

Safer Sidewalks



Photo Credit: Ryxhd123

A curb is where a sidewalk meets a street. A **curb ramp** is a slope in the sidewalk. Curb ramps help people who use wheelchairs. A wheelchair can roll up or down the ramp. The person can safely cross the street. The wheelchair will not fall over.

Sometimes curb ramps can be dangerous, however. The ramps make the sidewalk level with the street. People who are blind may not know they are on a ramp. They might walk into a busy street.

Inventors thought about making a better curb ramp. They added a bumpy plastic covering to existing curb ramps. People who are blind can feel the bumps. Those people will know they are on a ramp. Wheelchairs can safely roll down the ramp too. Now curb ramps help everyone.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: For questions 1-4, circle the correct answer.

1. What is a curb ramp?

- a) a slope in the sidewalk
- b) the place where a sidewalk meets a street
- c) bumps in a sidewalk

2. Why may curb ramps be a problem for blind people?

- a) They may not know they are on a ramp and walk into a busy street.
- b) Their wheelchair might fall over when they try to roll into the street.
- c) They might trip over the ramp because they can't see it.

3. People in wheelchairs need a curb ramp to get from the street to the sidewalk. Without curb ramps, their wheelchairs might fall over. What does this tell us about curbs and sidewalks?

- a) Curbs and sidewalks are higher than the street.
- b) Curbs and sidewalks are as high as the street.
- c) Curbs and sidewalks are a different color than the street.

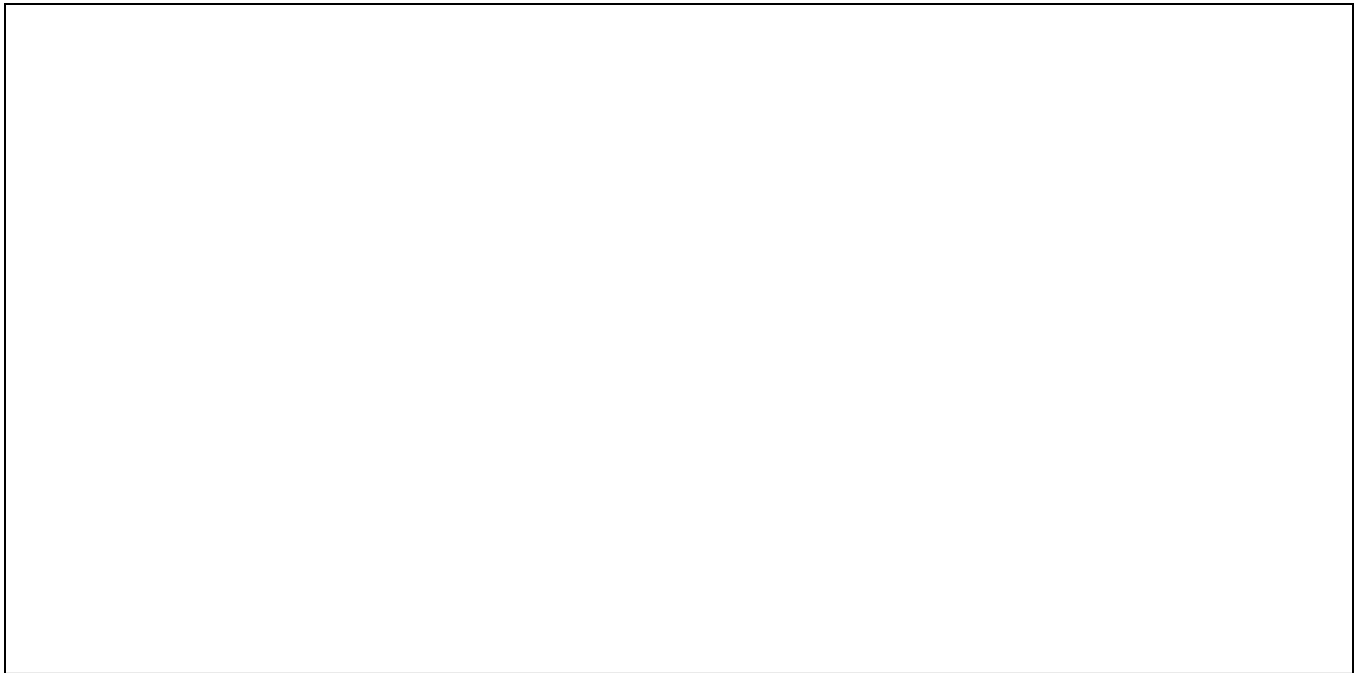
4. What is the main lesson in "Safer Sidewalks"?

- a) Curb ramps with bumps help both blind people and people in wheelchairs.
- b) Curb ramps with bumps help only blind people.
- c) Curb ramps with bumps help only people in wheelchairs.

5. A) What did inventors add to curb ramps to make them safer for blind people?

Inventors added a

- B) Draw a picture of a curb ramp that is safe for everyone.



6. What did you learn from "Safer Sidewalks"?

7. Class Discussion Question: Explain why a sidewalk without a curb ramp is safer for a blind person than for a person in a wheelchair.

Teacher Guide & Answers

Note to Teacher: Read each question out loud to your students and have each student complete the worksheet independently. For questions 5 A) and 6, you can have students draw their answers, answer orally, or write their answers depending on your students' progress. If you have them write their answers, you may want to write the word(s) on the board for them to copy. Question 7 is a class discussion question.

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 570

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5. A) *Note to Teacher: See note at the top of the first page.*

What did inventors add to curb ramps to make them safer for blind people?

Suggested answer: Inventors added a *bumpy plastic covering*.

- B) Draw a picture of a curb ramp that is safe for everyone.

Suggested answer: Students' pictures may vary but should include a sidewalk sloping down to meet a street. The ramp (or slope in the sidewalk) should have bumps on it. Advanced pictures might also include a person in a wheelchair or a blind person using the ramp to cross a street safely.

6. *Note to Teacher: See note at the top of the first page.*

What did you learn from "Safer Sidewalks"?

Suggested answer: Answers may vary and should be supported by the passage.

7. *Note to Teacher: See note at the top of the first page.*

Class Discussion Question: Explain why a sidewalk without a curb ramp is safer for a blind person than for a person in a wheelchair.

Suggested answer: Answers may vary but students should explain that a blind person would be able to feel that the curb is not level with the street so they will know that they are leaving the sidewalk and should be careful. This is dangerous for a person in a wheelchair because wheelchairs are not built to go up and down levels. Rather, they are meant to roll on flat surfaces. If they try to go down the curb to the street, their wheelchair might fall over.