

## A Wild Ride in Portland: World Naked Bike Ride Day

A Seasonal Lesson Plan by Shannon Felt

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### Teacher's Notes & Answer Key

<b>Level</b>	Upper Intermediate +
<b>Lesson Aims</b>	Learners will practice reading for gist and detail and will practice discerning the meaning of new vocab from context.
<b>Approximate Timing</b>	45-60 minutes
<b>Notes to the teacher</b>	<p>World Naked Bike Ride (WNBR) Day is really more of an event than a holiday. The official date varies as different rides take place on different days around the world, but it generally occurs in June or July. This lesson focuses on the event in Portland as it claims to be the largest. It supposedly began in 2004 and has been growing each year. The official motto is “bare as you dare,” which means that while nudity is encouraged, it is not mandatory. The goal of the holiday also varies slightly according to the event, but the Portland maintains that it’s mainly to raise awareness about dependence on fossil fuels and encourage positive body image. The article used in this lesson focuses partially on the Portland World Naked Bike Ride overall and also on the author’s feelings about participating for the first time.</p> <p>The article is from The Atlantic so the language is a bit advanced. I’ve adapted it slightly, though mainly just by cutting out a few paragraphs for the sake of length.</p> <p>A caution: since this lesson does center around the idea of public nudity, some students could be uncomfortable/offended (there are a few bare backsides in the picture connected to the article which could be removed or covered). You may not want students googling “World Naked Bike Ride” in class as they will certainly get full-frontal results. As long as it’s used carefully, this is a fun topic, a good challenging read for Ss, and a springboard for productive activities on other silly/bizarre/interesting/activist events in other people’s cities or countries.</p>
<b>Text Link</b>	<p>The article: <a href="http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/06/what-its-like-to-join-portlands-world-naked-bike-ride/276861/">http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/06/what-its-like-to-join-portlands-world-naked-bike-ride/276861/</a></p> <p>Other info on the event(s): <a href="http://wiki.worldnakedbikeride.org/">http://wiki.worldnakedbikeride.org/</a></p>

### Teacher's Notes

**1) LEAD-IN:** Ask for a show of hands to see how many students have bikes. Elicit from one or two of them how often they usually ride their bikes. Ask Ss to discuss Ex. 1 in pairs. Elicit in whole class feedback different reasons why people might ride bicycles (e.g. for pleasure, to get to work, to be more environmentally friendly) and find out what types of situations Ss feel comfortable biking in.

Show Ss this picture of a mural depicting the WNBR in Portland:

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Elicit what's different about this picture than they might expect (should be easy: the people are naked!). Tell Ss this is a real event that takes place around the world every year.

**2) GIST READING:** Give Ss Ex. 2 and let them skim the text while matching the appropriate heading to each paragraph. Have Ss check answers in pairs.

**Key:**

- A. This Year's Ride
- B. Getting Ready to Ride
- C. The Biggest Ride in the World
- D. Why Ride?

**3) VOCAB PRE-TEACH:** Have students do Ex. 3 (matching the vocab words or expressions from the article to their meanings). Ask them to check in pairs, encouraging them to justify to their partner why they chose the definition they did. Lead WCFB, clarifying MFP as needed.

**Key:**

- 1) h
- 2) f
- 3) d
- 4) c
- 5) a
- 6) b
- 7) g
- 8) e

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**4) DETAILED READING:** Have Ss read the article again and answer the questions in Ex. 4 individually. Pair check and WCFB.

### Key:

1. F (started at the Art Museum)
2. T (price is \$1 per item of clothing worn)
3. F (it's "bare as you dare" - you can be as naked or clothed as you want)
4. T (people put lights on bikes, wear tutus, Viking helmets, etc.)
5. T (they don't know until they watch the video in July or August)
6. F (similar events in NYC, Thessaloniki, Guadalajara, and London)
7. T ("Portland's gathering has traditionally been the largest")
8. F (they also want to raise awareness of cyclist's vulnerability, dependence on fossil fuels, and positive body image)
9. T (she says she's happy it causes people to "dust off their bikes")
10. T (the experience was "magical" for them)

**5) EXTENSION TASK:** Ask Ss to discuss in pairs whether or not they'd be willing to participate in this event (would they "dare to bare?") and why or why not. Elicit some responses in WCFB.

