



LET'S  
WALK TO  
SCHOOL

KS1/Foundation Phase/ P1-3

# WALKING to school through the generations



**Duration: Approx 60 mins**  
(excluding the extension  
and at home section)



## Aim

To ask pupils to consider the different experiences of walking to school across different generations, and in countries outside the United Kingdom.

## Objectives

This lesson will enable pupils to:

- Consider how the journey to school for older generations may have been different to their own journey to school.
- Compare the differences from the past to now.
- Create a story or picture to illustrate these differences.
- Consider how the journey to school may differ across countries (in the extension).

## Resources

- 'Walk to school stories' resource sheet (available at the end of this file)
- Writing and drawing materials
- Whiteboard or flipchart

## Curriculum links

- **ENGLISH/WELSH/LANGUAGES** – listening to a story, recalling facts, comparing with own experiences
- **HISTORY** – local history
- **PSHE/HEALTH AND WELLBEING** – considering other people's perspectives
- **GEOGRAPHY/SOCIAL STUDIES** – local area

## Preparation

There are five stories about walking to school available in the resource sheet at the end of this file.



## Introduction



1. To start the lesson, ask the children how they travelled to school today. Ask questions such as:
  - Did you walk, scoot, cycle, Park and Stride or come by car?
  - Did anyone come by some other method?
  - How long does it take you to get to school?
2. Ask who they came to school with: sibling/s, mum, dad, carer, grandparents. Follow up by asking if they always travel with that person or whether it changes throughout the week.
3. What did they notice when coming to school? What traffic did they see? Did they meet any friends on the way?
4. Encourage them to think about how their parents/carers or grandparents travelled to school when they were children. What do they think might have been different? Steer the conversation to think about what the traffic might have been like, who they think their parents/grandparents travelled with, and how far they travelled.
5. Explain to the children that they will be listening to some stories from people who are the same age as some of their parents/grandparents (depending on the story chosen) and how they travelled to school.



## Development

1. **Read one story from the resource sheet at the end of this document to the children.** You can choose which story will be read and are welcome to read more than one depending on the time you have available. However, one story will work for this task.
2. **Ask the children what they remember about the story.** Here are some prompts:
  - When did this person go to primary school?
  - Where did they live?
  - How did they get to school?
  - Who did they travel with?
  - How long did it take them?
  - What other memories did they have of school?
  - What would the children like or dislike if they had to do this journey?
3. **Record the answers on the whiteboard.**
4. **Explain to the class that you are going to read the story again.** While you're reading, ask them to think about what is the same and what is different compared to how they travel to school.



**5. Ask the children to tell you what they've noticed is different in the story to their own journey to school.** Again, use the prompts above and record on the whiteboard for children to see. Ask the children to use (and record on whiteboard) sentences, e.g.

- Lynsey walks to school and I go to school by car.
- James cycled, but I am driven to school by my dad.
- Rachel came to school on a tractor, but a tractor wouldn't fit in the parking space at our school!



**6. Ask the children to take one or more of the sentences on the whiteboard** and write them down in their books/on paper OR write their own sentence about the differences in the story and their own journey. If there is time, children can illustrate their writing with a picture.

## Plenary



1. Invite a few pupils to either explain the differences and similarities they have drawn or read out the differences and similarities they have written.
2. Ask the children to say which journey they would prefer to make to school and why.
3. Ask the children to think about how their parents/carers and grandparents travelled to school when they were younger. How would they find out about their journeys? What questions would they ask?

## Extension

Look at one or both stories from people who went to school in different countries. Using the same outline as above, create another lesson based on these stories or focus on a story from a particular country and use that as a starting point to investigate the country: the climate, wildlife and much more.

**OR**

If your school has links with a care home, perhaps the work produced in the lesson could be shared with the residents in the care home with an invitation for them to write back with their experiences, asking the same questions as above.





1. Let's do some investigating into your own family's past. Can you ask your parent/carer or grandparents about how they travelled to school when they were younger? If you need to get more information, you can use the following questions:
  - Can you describe your school? Was it in a village or in a city? How big was it?
  - How did you travel to school?
  - Did you travel with anyone?
  - How far did you have to travel?
  - How many other people were travelling in the same way as you?
  - What did you like/dislike about your journey to school?
  - Do you have any strong memories of travelling to school?
2. Using the answers to the questions above, can you draw a picture of what it was like for that person to travel to school?
3. Did your parents/carers or grandparents go to the same school as you? If so, what has changed about your journey to school? What has stayed the same? Can you tell your parents/carers or grandparents about your journey to school answering the questions above?



