About SMART MOVES
Middle School Curriculum

SMART MOVES Middle School Curriculum invites students to become active citizens – to examine real issues in their own community and act on their knowledge and beliefs. Designed by the Office of Transportation at the City of Portland, this curriculum is intended to build a sense of hope in youth, to give them a stake in their city and the skills and desire to shape it.

The mission of the City of Portland is to encourage traffic safety, a clean environment, and livable neighborhoods. Meeting these goals requires the participation of informed citizens working together, and educators like you are crucial to this process.

Why SMART MOVES?

This curriculum helps students to:

• Identify real transportation, planning, and environmental issues in their community.
• Practice problem solving.
• Understand how a community is formed and managed.
• Learn traffic and safety rules.
• Safely explore healthy transportation options such as walking, biking, and roller-blading.
• See the connection between transportation habits and the environment.
• Develop and practice benchmark skills.
• Discover a clear vision for their community and create a plan of action.

Who is it for?

SMART MOVES was created for all middle school students. With minor adaptations, it can be used successfully with classes that contain a wide range of skill levels. In addition, these lessons can be tied to a variety of subject areas. For example, a teacher looking for language arts assignments will find topics here suitable for narrative, imaginative, expository, and persuasive writing exercises.

What’s in this Curriculum?

The SMART MOVES Curriculum consists of ten lessons ranging from health and safety to environmental and planning issues. Behind each lesson is a concern for both the safety of individuals moving about the community and the safety of the environment in which they travel.

Lesson Components

Each lesson plan includes the following components:
• **Overview** – lesson summary
• **Objectives** – specific student outcomes
• **Time** – approximate class periods
• **Materials** – detailed list of all materials necessary to teach the lesson
• **Procedure** – step-by-step suggestions for teaching
• **Assessment Opportunities** – within the lesson
• **Extensions** – suggestions for further study
• **Benchmarks** – correlated to the Oregon Standards and Benchmarks. Information includes the subject area, strand, content standard, and specific benchmarks for 8th grade. Where the content standard and benchmark are identical, only the content standard is listed.
• **Resources** – local, regional, and national
• **Student Handouts** – copy-ready student handouts
• **Teacher Resources** – answers to questions on student handouts and background information

**Overview of Lessons**

**Making Choices 1: Basic Principles**

Students examine core beliefs behind American values, including the thinking of philosophers such as Locke and Rousseau. Through dialogue, students define and develop their own principles and values.

**Making Choices 2: Walking the Walk**

In this second lesson on values, students recognize the complexity of environmental choices, explore a process for decision making, and create an environmental action plan based on their principles.
H2O and Cars
Students discover the connection between cars and water quality. They discuss how they can help prevent water pollution, and then create illustrated fact sheets to distribute to drivers in the community.

Trees, Cars and CO2
Using simple arithmetic to figure the amount of CO2 emissions produced by their own travel, students understand why fuel-efficient cars are more environmentally friendly. As a wrap-up activity, students design a bumper sticker that expresses the information they have learned.

Form, Function, and Freeways
Students consider how transportation infrastructure affects the way we live our lives. Students study the streets located around their school and the functions that the streets serve for the school community as well as for the Portland metropolitan area. They then consider a major transportation decision that would affect their school's neighborhood and write an impact statement that explains the ramifications of the decision.

ECO Town
By playing a board game, students are introduced to the transportation issues involved in planning a livable city.
Pushing Pedal Power
In this lesson, students analyze car advertisements, discuss the bicycle as an alternative to the car, and then create their own advertisements promoting bicycling.

Safety
Students read descriptions of transportation crashes, play a game that requires them to identify transportation safety rules, and then observe and record safe and unsafe behaviors in the community.

Get Moving and Get Healthy
In this lesson, students calculate their resting heart rates and target heart rates. They complete fitness evaluations and set activity goals using various modes of transportation to improve their health.

What Do You Know Bingo
In this group bingo game, students review traffic safety, health, transportation, and planning issues using questions taken from the lessons.

Tips for Using SMART MOVES

How to integrate
This curriculum offers a flexible tool for teaching many community issues: citizenship, environmental awareness, safety, and health. Some of the lessons cover a single topic in one class period, while others focus on
complex concepts and extend over several periods. The lessons are complete and may be used as is or easily modified.

How you integrate the lessons into your curriculum depends on your goals and your students’ interests and skill levels. You could choose individual lesson plans to introduce, supplement, or extend a unit you are teaching. Or you could use the whole curriculum in sequential order as a unit in itself. Any one of these lessons could be the basis for a module, class project, or service learning.