**6) PRODUCTIVE TASK: Event Flyer:** In groups of 3 or 4, Ss must create their own crazy event. Tell them they need to come up with an event and design a flyer for the event to advertise it. Tell Ss they should include the following information on their flyer (summarized in Ex. 5). Show them the demo event flyer included here (or create your own).

#### **The name of the event**

#### **A slogan (like "Bare as you dare")**

**What** the event is—what people will do, what people should bring, etc.

**Who** the event is suitable for

**When** the event will take place, and how long it will last

**Why** the event is being held

Allow Ss to work together on their flyers, encouraging them to be creative and monitoring as needed. When they're finished, have Ss post their flyers around the room. Ask Ss to walk around in their groups and look at the other flyers. Each group must agree on one event to attend (they can't choose their own).

For WCFB, elicit which event each group would attend and have them justify why. See which event would get the highest attendance.

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### Student Worksheet 1

(Exercise 1) *Discuss the questions below with a partner.*

1. Do you enjoy riding a bicycle? How often do you usually do it?
2. Are there some situations in which you feel more comfortable riding a bike than others? For example, do you like riding in the countryside but not downtown in a city?
3. What are some reasons people ride bikes, besides the fact that cycling is fun?



### Student Worksheet 2

The  
Atlantic

## What It's Like to Join Portland's 'World Naked Bike Ride'

By Christina Cooke



My friend Xochil was shocked to see me when we met up at the Portland Art Museum last Saturday night, mostly because I was wearing underwear, cowboy boots, and nothing else. Then again, she was barely clothed herself.

**A.** \_\_\_\_\_

We'd decided this year to squelch our inhibitions, take off our tops and participate in the city's 10<sup>th</sup> annual World Naked Bike Ride. Born as a protest of pollution-based transportation and a biking-awareness builder, Portland's infamous clothing-optional ride has multiplied in size over the last

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decade, from 125 riders in 2004 to 7,000 in 2007, when the weather was particularly nice. Adding a twist this year, the Portland Art Museum, a first-time sponsor and the starting point of the ride, offered participants after-hours admission to its new bicycle-design exhibit for an entrance fee of \$1 per worn article of clothing.

### **B.** \_\_\_\_\_

When I arrived at the ride start in the waning 9pm light, thousands of people were preparing themselves for the seven-mile pedal. Across the museum's grassy front lawn, they were painting each other's bodies, wrapping strings of lights around the handlebars of their bikes and dancing to music blasted from battery-powered PA systems. Around the base of an elm tree, four topless women arranged each other's pastel tutu skirts, a 60-something man wearing only a red cape and Viking hat adjusted his bike, and a young naked couple posed for pictures, sometimes covering certain parts with helmets, sometimes not.

### **C.** \_\_\_\_\_

One of the lead organizers, Meghan Sinnott, estimates more than 5,000 people participated in the ride this year, though she says a formal count won't be available until July or August, once volunteers count a video recording of the start. Though more than 70 similar "bare as you dare" rides occurred last weekend throughout the world, in cities including New York, Thessaloniki, Guadalajara, and London, Portland's gathering has traditionally been the largest.

### **D.** \_\_\_\_\_

While the Portland ride originated a decade ago as a renegade group out to highlight the vulnerability of cyclists and to protest dependence on fossil fuel, the tenor has changed as the size has grown and mainstream entities like the police department and museum have come on board. Yes, many riders still bare it all for the original mission (Exhibit A: the guy with the slogan "More nude, less crude [oil]" painted on his back), but others strip down naked and saddle up to promote positive body image or just have a wonderful naked experience. "If you throw a ride where 5,000 people show up, that's more people than commute per day in Portland," Sinnott says. "We're getting people who are buying bikes or borrowing bikes or dusting off bikes and getting out there and thinking, 'This is fun; I can do this.' I want people to know that this is a protest, but I am so satisfied personally to know it's getting people out on bikes."

