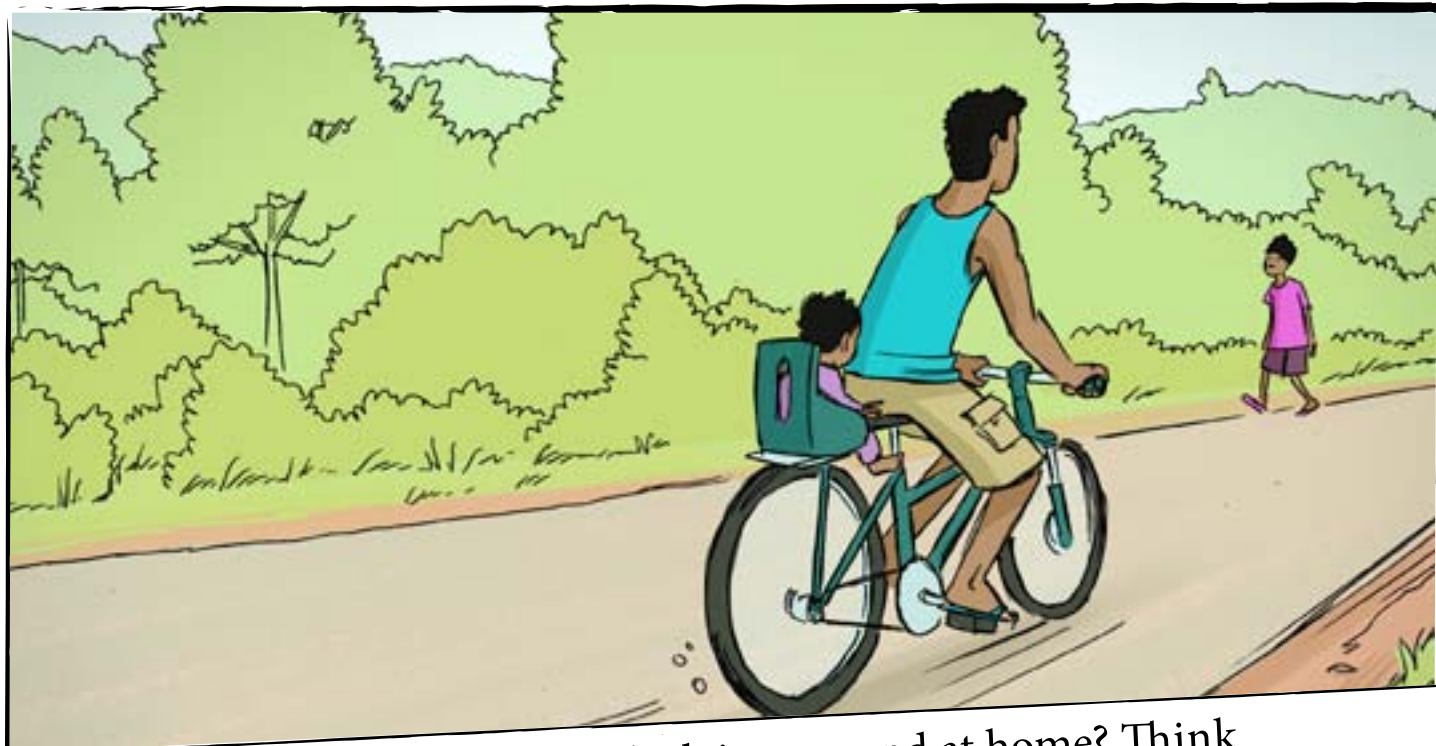


# New Life for Old Wheels



Do you have an old bike lying around at home? Think it's too small, or too beat up, to be of use? Think again. That old bike could change someone's life.

In most of southern Africa, most people walk everywhere. That's because cars cost too much. And buses and trains are rare.

This makes life difficult. On foot, it can take hours to do the shopping, or get water. It's impossible for many children to get to school. It's hard to get sick people to the doctor. And it's difficult to get medicine to people who need it.

## The 'bike' solution

Bicycles allow people to travel long distances

quickly. They also work well on Africa's many dirt roads and paths. And they don't need gas to run. But in Africa, bikes cost almost two months' wages. Most people can't afford them.

**Did you know...?**  
Each year, Americans buy 15 to 20 million new bikes and get rid of 10 million old ones.

The good news? Thousands of lucky Africans now have bikes, anyway, thanks to Bicycles for Humanity (B4H).

