



LET'S  
WALK TO  
SCHOOL

KS2/P4-7

# 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:

- Learn about different school journeys over the years
- Recall facts about stories they hear
- Compare and contrast their own journeys to school with those they have heard

## 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, writing comparison words.
- **HISTORY** – local history, considering why things were different at a different point in time
- **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, introduce the subject of travelling to school. This section can be done as a group or with talking partners. Use questions like:
  - How did you travel to school today?
  - How long did it take you?
  - What was the traffic like on your journey?
  - Who did you travel with?
  - What did you see and hear on your journey?
  - What do you like about your journey to school?
  - What do you dislike?
2. Ask them to think about how their parents/carers or grandparents travelled to school. What do they think might have been different? If needed, steer the conversation to think about what the traffic might have been like, who they think their parents/carers/grandparents travelled with, and how far they travelled.
3. Explain to the children that they will be listening to and reading stories from people who are the same age as their parents/carers and grandparents and how they travelled to school.

## Development



1. **Read one story aloud and then choose children to read the other stories**  
OR put into groups/pairs to read together.
2. **Ask children what they remember about the stories?**  
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. **Read the original story again, asking the children to think about what was different then compared to how they travel to school nowadays.**
4. **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.



**5. Write this statement on the board:**

**A generation ago, 70% of children walked to school but now it's around half.**

**Discuss:** What sort of things have changed since the 1970s that may have had an effect on the number of people walking to school?

**6. Ask children to write a compare and contrast piece about travelling to school through the years.** Each child should choose one person's story and compare it to their own journey to school. Use the prompts above as well as the following:

- Why do they think the journeys were so different?
- What has changed in the years since that person went to school?
- Include an explanation of whose journey they prefer and why.

## Plenary



**1.** Recap on the differences they have discovered and the reasons why they might be different.

**2.** Invite pupils to share their ideas or their writing with the class.

## Extension

Ask children to write a similar story about their own journey to school. Here are some things to consider:

- Location of school (town, village etc).
- Size of school (how many pupils attend).
- How they travel to school.
- Who they travel with.
- How long it takes and how far they travel (if they know).
- Consider type and volume of traffic, types of roads, pavements and footpaths, other people walking, cycling or driving.
- What they like about their journey to school.
- Any stories they remember from travelling to school.

**OR**

Using the overseas stories, you can create another lesson focussing on the particular country where the story is from, and use that as a starting point to investigate that country: the climate, wildlife and much more.





Write about someone else's journey to school. It could be your parents/carers, your grandparents, another family member, or someone else you know. Here are some questions to help you:

- When did you go to primary school?
- Where was your school located?
- How big was it?
- How did you travel to school?
- Did you travel with anyone?
- How far did you have to travel?
- How long did it take?
- What was your journey like?
- What did you like and dislike about your journey to school?



**SHARE WITH US YOUR CHILDREN'S STORIES, DRAWINGS AND CREATIONS.**

Tag us **@LivingStreets** or email us at **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!

