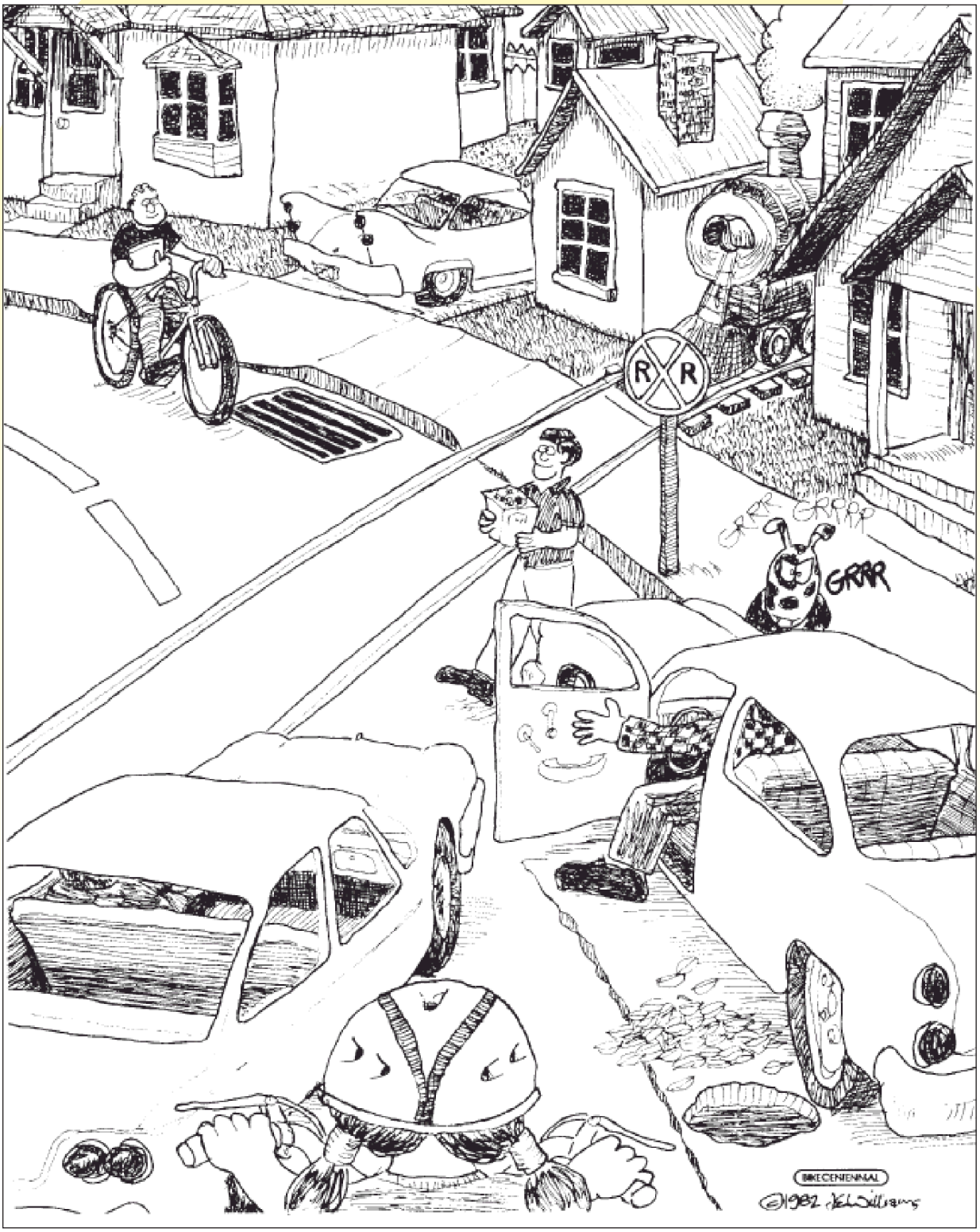
Bike Riding Dangers

Pretend you are the person riding the bicycle at the bottom of the picture.
Can you see all the things that put you at risk as a bicyclist?
There are 13 bike riding dangers in all.