## B4H

This group was formed in 2005 by a group of friends in Canada. They decided to collect new and used bicycles, then ship them to people in Africa.

The first year, B4H sent one shipping container filled with bikes to Namibia. The next year, the group sent four containers. The following year: eight. This year, B4H hopes to send 16 shipments.

## How it works

Today, there are B4H **chapters** across Canada. There are also a few in the U.S. and Australia. Each chapter follows the same steps to ship bikes to Africa.

First, volunteers collect between 300 and 400 bikes. Then, they pack them tightly into a container. They fill any gaps with tools and spare parts.



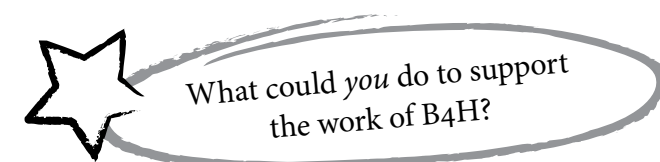
A **chapter** is a local group.

Finally, they send the container to Africa by ship.

When it reaches its destination, the container is unpacked. The bikes are given out. Local people are trained to fix and maintain them. And the empty container becomes an instant bicycle workshop.

## Get involved!

Is your old bike looking for a new rider? Recycle it. Call your local Bicycles for Humanity chapter. Or start one of your own.



St. Jude Catholic School in London, Ontario held spirit days and a pancake breakfast for B4H. They raised \$1,525 -- enough to send 50 bikes to Africa.

## Lesson Plan

### Before Reading:

- Provide each group of two students with a copy of Photo #1 (p. 9), Photo #2 (p. 10), and the **Observe It!** organizer (p. 11). Alternatively, show students the two photos on an overhead.
- Ask pairs of students to compare the photos. In what ways are they similar? In what ways are they different? Have students record their observations on the Venn diagram. (*A key observation for students to make is the difference in how the bikes are being used. In Photo #1, the bikes are being used for pleasure; in Photo #2, they are being used as a method of transportation.*)
- Invite students to share their completed Venn diagrams with the class.

### During Reading:

- What questions do students have as they read? Each time students come across a passage or text feature in the article that raises a question for them, ask them to pause, mark a **?**, and write down their question. If they become confused, they can mark the text with a **Huh?** and then reread or skip ahead to try to repair understanding.

### After Reading:

- Invite students to share their questions with the class. Which can other students answer?
- Then, engage students in a class discussion. *In what ways would students' lives be different if there were no cars, buses, or trains? For what reasons would students be interested in contributing to Bicycles for Humanity (or to another project in their community that makes a lasting difference in people's lives)? What contributions could students make?* (Ideas include collecting old bikes, telling other people about the need to send old bicycles to Africa, starting a local chapter or raising money to help chapters cover the cost of sending containers to Africa).

### Extension:

- Have students create an informative comic strip showing how Bicycles for Humanity works. Students should include information about why bicycles make such a big difference in Africa.
- **Criteria for Assessment:** An informative comic strip *includes relevant facts, is correctly sequenced, and tells the complete story using images and words.*

### Internet Connections:

- Visit <http://www.bicycles-for-humanity.org/> to find out more about B4H and how you can become involved (*Note: All URLs are posted as links on our student website at <http://www.news4youth.com>*)

## View It!



Photo #1

Getty Images

View It!



Photo #2

Getty Images

Observe It!

