Name: _____ Date: _____

Who Decides the Number on the Speed Limit Sign?

Circle group

The number on a speed limit sign may look like a random pick. But a town thinks about many things before it picks a limit.

Traffic engineers often start by watching the road. They may measure how fast most drivers go when nothing is in the way. People tend to drive at a speed that feels safe, so this tells engineers a lot.

Next, they look at what is near the road. Are there sharp curves or steep hills? Are there driveways where cars pull out? Do many people walk or bike? A road with homes, a park and a school needs a lower limit than a long, straight road with few buildings.

Engineers also look at past crashes. If a road has had many, they may suggest a lower limit or a new crosswalk.

The engineers give advice, but one person does not set the limit. A town board or other leaders usually vote on it. Then it becomes law. Workers put up signs so every driver knows the number.

Slower limits give drivers more time to stop. That matters most where children cross.

Questions

1. What do traffic engineers often measure first?

_____

_____

2. What are two things near a road that can lead to a lower limit?

_____

_____

3. Who usually votes on the limit?

_____

_____

4. What do workers do after the limit becomes law?

_____

_____

5. Why would a road near a school get a lower limit?

_____

_____

6. Why do engineers look at past crashes?

_____

_____

Words to know

engineers: people who use math and science to plan and solve problems
limit: the most that is allowed
driveways: short roads that lead from a street to a house
crashes: times when vehicles hit something
board: a group of people chosen to make decisions

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Who Decides the Number on the Speed Limit Sign?

Triangle group

The number on a speed limit sign may look as if someone just picked it. In fact, a town usually thinks about many things before it chooses a limit.

Traffic engineers often start by watching the road. They may measure how fast most drivers go when nothing is in the way. People tend to drive at a speed that feels safe for the road, so this tells engineers a lot.

Next, they look at what is around the road. Are there sharp curves or steep hills that make it hard to see ahead? Are there driveways where cars pull out? Do many people walk or bike nearby? A road with homes, a park and a school needs a lower limit than a long, straight road with few buildings.

Engineers also look at the record of past crashes. If a road has had many, they may suggest changes, such as a lower limit or a new crosswalk.

The engineers give their advice, but the limit is not set by one person alone. A town board or another group of leaders usually votes on it, and the rule is then put into the law. After that, workers put up signs so every driver knows the number.

Slower limits give drivers more time to stop. That matters most where children are crossing.

Questions

1. What do traffic engineers often measure at first?

_____

_____

2. What are two things near a road that can lead to a lower limit?

_____

_____

3. Who usually votes on the final speed limit?

_____

_____

4. What do workers do after the limit becomes law?

_____

_____

5. Why would a road near a school get a lower limit?

_____

_____

6. Why do engineers look at past crashes?

_____

_____

Words to know

engineers: people who use math and science to plan and solve problems
limit: the most that is allowed
driveways: short roads that lead from a street to a house
crashes: times when vehicles hit something
board: a group of people chosen to make decisions

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Who Decides the Number on the Speed Limit Sign?

Square group

The number on a speed limit sign may look as though someone simply picked it at random. In reality, a town usually weighs a great many factors before it settles on a limit.

Traffic engineers often begin by observing the road itself. They may measure how fast most drivers travel when nothing is in their way. Because people tend to drive at a speed that feels safe for the road, this information tells engineers a good deal.

Next, they study what surrounds the road. Are there sharp curves or steep hills that make it hard to see ahead? Are there driveways where cars pull out into traffic? Do many people walk or ride bicycles nearby? A road lined with homes, a park and a school calls for a lower limit than a long, straight road with few buildings.

Engineers also examine the record of past crashes. If a road has had many of them, they may recommend changes, such as a lower limit or a new crosswalk.

Engineers offer their advice, but the limit is not decided by any one person. A town board or another group of leaders usually votes on it, and the rule is then written into the law. After that, workers put up signs so that every driver knows the number.

Lower limits give drivers more time to stop, which matters most in places where children are crossing.

Questions

1. What do traffic engineers often measure when they begin?

_____

_____

2. What are two features near a road that can lead to a lower limit?

_____

_____

3. Who usually votes on the final speed limit?

_____

_____

4. What happens after the limit is written into the law?

_____

_____

5. Why would a road with a school nearby be given a lower limit?

_____

_____

6. Why do engineers study the record of past crashes?

_____

_____

Words to know

engineers: people who use math and science to plan and solve problems
limit: the most that is allowed
driveways: short roads that lead from a street to a house
crashes: times when vehicles hit something
board: a group of people chosen to make decisions

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: Who Decides the Number on the Speed Limit Sign?

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: Who Decides the Number on the Speed Limit Sign?

Easier · 185 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.9

1. How fast most drivers go when nothing is in the way.
2. Any two of: sharp curves, steep hills, driveways, people walking or biking, a school or park.
3. A town board or other leaders.
4. They put up signs.
5. Children cross there, and slower cars have more time to stop.
6. To find roads that may need changes to be safer.

Triangle: Who Decides the Number on the Speed Limit Sign?

This passage · 219 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.1

1. How fast most drivers go when nothing is in the way.
2. Any two of: sharp curves, steep hills, driveways, people walking or biking, a school or park.
3. A town board or another group of leaders.
4. They put up signs.
5. Children cross there, and slower cars have more time to stop.
6. To find roads that may need changes to be safer.

Square: Who Decides the Number on the Speed Limit Sign?

Harder · 232 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.8

1. How fast most drivers travel when nothing is in their way.
2. Any two of: sharp curves, steep hills, driveways, people walking or biking, a school or park.
3. A town board or another group of leaders.
4. Workers put up signs so drivers know the number.
5. Children cross there, and slower cars have more time to stop.
6. To find roads that may need changes to make them safer.