

Lesson plan

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Title of activity: Seeing and Avoiding Cyclist Blind Spots	Subject area: Social issues (traffic)
Grade level: 12-14 jaar	Duration: 1 hour (50 minutes) + practical exercise if possible

Learning Objectives:

1. Knowledge Goal:
 - Students understand the limitations of vehicle mirrors (blind spots, limited visibility) and can explain the consequences these have for the safety of other road users, such as cyclists and pedestrians.
2. Skill Goal:
 - Students can take safe measures when traveling on foot or by bicycle near large vehicles, such as:
 - Avoiding the blind spots of trucks or buses.
 - Making eye contact with the driver whenever possible.
 - Keeping a safe distance when overtaking or passing a large vehicle. (if possible)

Teaching Method en techniques: Dialogue, question and answer, cooperative learning/group work, discussion, problem-solving thinking, reflection

Materials / Resources / Technology use:

Use the lesson sheet on danger recognition in traffic and blind spots for cyclists from the VSV (Flemish Foundation for Traffic Knowledge).

- Printouts with situational photos
- Printout of the blind spot poster
- A “larger” vehicle (van, truck, etc.) for the practical exercise
- [Verkeer op School SO | Dode hoek voor fietsers](#)
- [Geen dodehoekongevallen meer met SofAlert](#)

Activity Description:

50 min – 1h

Teacher (and students) (10min)

Introduction

Despite a number of technological improvements in vehicles, the problem of blind spots is still relevant. In the classroom, you will teach students to recognize several blind spot situations. You can also practice behavior around larger vehicles in real-life scenarios.

Show the video tot (1.30”) - [Geen dodehoekongevallen meer met SofAlert](#) (Dutch)

Seeing and Avoiding Cyclist Blind Spots

[Be Truck Aware – Blind Spots: Cyclists](#) (ENG)

Have the students answer the following questions:

- Are there any points on your route to school where there is a risk of a blind spot accident?
- Who has ever almost been involved in a blind spot accident?

Students (15min.)

About the blind spot

Read the following statements aloud to the students. Let them answer individually or in groups.

- **True or false?** A truck driver can see everything in front of and next to the truck thanks to the various mirrors.
→ **FALSE.** Certain areas remain invisible to the driver. Such an invisible area is called a *blind spot*.
- **Most blind spot accidents happen on the right side of the truck.**
→ **TRUE.** The driver sits on the left in the cabin. On that side, he can see most clearly through the side window. On the right side, visibility is much more limited, and that is exactly where cyclists and pedestrians are often located.
- **When a truck turns right, the driver can only see the side of the trailer in the right mirror.**
→ **TRUE.** The mirrors are attached to the tractor, the front part of the truck. When the truck turns right, it “folds” slightly, and the mirrors move inward. On the side, the driver cannot see anything except the back of their own truck.
- **At a roundabout, the driver has better visibility of cyclists because they sit high and have a good overview of everything happening.**
→ **FALSE.** At a roundabout, the driver is constantly busy steering and maneuvering while also keeping an eye on other road users. Their attention is divided, and the blind spot changes continuously. Give the driver plenty of space and stay clear when on a roundabout.
- **Truck drivers have to pay attention to so much at once that they hardly have time to watch out for vulnerable road users.**
→ **FALSE.** Truck drivers pay a lot of attention to vulnerable road users and do everything they can to avoid accidents. However, being defensive in traffic is a shared responsibility.

Teacher (5 min)

Recognizing risk situations

Divide the students into small groups and hand out the sheet with the situational photos. The students discuss the hazards they see and what they would do in each case.

Students (15min.)

Situation 1:

A truck stops next to you at a traffic light.

Seeing and Avoiding Cyclist Blind Spots

→ **Discussion:** *There is a chance the driver hasn't noticed you or has forgotten you are there. Try to make eye contact with the driver. If that's not possible, stay as far away from the truck as you can and, if necessary, get off your bike.*

Situation 2:

You approach a truck stopped at a traffic light.

→ **Discussion:** *The traffic light could turn green at any moment. If the truck turns right, this could be very dangerous. Stay behind the truck, even if the bike lane seems to invite you to move forward.*

Situation 3:

You want to cycle straight through at this intersection.

→ **Discussion:** *The driver of the van must yield to you because the bike lane continues through the intersection. It is not certain that they have seen you. Slow down and try to make eye contact with the driver.*

Reflection (5 min)

Tell the students that during this lesson several blind spot situations have already been discussed, and ask if anyone can explain what a blind spot actually is.

→ **Answer:** *A blind spot is an area around a vehicle where the driver cannot see you. Most vehicles have a blind spot. The larger and taller the vehicle, the bigger the blind spot.*

Practical exercise (+25 min.)

Use a "larger" vehicle (van, truck, etc.)

Students

Crossing / Eye Contact

Have the students cross at the crosswalk just as they would in real traffic. Two or three students sit in the vehicle (depending on the number of seats). The student in the driver's seat acts as a distracted driver (looking away, using a phone, fiddling with the radio, etc.). Watch carefully to see which students actually wait to cross until the "driver" makes eye contact.

After all students have crossed, ask the following questions:

- How can you be sure that a driver has seen you and will let you cross? (Eye contact)
- To the student(s) in the vehicle: Did everyone make eye contact with you?

Explain that students should only step off the curb when they are certain the driver(s) will stop for them, meaning they have made eye contact with the drivers on both sides.

Let the students revisit and discuss the previous statements.

Show the Poster about Truck's blind spots. Maybe students can develop their own poster by seeing another video.

[Blind Spot Awareness](#)

Can you give feedback about this lesson please? You can copy this link and share it with the students.

[Active Citizenship Compass Evaluating Learning activity - Formulier invullen](#)