At the end of the ride, before pulling our clothes out of our bags, Xochil and I pulled our bikes to a stop under the Morrison Bridge and looked across the Willamette River to the downtown lights beyond. "How magical to be part of something so ridiculous, and so big," Xochil said.

Text slightly adapted from the article in the Atlantic, June 13, 2014:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/06/what-its-like-to-join-portlands-world-naked-bike-ride/276861/>

(Exercise 2) *Quickly skim the article about World Naked Bike Ride Day and write the correct heading (below) into each gap in the article.*

**The Biggest Ride in the World**  
**This Year's Ride**  
**Getting Ready to Ride**  
**Why Ride?**



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(Exercise 3)

**Vocabulary:** Match the words or phrases from the article on the left with their meanings on the right.

- |   |                          |  |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| 0 | bare as you dare         | a) a rebel; sb who does the opposite of others                   |
| 1 | dust sth off             | b) the ability to be hurt; not totally safe                      |
| 2 | add a twist              | c) to begin or come from   |
| 3 | originate                | d) to make a small change  |
| 4 | renegade                 | e) how you feel about your body                                  |
| 5 | vulnerability            | f) to use sth after you haven't used it in a long time           |
| 6 | squelch your inhibitions | g) ignore the reasons you feel uncomfortable                     |
| 7 | body image               | h) only show the parts of your body you are brave enough to show |
- 

(Exercise 4)

**Read the text again and decide whether each statement is True (T) or False (F). Underline the part of the text that helped you choose that answer.**

1. The Naked Bike Ride started this year at the Portland Bike Museum.
2. The ticket price for the museum is more expensive for people who are wearing more clothes.
3. You have to be naked to participate in the World Naked Bike Ride event.
4. It is normal for people to decorate their bikes and their bodies before they start to ride.
5. The organizers don't actually know how many people ride bikes in the event each year until a month or two after it ends.
6. Portland is the only city that holds a Naked Bike Ride event.
7. Portland's World Naked Bike Ride is said to be the largest one.
8. The only reason people participate in the bike ride is because it's fun and they like being naked.
9. The organizer of the event hopes it will cause more people to ride their bikes.
10. The author and her friend enjoyed their experience on the World Naked Bike Ride.

(Exercise 5)

*Work with your group to invent your own crazy event. It can be anything! Make a flyer to advertise the event and see if your classmates would come to it. On your flyer, make sure you write the following information:*

- **The name of the event**
- **A slogan (like "Bare as you dare")**
- **What** the event is—what people will do, what people should bring, etc.
- **Who** the event is suitable for
- **When** the event will take place, and how long it will last
- **Why** the event is being held

## Demo Flyer

# DC Dance Days

“Dance your cares away”

**WHAT:** a four day, city-wide dance event. To participate, you need to film yourself dancing in a different crazy costume to a different song in front of each of the big monuments in D.C. Judges will be stationed at each monument to award daily prizes in categories such as “craziest costume,” “smoothest solo dance moves” and “best group dance.” At the end of the event, participants should make one video of all the dancing they did during the four days and submit it to the official contest judges. The best video will be played throughout the next year in DC tourism advertisements.

**WHEN:** every year on Labor Day weekend. Begins at 5pm on Friday and lasts until 5pm on Monday.

**WHERE:** downtown Washington, D.C.. The official dance sites are: The White House, The Lincoln Memorial, The Washington Monument, and the US Capitol.

**WHO:** this event is perfect for anyone who loves to dance, express their creativity, and hopes to achieve local fame.

**WHY:** the world seems to be a serious place; when we turn on the TV we see political drama and bad news everywhere. The DC Dance Days event aims to help people relax and enjoy life for a short time. The event tries to raise awareness that even here in the middle of conflict and politics, people can still come together, have fun, and celebrate creativity, movement, and self-expression.