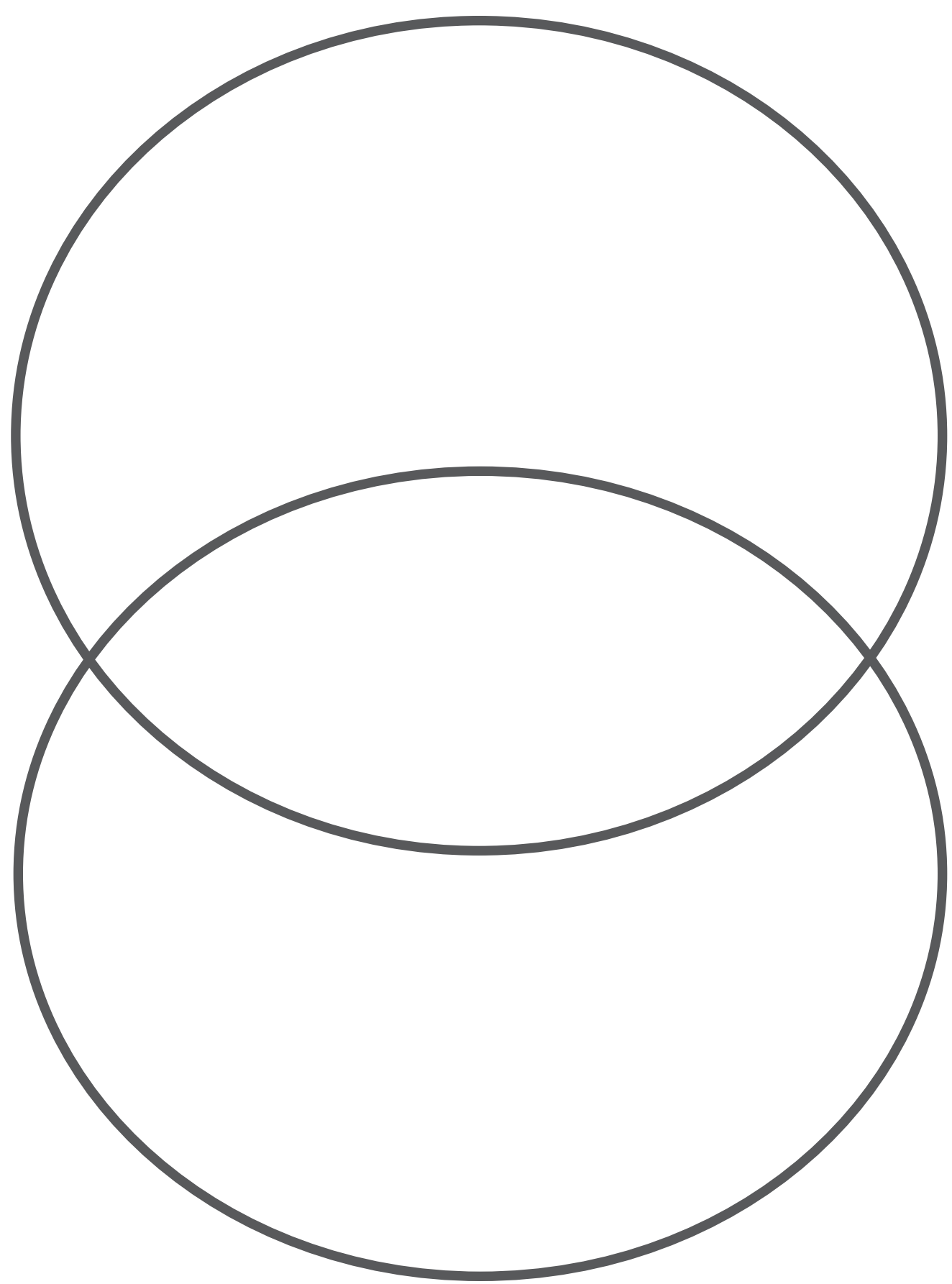


Photo #2

Photo #1

## New Life for Old Wheels

### Practice It!

Answer the questions below in complete sentences:

1. Why do most people in Africa travel on foot?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What are some advantages of biking instead of walking in Africa?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What does **B4H** stand for?

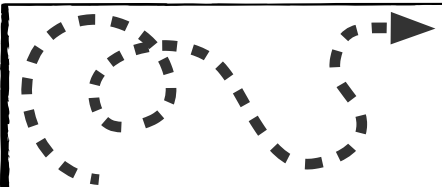
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Explain what **B4H** does.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Using your own words, explain to a partner what happens to a bike between the time it is collected by B4H to when it is given to its new owner.

## No Girls Allowed!



The skier speeds down the ramp, then sails into the air. Seconds later – a perfect landing. Wow!

Will the jump be good enough for a medal at the 2010 Winter Games? Hmmm . . . That depends. Is the skier a man or a woman?

What does **gender** have to do with it? Well, women's ski jumping is not an official sport in the Olympics. So women ski jumpers don't have a chance of winning a medal. They're not even allowed to compete.

Is this fair? Some people don't think so. Men have been jumping in the Winter Games since 1924. So why not women?

### One side of the argument

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is in charge

of deciding which sports can be included in the Olympics. It bases its decisions on strict criteria. And it says that women's ski jumping just doesn't measure up.

For one thing, this sport is not practiced on three continents, or in 25 countries. For another, it hasn't held at least two world championships.

**Gender** is the condition of being male or female.



It's important that these criteria are met, IOC officials say. They help make sure that the Games are truly global.