

Lesson One – An Introduction to the School Bus and Bus Safety

Objective: This lesson will familiarize preschool children with the school bus and introduce safety concepts that will be expanded in lessons two and three. At the end of this lesson they will know:

- How to identify school buses from other buses
- The purpose of the school bus
- What a school bus looks like inside
- How to recognize the different parts of a school bus
- Who drives a school bus
- Why there are rules on a school bus

I. INTRODUCTION – What is a School Bus?

1. With the children in a group, ask them to volunteer things that they know about school buses. They might volunteer that school buses are yellow, that they are long, that kids ride them to school and home, etc. If necessary, draw out answers with questions such as:

- Who rides on a school bus?
- Why do we need school buses?
- Do your mom and dad ride on school buses?
- Who drives a school bus?
- Where do school buses go?

Ask for a show of hands of children who have ridden a school bus in the past and let any volunteers share where and why they rode the bus.

2. Once the students have volunteered everything they know about buses, introduce the lessons:

- Tell them they are going to be learning a lot more about what it means to ride a school bus and will actually get the chance to get on a bus and go for a ride once they know the rules for the school bus.
- Talk about how it is important to learn about how to ride a school bus because many of them will ride a bus to school when they start kindergarten and others will take the bus for field trips and school activities.
- Ask them to volunteer the classroom rules they know (take turns, no pushing, clean up, etc.).
- Explain that there are rules for the school bus too. Some are the same as classroom rules and some are new.

3. Either hand out a [picture](#) of a number of different types of buses to each child or put the picture on a SmartBoard. Ask everyone to help identify which of the buses shown are school buses.

II. BUILDING A BUS IN THE CLASSROOM

Before the children experience a real school bus, create one in the classroom with chairs. Line up chairs in two rows of one or two chairs each, with an “aisle” between them. Ask the children what is missing and let them try to figure out that the bus also needs a driver’s seat.

1. Practice lining up to get on the bus, walking down the aisle, and finding a seat. Note that this is the first “rule” about school busses – everyone takes their turn to get on and nobody pushes or “butts” in line. One teacher should act as the driver and greet each child as they get on.
2. Once all the children are on the bus, ask each of them one at a time to select a place to go on a pretend “field trip” on the bus.
3. Sing “the wheels on the bus” or a school-related song and then have everyone line up to “get off” the bus.
4. The teacher/bus driver should then do a safety check of the bus, walking to the very back and checking each seat to make sure no one got left behind.

III. VISITING A REAL BUS

Over the course of three lessons, the students will become familiar with all aspects of waiting for the bus, riding the bus, bus behavior and bus safety. In the first lesson, a school bus should be parked in the school driveway or parking lot.

1. Before going to see the bus, have a discussion about how a school bus is different from a car. Answers may include (or should be prompted by teacher):
 - Many people can ride a bus. Only 4 to 6 people fit in most cars.
 - Cars come in all different colors. School buses are only yellow so that everyone can recognize them.
 - School buses have big steps to climb to get in. Some cars have big steps too, but others do not.
 - Your mom or dad probably drives your car. A school bus is driven by a specially trained driver.
 - You must wear a seat belt in a car. Some school buses have seat belts and some do not. They have other ways to keep you safe.
 - A school bus has a red stop sign on the outside to tell cars behind it to stop when children are getting on and off. Cars do not.
 - A school bus has a bar in front that tells children when it is safe to walk in front of the bus. Cars do not.
2. Talk about what you are going to do on the real bus – these are some more bus “rules”:
 - Line up outside the closed bus door.

- When the door opens, each child will climb onto the bus, one at a time. The teacher will help them if the step is too high.
- Greet the bus driver.
- Walk down the aisle and find a seat to sit in.
- Sit quietly until everyone is on the bus.

3. The visit to the bus

As a group, walk all the way around the outside of the bus and have the children point out different parts of the bus. Make sure they notice the red stop sign, rear emergency door and the bar that opens when someone has to walk in front of the bus to get on or off.

Next, practice getting on the bus. If the class is small enough, start by letting each child have his or own seat. After all the children are seated, talk about sharing seats. One by one, choose a child to get up and walk to an occupied seat and ask if they can sit down. Each seated child should say yes. If necessary, the teacher can direct each child to a new seat: "Adam, please ask Emma if you can share a seat with her."

Finally, have each child climb off the bus and wait while the driver does his or her "bus check" before they go back to the classroom.

IV. ART PROJECT

Each child will make their own bus to be used in future lessons.

Supplies:

- One cardboard (not Styrofoam) egg carton per child
- Yellow paint
- Red construction paper
- Bottle caps from soda bottles, milk cartons, etc., colored black, or black paper circles
- Photos of each child and family members or pictures from magazines
- Black markers



Instructions:

- Paint the egg carton yellow.
- Turn the carton on its side so the top is facing you and glue two black bottle caps or paper circles to the bottom to be wheels.
- Write "School Bus" on the side.
- Add a red paper octagon stop sign.
- Enlarge the openings on the side (former top) to make windows and tape a photo in each one

By the end of this lesson, students should be familiar with the school bus and understand both why they might ride a bus in the future and also know that busses have certain rules that have to be followed. They should be able to identify the major parts of the bus and know how to get on and off the bus and how to find a place to sit.