

Riding the Ups and Downs

- Who can ride a bike?
- Is it easy or hard learning to ride a bike?
- Once you've mastered learning to ride a bike is it always easy?
- When is it easy? When is it hard?

Story – Jamie goes on a journey

Jamie loved cycling and was planning to do a long bike ride. He would cycle from his house to see his Uncle Richard who lived out in the country. He did lots of preparation work – he bought new tyres and pumped them up hard, oiled the bike in all the right places and checked that the brakes and gears were working. He checked the map so that he knew the route. Jamie also made sure that he had all the right gear – correct trainers, a cycle helmet, bike spanners, oil, patches, pump, water and a packed lunch.

When the day came for the big bike ride he set off on his journey. At first everything went really well – the weather was fine and it wasn't too windy. It was also quite flat when he was cycling out of the town. However, when Jamie got into the countryside there were some big hills to climb. Jamie puffed and panted and cycled as hard as he could and managed to make it to the top of the hills where he stood and caught his breath. On one of the hills Jamie even had to get off his bike and push it up to the top of the hill. The views at the top of the hills were marvellous! Jamie felt he was on top of the world! And of course, when he was at the top he could then look forward to riding down the hill without having to pedal at all. These were the bits of the journey that Jamie enjoyed the most.

Just after lunch Jamie noticed that he had a flat tyre. It was really good he had been prepared and brought his puncture repair kit. He took the wheel off, found where the puncture was (a nail had gone into the tyre) and put a patch on. In no time at all he was off again. But no sooner had he set off than it started to rain. Jamie couldn't believe it. He had checked the forecast and it had said it was going to be fine all day. "Oh well," thought Jamie, "I suppose you never really know what's round the corner."

Luckily it was only a small shower and soon Jamie was cycling along lovely flat country roads. At one point the chain came off his bike and he had to stop and fix it back on but he was soon on his way again. In fact he saw a signpost which told him he was just two miles from uncle's house.

Eventually Jamie reached his Uncle Richard's house where he told him all about the highs and lows of his journey. Uncle Richard smiled and told Jamie it sounded like Jamie's journey was just like the journey of health in our life.

Follow up questions:

- What were the highs and lows of Jamie's journey?
- What did Jamie's uncle mean by saying the bike journey was like the journey of health?
- Are we healthy all the time?
- What does it feel like to be healthy?
- What does it feel like to be unwell?
- Jamie did a lot of preparation before his bike ride to try and make the journey as easy as possible. What sort of things can we do to make our journey of health go as smoothly as possible?
- Did all his preparations mean that nothing went wrong? It's the same with us. However, a bike can't repair itself but the human body can – in most cases without any help.

Suggested song: 'One more step along the world I go'