

# 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.

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

## 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
<b>1</b>	give a different name to a person or object	me <b>ck</b> nian	
<b>2</b>	the negative form of "too"	he <b>ri</b> te	
<b>3</b>	the opposite of "dangerous"	fe <b>s</b> a	
<b>4</b>	has two wheels and two foot pedals	yi <b>cb</b> elc	
<b>5</b>	very big	nt <b>g</b> ai	
<b>6</b>	you make these go around with your feet	da <b>lp</b> es	

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.