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Tag us @LivingStreets or email us at [commsteam@livingstreets.org.uk](mailto:commsteam@livingstreets.org.uk)

We are Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking. These learning resources support participation in WOW – the year-round walk to school challenge.

For further information on WOW, visit [www.livingstreets.org.uk/WOW](http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/WOW)

Get in touch: [walktoschool@livingstreets.org.uk](mailto:walktoschool@livingstreets.org.uk) 020 7377 4900



## Supporting material

# Walk to school stories resource sheet



### 1. 1940s England - Richard

I went to school in a very small village school from 1943 – 1948 in Leicestershire. There were only two classes and two teachers. I travelled to school by school bus which went through the surrounding villages, picking up all my classmates. I don't think mum or dad ever took me or fetched me from school – which happens a lot more now. We used to have a sing-song on the bus. We also didn't have any other activities to go to after school.

During the winter of '46-7, we were off school for six weeks as traffic couldn't get through because of the snow. This also applied to our milk lorries – I lived on a farm with milking cows. And because the lorries couldn't get through to take the milk, we kept milk in every container in the house, including the bath! One day in the snow, five of us decided to walk to school, slowly, arriving at lunchtime. After having lunch, the teacher suggested we went home, which we did (much quicker)!

### 2. 1950s/60s New Delhi, India - Lorraine

I went to a convent school (a school in which the teachers are nuns) in New Delhi. It was an old building, not far from the city centre, and the school was for children of all ages. There were about 300 pupils. I went to school on a school bus with other pupils and an adult chaperone to keep an eye on us. The journey was about 10 miles and it felt like to took a really long time. I remember there was lots of traffic, especially through the city. It was always really hot on the bus. I remember looking at the huge government buildings on the bus route. I don't think many pupils have to travel so far to school these days.



### 3. 1970s England - Rachel

I went to the same primary school as my dad, in a little village school in Leicestershire. It comprised of an old building with two classrooms for the juniors and a separate new building for the infants. The infants building didn't exist when my dad went to this school. It was a small school of 60 pupils with three teachers, one of which was the Headteacher. She owned a pug dog that used to sit at the front of the class.

I travelled to school by school bus, picking up my classmates on the way from the villages and other farms. The journey was about four miles and took about half an hour. The journey included both country lanes with tractors and a busy A road with cars and lorries. I liked talking to my friends on the way to school and we used to sing songs, and our bus driver was called Lilly.

I grew up on a farm, so when it snowed and the school bus couldn't make it, my dad used to take me to school by tractor!



#### 4. 1980s England - Lynsey

I went to school in a village on the outskirts of Chester. My school was made out of corrugated metal, repurposed from aircraft hangers after the war. There were about 150 children in the school and we had a school field and a pond for pond dipping.

When I was younger, I walked to school with my mum and then later by myself, although on music days I didn't because I played the cello, and it was too heavy for me to carry. I walked for less than a mile, but it seemed like longer on the way to school as it was uphill all the way. It took 15 minutes unless it was conker season.

The main road I walked along was a fairly busy road. There was another school on the way, so there were always lots of people walking. I really liked my journey to school because I loved going to school. I also loved collecting conkers in the early autumn. I used to be ready to walk to school very early so I could get to the conkers before anyone else. I also remember being obsessed with roller skates for a while, and sometimes I skated to school while my mum carried my shoes!

#### 5. 1990s Australia - James

I went to primary school in the 1990s in a small village near Perth, Australia. The school was made up of about six buildings and everything was quite open. There was no playground, but it was next to a park and the canteen area was outdoors.

I walked to school with my older sister and then when I got a bit older, cycled on my own. It took me 5-10 minutes as I only lived about 300 metres from the park. The road I walked along was next to a wild area called Periwinkle Bush. It was a quiet road. The last part of my journey was through a park. There was no fence around the school so I could vary my route a bit depending on how I felt. I loved that my journey to school was so quick.

In the summer, you had to look where you were going because you would find snakes on the path. They weren't very dangerous ones, but it would still be painful. At other times of the year, you would get swooped by magpies. Once a magpie picked a hole in my helmet!

