Streets Have Personality Game

THE CHALLENGE
Students take on a persona and act out how they would travel on different street examples. After each turn acting the class has the chance to discuss implications.

GRADE LEVEL
Elementary

ACTIVITY DURATION
45 minutes.

MATERIALS
PowerPoint with full screen slides of different local street types (how many?).

SET UP
Requires a screen and open space for kids to sit up and move around.

WARM-UP ACTIVITY
- Ask the teacher to arrange students into groups of 5-6.
- Give each group a section of space in the classroom.
- Give each group a mode type (walking, cycling, skateboarding/scooter, taking the bus or driving).
- Ask each group to pick out a name to represent their mode.
- Ask students to practice travelling around their space using their mode.

Ask students to think about characteristics of their mode (are you fast or slow, are you alone or with other people, does it cost money to use your mode etc):

Pretend to be other users: grandmas, two year olds, teachers and again think about the characteristics of their mode.

WARM-UP DISCUSSION
- Can you tell me more about how people move differently?
- What stood out for you?
- How can people watch out for each other?
- Now that each of your groups have practiced moving around in your mode, are you ready to see the other groups travel together on a street?

MAIN ACTIVITY
Display on-screen different street types and ask groups to “travel” on them:

- Residential street slide: Invite the different groups to come into a shared space in the middle of the room, one mode at a time (prompt with “Let’s get the bikes out here onto the street”)
- Highway slide: “let’s get the cars out onto the road”
  - Now what about if we add skateboarders?
  - How does everyone feel? Who’s worried about the people walking?

This activity lets kids of different ages be street experts. They draw on their own knowledge and understanding to ‘make believe’ the experience other community members. The goal is to grow empathy around how different streets accommodate (or don’t) everyone.
What do you think streets like this are good for?

- Pedestrian mall/street slide: who belongs on this street? (People Walking!)
  - How do you know that?
  - Who else might belong on this street?
  - Skateboards? Bikes?

**FOR DISCUSSION**

- Which group gets to travel on the most number of street types? Gets to have the most fun? Which group might be the most nervous?
- Who designs our streets? Explain the roles and responsibilities of a transportation engineer.
- Why can it be challenging for transportation engineers to design streets for everyone?
- Can you tell me about one design element (define design element, something on the street, like a sign, a specific type of travel lane, planters or trees) you noticed that makes it easier and more enjoyable for your team to get around?
- How can engineers and designers work together to make streets safer for kids?

**LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY**

**IMPORTANT:** It is crucial to have a conversation with the classroom teacher prior to performing the activity. This will aid in understanding the educational level of the class which will help determine the appropriate level of difficulty of the materials and items for discussion. For example, regular classes vs. gifted & talented or AP classes.

**Increase difficulty by:**

1. Talk about any legal implications around street design – is skateboarding permitted in your downtown? Is bike riding permitted on the sidewalk? Did you know we can change the law?
2. Discuss how much freedom toddlers (then older children) might have on different street types. How important is freedom to travel? Can you think of examples (transit frequency, travel choice).

**Decrease difficulty by:**

1. Ask students to think about their own street: how do they travel home? How else might they like to travel to school? Or how might others in their family wish to travel?