



Teaching Notes

The Travel Buster is a fun online teaching resource for pupils at Key Stage 2, aimed at raising awareness of the impact of school travel on health and the local environment. It allows pupils to see how the way they travel to school rates in terms of air pollution, noise, and health, and provides useful information and ideas for improving their travel choices.

The Travel Buster can be easily incorporated into lessons and ties in with a number of areas of the National Curriculum, including:

PHSE and Citizenship:

- 3a. What makes a healthy lifestyle, including the benefits of exercise and healthy eating, what affects mental health, and how to make informed choices.
- 5a. Take responsibility [for example, for identifying safe, healthy and sustainable means of travel when planning their journey to school].
- 5b. Feel positive about themselves [for example, by producing personal diaries, profiles and portfolios of achievements; by having opportunities to show what they can do and how much responsibility they can take].

Geography:

- 5a. Recognise how people can improve the environment [for example, by reclaiming derelict land] or damage it [for example, by polluting a river], and how decisions about places and environments affect the future quality of people's lives.
- 5b. Recognise how and why people may seek to manage environments sustainably, and to identify opportunities for their own involvement [for example, taking part in a local conservation project].
- 6e. An environmental issue, caused by change in an environment [for example, increasing traffic congestion, hedgerow loss, drought], and attempts to manage the environment sustainably [for example, by improving public transport, creating a new nature reserve, reducing water use].


Preparation

The **Travel Facts** handout provides further information about air pollution and noise, and can either be used as a handout for pupils, or by teachers to explain the issues.

It should be made clear to pupils that the Travel Buster rates school travel according to impact per person, so for example, although a bus might be considered more polluting and noisy than a car, because it carries more passengers it is a better travel choice as less vehicles are needed overall.

School Travel Diary

Included in the Travel Buster is a **School Travel Diary** for children to record how they travel to and from school over a period of one week. This information is used as part of the calculation to rate their school travel, so pupils should be asked to record their school travel at least a week before they carry out the online exercise.

								
Walking	Skateboard	Scooter	Bicycle	Tram	Train	Bus	Car	Ferry

If a pupil uses more than one mode of transport to get to school, they should enter the most dominant type, which is used for the longest part of their journey. It is assumed that the majority of pupils who travel by public transport will walk for part of their journey.

Alternatively, if a pupil walks or cycles a reasonable distance to catch a bus or train to school, you may wish to suggest that they enter walking/cycling in the “To” field and bus/train etc in the “From” field so that their actual travel is better represented in the Travel Buster.

Journey Distance

Part of the exercise asks pupils to enter how long their journey to school is. A link to Google Maps is included in the exercise to help pupils work out the distance, although it may be helpful for teachers to ask pupils to work out the distance beforehand, as part of the School Travel Diary exercise, or to give estimates.

Technical Requirements

The Travel Buster is a Flash application, which uses sounds, as well as images and animation, to demonstrate the impacts of the different school travel choices, so if you can, carry out the exercise on a computer with speakers.

The Travel Buster has been designed to work on a white board and a **Downloadable Version** is also available for classrooms that do not have internet access.

The Travel Buster

Calculate Your Journey

- **Character:** The first stage of the Travel Buster asks pupils to enter their name and select a character that best represents them.
- **Environment:** They are then asked to select whether they live in a city, town or the countryside.
- **Transport:** The character and background then appear on the screen together and pupils are asked to select which modes of transport they used to get to and from school over the past week, using information from their school travel diary.
- **Cars:** If a pupil selects car as a mode of transport they will be asked how many people they usually travel with and a fact about cars will appear.
- **Impact and Fact:** The next screen displays all the different types of transport the pupil has used throughout the week, and a fact will appear relating to the most dominant mode. The screen animates to reflect the impact their journeys have on them and the environment, and sounds are generated.
- **Distance:** Pupils are then asked to enter how far their journey to school is - a link to Google Maps is included to help them work it out.
- **Impact and Fact:** The scene then animates to demonstrate the effect the distance of their journey has on their health and the local environment. Another fact pops up about the pupil's most dominant mode of transport.
- **Scores:** On the next screen the pupil's scores are shown using three scales – for health, noise pollution and air pollution, together with an overall star rating, which reflects the overall impact of their school travel.

Make a Pledge

Once pupils have been given their overall score, they have the option to make a pledge to change their school travel and reduce the negative impact it might be having.

A pledge certificate is generated by clicking the "Print a Pledge" button, which includes their name and score, and a blank space for them to write in their pledge.

A number of pledge ideas are included in the **Travel Tips** handout. Encourage pupils to compare scores and discuss the impact their school travel has on their health and the local environment.

Depending on how each pupil has rated and what travel options they have in terms of accessibility to public transport, or how far away they live from school, they can choose to make small or large pledges.

For example:

I promise to.....

Walk to school at least once a week

Travel to school by bus more often

Ask my friends to walk to school with me

Share car journeys to school with my friends

Quiz

A final part of the exercise is the quiz, where pupils are asked to rank different modes of transport according to the impact they have on health, noise pollution and air pollution. The quiz allows them to apply what they have learnt during the previous exercises, in a fun and interactive way! It also includes additional ways of travelling, including aeroplane.

As with the calculator, the modes of transport are ranked according to their impact per person, rather than per vehicle.

Follow Up Ideas

- Having made pledges, ask the pupils to report back to their fellow classmates on their success, and carry out the exercise again to see how they rate.
- Encourage pupils to make a record of sounds, smells and wildlife on their way to school, what different modes of transport they see along the way, and the effect they are having on their health and the environment.
- Ask pupils to draw the different environments they see – for example their home, journey to school, and the school. Encourage them to use colours to show how they see the environment, including pollution and noises.
- Encourage pupils to think about the other journeys they make and to discuss how these journeys impact on their health and the environment.
- For pupils who have computers at home, suggest they download the **Travel Buster Screensaver**.

If you require any further information or ideas, or have any feedback on the Travel Buster, please contact Environmental Protection UK:
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