthusiasm for walking. Some communities may not be very “walkable.” Many places are spread out, so people depend on cars to get them to school, the mall, or the library.

Walking, whether a stroll or racewalk, is an excellent way to maintain good health. It’s simple, natural, and easy on the body. No expensive equipment or training is needed. Build muscle, strengthen bones, relieve stress, and improve your heart and lung function as you walk!

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, physical activity doesn’t need to be strenuous in order to be healthful. Any moderate, regular activity—such as walking—can lower high blood pressure and help control weight. It can even reduce the risk of early death.

Walking is easy, but consider these *Dos* and *Don’ts*:



- **DON'T** walk at a pace that makes you breathe heavily. As you walk, you should be able to talk or sing without becoming breathless.
- **DO** drink water or other fluids before, during, and after walking.
- **DON'T** watch your feet, which causes neck and shoulder strain. Walk with your head up, back straight, shoulders relaxed, and scan the sidewalk ahead for obstacles.
- **DO** some stretching exercises before and after vigorous walking.
- **DO** take smooth, even strides, even as you increase your speed.
- **DO** vary your route to maintain interest and enjoyment.
- **DO** wear comfortable, well-cushioned shoes, and dress for the weather.

■ **Thinking It Over:** Write **T** for *true* or **F** for *false*.

1. ____ To gain health benefits from walking, you must walk fast and far.
2. ____ People with high blood pressure can often walk their way to better health.
3. ____ Regular walking can help you live longer.
4. ____ Walking can be good exercise for people of all ages.
5. ____ When walking, always keep your eyes on your feet.

3. Name three physical benefits of walking.

4. Name a mental benefit of walking.

5. What federal official declared that any level of walking can be healthful?

■ **Key Vocabulary**

1. Explain the difference between a *stroll* and a *racewalk*.

■ **Informal Language**

What do you think the author means by the phrase “ankle express”?

Read the **boldface** words from the reading. Write **S** if the word describes a *stroll* or **RW** if it describes a *racewalk*.

2. ____ **strenuous**
3. ____ **moderate**
4. ____ **vigorous**
5. ____ **relaxed**
6. ____ **breathless**

■ **On Your Own**

Consider taking the “ankle express” to your school or job. List some pros (benefits) and cons (disadvantages) of walking as transportation.

PROS: _____

CONS: _____

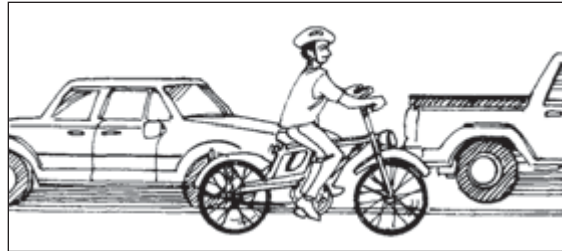
■ **Recalling Details**

1. What is the oldest form of transportation?

2. What two activities should you be able to do as you walk?

LESSON**3 Biking: The Rules of the Road**

Wanda's Whirled of Wheels is a popular cycle shop. Wanda does more than sell bicycles, though. She also offers classes in bike maintenance and safety. She encourages cyclists to invest in safety equipment such as helmets, lights, bright clothing, flags, and mirrors. With each purchase, Wanda's customers take home a printed sheet of rules of the road. The following rules call for a safe and defensive riding style.

**WANDA'S RULES OF THE ROAD FOR CYCLISTS**

- Know and obey all the local traffic rules.
- Assume that motorists will not see you. Drivers expect to see other motorists and may not notice a cyclist.
- Don't keep your eyes on the roadway beneath you. Instead, scan the road ahead to anticipate problems or obstacles.
- Ride only one person on a bicycle (unless you're on a tandem or other special bike).
- Ride on the right side of the road along with the traffic. In most places, it's illegal for bicyclists to ride against the traffic or on the sidewalk.
- Keep both hands on the handlebars. A busy stretch of road is not a good place to get a drink from your water bottle.
- Use lights and wear bright or reflective clothing when riding at night.
- Don't hitch rides by holding onto other vehicles.
- Never ride a bike while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Be sure to signal before you turn.
- Ride in a straight line at a steady pace. This allows motorists to predict your course.
- Before entering a road or an intersection, look left, right, and left again.
- Make eye contact with drivers.
- When riding alongside parked cars, look through the rear windows. Watch for drivers pulling out or opening car doors!
- Even though you have the right of way, don't take it for granted. Automobiles have much better protection against accidents than bikers do! Being right does not always mean being safe!
- Some streets are just too dangerous to ride on—even with proper skills and defensive riding. Sometimes you simply have to avoid certain roads.