**Reading, thinking, and speaking**

Many of the lessons ask students to read handouts, but the process is adaptable. If reading the handouts proves too difficult for some students, consider reading those handouts aloud to your class or pairing poor readers with better ones.

Whatever you do, don’t shy away from the lessons that engage higher order thinking just because your students have limited skills. Many educators are now finding that students with a range of abilities are capable of and indeed interested in tackling the complex thinking real-world issues require.

Young people are experts on their experiences. They care about their neighborhoods and want to talk about them. If you adopt the role of facilitator, you can help your students construct exciting and meaningful exchanges. You won’t have all the answers. You don’t have to. You are all citizens of Portland and you are deciding how you will live in this city. The
SMART MOVES Curriculum asks teachers to collaborate with their students, to share a dialogue about the common good and what it means to our daily lives.

**Group work**
Almost all of the lessons ask students to work in groups, a tactic that helps them learn and practice teamwork skills. Citizenship requires the ability to work and solve problems together. But you might also want to make opportunities for students to produce individual pieces as well, such as poems, drawings, songs, or models that express their unique understanding of a concept or topic.

**Getting out into the community**
Teachers should note that it is almost impossible to study livability issues without getting students out into the community. You may have students who have never walked around the school or their own neighborhoods. As much as possible, get students out of the classroom to look and think about the place where they live. Help them realize that the results of human decisions are all around them. Do they like what they see? What decisions would they make if they were in charge?

Some of the lessons ask students to practice a skill in the community and report back to the class. This “homework” can be a fun way to reinforce concepts if you make a point to ask students what they discovered. Encourage your students to develop the eye of an anthropologist. What’s
going on out there in the community? What do they see? And why do they think it is happening?

**Further study**

Use the resources listed at the end of each lesson to expand and extend study of the topic covered in the lesson. Both Metro, (503) 797-1755, and Tri-Met, (503) 962-7660, have curricula that are compatible with SMART MOVES. Check out their offerings for more lessons on safety and livability issues.

**Project ideas**

Projects offer students the opportunity for hands-on, contextual learning and are a powerful way for students to connect academic knowledge with the world around them. Whenever possible, students should share their projects with an audience of peers or adults.

Below are a few suggestions for projects that students could complete with support and guidance from adults. Students could:

- Map the neighborhood and/or the area around the school. Have them include specific transportation facilities such as crosswalks or bike paths.
- Conduct information interviews with individuals involved in transportation and planning issues: planners, platters, members of a neighborhood association, or local bike club.
- Put on a bike or scooter safety rodeo with an obstacle course and prizes. Invite police officers to moderate.
- Create a guide to the best bike routes for kids in the city.
• Design a handbook on bike, bus, or pedestrian safety.

• Take on a community issue, (such as a dangerous intersection near their school), attend neighborhood or city meetings, and bring attention to the problem with informational flyers.

• Explore on the Internet what other cities in America and around the world have done to create safe and livable environments.

• Design and display a safety collage.

• Write and perform plays on safety and environmental issues for other classes.

• Create and conduct surveys. Have your students survey the community to find out what people like and dislike about their neighborhoods. Make sure students include respondents from all races and cultures in their survey. They could ask questions such as: What would you like to change about the traffic in your neighborhood? What safety rules do you wish more people would follow? Have students put this information on charts or graphs and come up with solutions to the problems that respondents identified. Students could even go back to the same respondents and ask them what they think of their solutions. This project helps students understand the challenges of creating a community for the common good.

• Develop a multi-media presentation. Students could inform other students or members of the PTA about their neighborhood. Presentations could include video-taped interviews with community members, an audio tape of neighborhood sounds set to music, or a slide show tour of a neighborhood that celebrates its unique qualities.
• Draw cities of the future, new designs for roads and bridges, and/or new vehicles.

• Estimate, predict, or forecast the future based on current statistics. For example, students could research American driving patterns and pollution numbers and forecast three futures: 1) if we increase the miles that each individual drives; 2) if we drive the same miles, adjusted for population growth; 3) if we reduce driving or reduce emissions with fuel-efficient cars. Let your class imagine and portray future scenarios. There are many good futuristic Web sites on the Internet to which students could compare their scenarios.

• Write brochures, fact sheets, or short stories based on their community. Students could create a myth or comic book about a safety or environmental superhero. They could write and illustrate a children’s books to share with younger children.

• Study geometry in nature to discover more efficient designs for housing, commercial buildings, and roads.
## Overview of Benchmarks

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