



# Interview: Parents, Family or Grandparents about Transport

## Summary

During this lesson, students will interview their parents, caregivers, family members, grandparents or local senior citizens to gain an understanding of how transport options and choices have changed over time. Students will have the opportunity to discuss how these changes have impacted the natural and built environment.

Use the information in this guide to help you complete the activity with students. See also [Links to Western Australian Curriculum](#) on page 4.

Year level: Years 3 – 9  
Teaching and learning resource

## Learning outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Write interview questions to assist in their research on transport options and choices;
- Consider how the world has changed over the last few generations;
- Record interviews and present findings including conclusions;
- Create a historical record;
- Identify how the introduction of cars has had an impact on the environment, health and social interaction over time, and;
- Predict new modes of transport.

## Preparation

### Resources

- 'Travelling through Time' student worksheets (artist impression and storytelling). See page 6.
- Barbara Abbott story resource sheet (from 'Living Histories'). See page 8.



## Background notes

Oral history is the collection of living people's testimony about their own experiences. In oral history projects, an interviewee recalls information for an interviewer who records the recollections and creates a historical record. It depends upon human memory and the spoken word; therefore information can vary between people.

Students may be able to find similar information from internet research, but this won't give them the opportunity to engage with the older generations or develop their listening skills.

## Teaching and learning ideas

Teachers are encouraged to use a range of the teaching and learning ideas provided. The teaching and learning ideas provide opportunities to address multiple learning areas. Teachers can modify and extend ideas for different year levels and phases of schooling. Teaching ideas have been aligned to the Western Australian curriculum including identification of learning area, strand and sub-strand.

## Activity 1 – Brainstorming ideas

1. As a whole class, brainstorm with your students how children get to school now. Record all ideas.
2. Read the Barbara Abbott story from Living Histories (provided with lesson) to get students thinking about the differences in travel from the 1950's to today. This can be done as a whole class or individually.
3. Question: Using information from the Barbara Abbott story, how do you think students in the 1950's might have travelled to school? Record ideas on the board next to the first list from step one.
4. Create data displays.
5. Compare and contrast.
6. Discuss with students the main differences in the two lists created.
7. Research and create a travelling through transport timeline.
8. Timeline can be static or dynamic.
9. Pose questions and collect categorical or numerical data by observation or survey.
10. Predict new modes of transport.
11. Present findings and conclusions in a range of communication forms (e.g. written, oral, visual, digital, tabular, graphic), appropriate to audience and purpose, using relevant terms).

## Activity 2 – Interview and learn

1. Questions: What do you think oral history means? Why would it be important to collect oral history? Is there someone in your family that you could interview for an oral history project?
2. Instruct students to conduct an oral history project on how transport has changed over the years. Ask students to work in pairs to formulate 10 interview questions they could ask their parents and grandparents (or elderly neighbours) about how travel has changed. Example questions include:
  - How did you get to primary school?

- How did you get to high school?
  - How many vehicles did you have in your household?
  - Was there a car park at your school?
  - What did you get up to between home and school?
3. Ask students to include the questions and devise other questions to interview their parents or caregivers, family members, grandparents or a local senior citizen. If possible, interviews should be recorded but encourage students to also take notes.

## Activity 3 – Travelling through time

1. Using the answers from their interview questions, ask students to compare and contrast the travel habits of themselves, their parents and their grandparents. Ask students to share their discoveries with the rest of the class. Look at the differences and similarities between students' daily lives and life during their parents' and grandparents' childhoods (e.g. mode of transport, transport options, cost) and how daily lives have changed.
2. Prompt students to think further about the following:
  - Compare the amount of fuel used?
  - How has the level of exercise changed?
  - Do we interact differently with others in comparison to older generations?
  - Pose questions and collect categorical or numerical data by observation or survey.
  - Create data displays.
3. Students can use the 'Travelling through Time' worksheets to compare their interview findings. Depending on the year level of your students, use the worksheet that encourages either drawings or stories, or use both.

## Extension activities

- Create a class blog on the Your Move website that compares travel habits between generations. The blog can be viewed at home by parents and grandparents (although only members can comment).
- After using the Barbara Abbott story, you could use other *Living Histories* stories. The *Living Histories* e-book contains 563 other stories of local seniors and is available on CD-ROM. You can search for terms such as "walk to school", "steam train" or "tram". For a free copy contact either the Your Move team ([yourmove@transport.wa.gov.au](mailto:yourmove@transport.wa.gov.au)) or call the Department of Local Government and Communities on 6551 8700.
- Invite grandparents or local senior citizen(s) to visit your classroom for morning tea and give students the chance to display their findings to their family members.
- Create invites, plan morning tea including guest speaker and contexts to be included.
- Ask students to use the information gathered from their interviews to write an article for the school newsletter. They could use desktop publishing software or online to publish their article.