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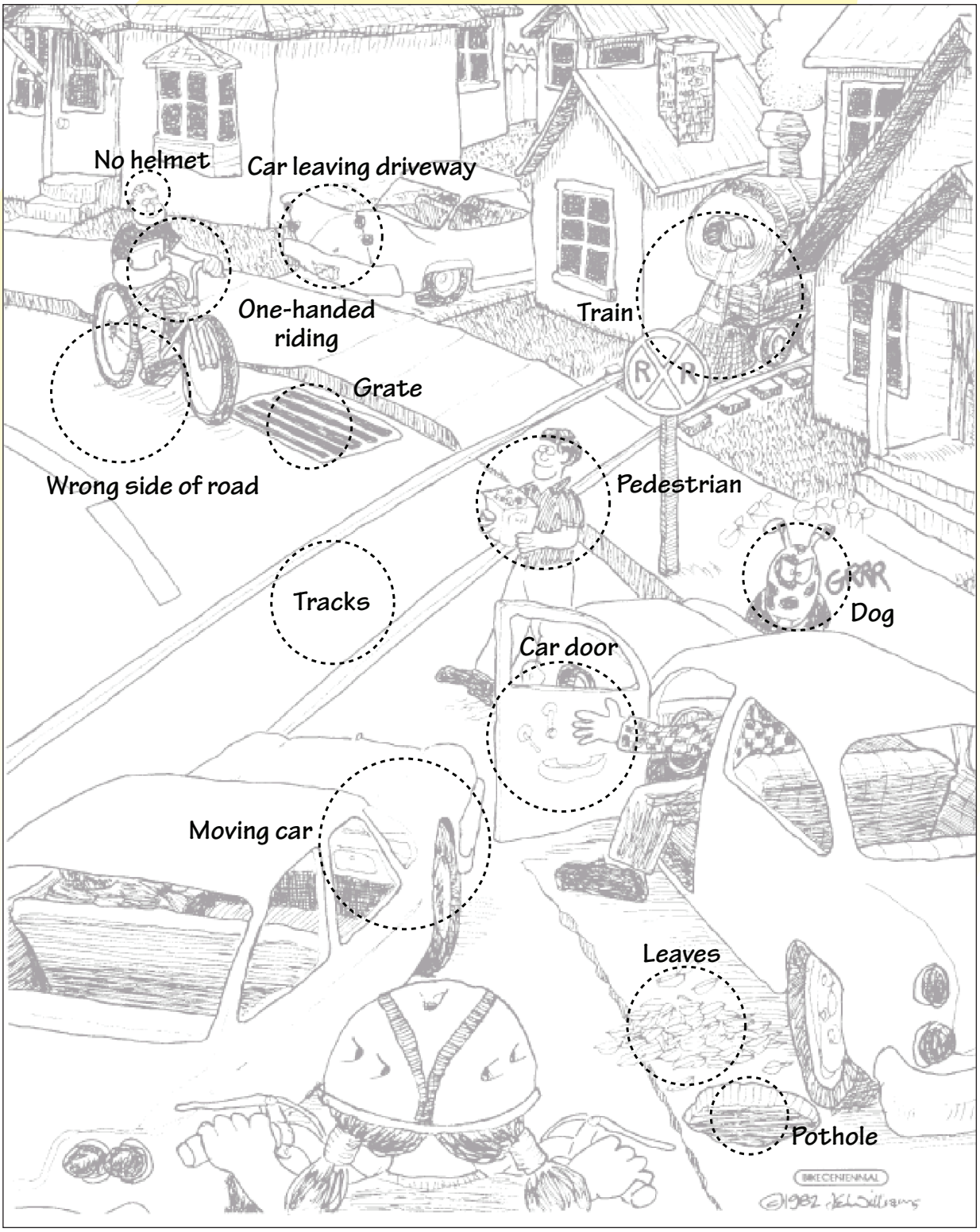
Bike Riding Dangers Answer Key



Find the Hazards Worksheet -

Answers and Explanations

1. Male bicyclist is riding his bicycle against the flow of traffic. The law requires bicyclists to ride with the flow of traffic. This is safer for several reasons:

   a. Motorists look for and expect all traffic to move in one direction and may not see bicyclists riding the wrong way.

   b. Traffic signs and lights face traffic flowing in one direction only. Bicyclists going against traffic will be unable to read and follow traffic signs and signals.

   c. The reaction time of motorists is greatly reduced when bicyclists ride toward vehicles.

2. Male bicyclist is not wearing a helmet. Research shows that up to 90 percent of fatal bicycle crashes are the result of head trauma. A properly worn and certified bicycle helmet cushions and protects the head from injurious impacts with hard surfaces such as asphalt and concrete.

3. Male bicyclist is driving with only one hand on the handle bar. Riding a bicycle with one hand limits the reaction time to hazards and dangerous traffic situations. Bicyclists should always keep both hands on the handle bars except when signaling. Books, packages, and other items should be carried in a backpack or basket.

4. Car backing out of driveway. Bicyclists should stop or slow down at every intersection (including driveways) and watch for traffic. Parked vehicles can begin to move at any time. Look and listen to detect any movement from nearby vehicles. Do not cross in front of or behind an occupied vehicle without communicating your intentions through the use of hand signals and eye contact with the driver.

5. Oncoming train. Stop, look, and listen for oncoming trains and let them pass before crossing the tracks. Use eyes and ears to detect the status of nearby trains. A nearby train will

typically send a warning whistle and crossing areas are usually marked clearly with flashing red lights and signs.

6. Railroad tracks. When crossing train tracks, either walk or ride your bicycle across with your wheels perpendicular to the tracks to avoid getting tires caught.

7. Pedestrian crossing street with packages. Bicyclists should always be observant of pedestrians. Pedestrians are often unpredictable, as in this example, and sometimes neglect to search for traffic before entering the street.

8. Opened door of parked car. Bicyclists should always scan parked vehicles for passengers who might open doors. When passing parked cars, allow enough room between the bicycle and vehicles to avoid opening doors. Always scan behind for oncoming traffic before swerving into another lane.

9. Loose dog. If a dog approaches while cycling, yell loudly "No!" or "Go home!" and keep control of your bicycle. If the dog threatens to bite or attack, get off your bicycle, put it between you and the dog, and back away slowly. Do not try to outrun or hit the animal.

10, 11, and 12. Sewer grate, pot hole, and leaves/debris. Bicyclists need to dodge surface hazards without swerving into the path of oncoming traffic. Bicyclists constantly need to search ahead for obstacles and hazards, steering around or dodging them when necessary.

13. Car crossing the path of the girl bicyclist. Motorists sometimes cross in front of bicyclists and then either stop or slow down to turn. This often occurs when the motorist does not see the bicyclist or misjudges the bicyclist's speed. Bicyclists must always BE VISIBLE, BE SEEN. Wear bright-colored clothing, helmet, reflectors, and lights, especially at night. In high-traffic areas, bicyclists should ride slowly to improve their ability to react to the actions of motorists. Cycle defensively and be prepared to use your brakes at all times.