- Conduct the ‘Research Transport through Photographs’ lesson to develop understanding of how transport use has changed over time.

## Assessment ideas

- Assess student ability to portray their findings in their ‘Travelling through Time’ worksheet.
- Assess how students plan, draft and publish their school newsletter article (from the extension activity).

## Links to the Western Australian Curriculum

**Table 1: English**

Strand	Sub-strand
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language for interaction</li> <li>• Expressing and developing ideas</li> </ul>
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interacting with others</li> <li>• Creating text</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Humanities and Social**

Strand	Sub-strand
Historical Knowledge and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present and past family life (Year 1)</li> <li>• The past in the present (Year 2)</li> <li>• Community and remembrance (Year 3)</li> <li>• The Australian colonies (Year 5)</li> <li>• Australia as a nation (Year 6)</li> </ul>
Humanities and Social Sciences skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questioning and Researching</li> <li>• Analysing</li> <li>• Evaluating</li> <li>• Communicating and Reflecting</li> </ul>

**Table 3: Mathematics**

Strand	Sub-strand
Statistics and probability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data representation and interpretation</li> </ul>

**Table 4: Technologies - Subject: Design and Technologies**

Strand	Sub-strand
Processes and production skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating solutions by:</li> <li>• Designing</li> </ul>

**Table 5: Technologies - Subject: Digital Technologies**

Strand	Sub-strand
Processes and production skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collecting managing and analysing data</li> </ul>
Creating solutions by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigating and defining</li> <li>• Designing</li> </ul>

### General capabilities

- Literacy; information and communication technology (ICT capability);
- Critical and creative thinking; personal and social capability; and ethical understanding.

### Cross-curriculum priorities

- Sustainability

## Travelling through time – an artist impression

Draw a picture of how **you** travel to school

Draw a picture of how your **parents** travelled to school

Draw a picture of how your **grandparents** travelled to school

## Travelling through time – storytelling

Write a story about how **you** travel to school

Write a story about how your **parents** travelled to school

Write a story about how your **grandparents** travelled to school

From the publication *Living Histories* and used with permission of Department of Local Government and Communities.

## Abbott, Barbara

### Child raising in the 1950s • Barbara Abbott • City Beach

The '50s started with the end of petrol rationing on 1st February 1950. Before that cars were fuelled by kerosene or gas producers. But not many people had cars anyway as they were an expensive item. Buses, trams and trolley buses were the usual mode of transport. Ferries crossed the river or went down to Mosman Park or to Drakes at Point Walter where a dance was held on a Saturday night.

Rationing of items such as butter, tea, sugar and clothing continued for some time.

I was married on the 28th January 1950 and had my two children during this decade. By 1954 we had a built a house in Tuart Hill with two bedrooms, lounge, kitchen, laundry and toilet on the back veranda plus a sleep out and front veranda. We also had a refrigerator but before we moved into the house we had used a Coolgardie safe to keep our foodstuffs cool. This refrigerator was still working perfectly 40 years later.

We also bought a small washing machine with a spin drier which was a new innovation. Before that I had boiled up the nappies in a copper and rinsed them in the trough. Washing lines were made of wire and stretched between two poles and we used wooden props to hold up the line, which were made and sold by Aboriginals.

Bread and milk were delivered every day and Bairds - a general all-purpose shop in Perth - delivered our groceries once a week after we had posted an order (we did not have a telephone).





If we did want to telephone anyone we used the phone box around the corner, which was painted red.

Boans was our favourite shop in Perth. We loved to go in and watch the butter being cut and put into paper in the quantities we wanted. Cheese was weighed and wrapped the same way. Payment was put into a cylinder that spun from the counter across to the cashier who was in a sort of tower and she sent the change back. This was always fascinating to watch by young and old.

One of my two children's favourite pastimes was for me to pack a lunch, catch the bus to Perth (the pram was carried on the back of the bus) and pay the threepence fee to get on to the Perth Railway Station. We sat there for about four or five hours watching the steam trains and the children loved it. We had our picnic lunch there and then came home again.

If we needed to go to Princess Margaret Hospital we always had to stop on the Thomas Street Bridge and watch at least one steam train before we went on. My son was very interested in all forms of transport. He studied road directories and at four years old could tell you the names of all the streets and what their names were and when they changed their names. His ambition in life, at that time, was to paint the white lines on the road!! But he ended up with a degree in science and physics.

I still look back at those days with fond memories. Life was simpler then.

*Barbara Abbott*