



## Local Studies Lesson Ideas

### **X marks the spot**

Ask the children to draw a map of their walking route from home to school, marking with a "X" all the places where they have to cross the road. Younger children can draw simple pictorial maps with landmarks, whilst older children can use local street maps.

Discuss their routes - can they identify danger spots such as junctions, corners, bends and parked cars? Can they plan a safe walking route to school, using safer crossing places? If in a rural area, can they design an ideal safer route, with traffic calming features?

It would be a useful exercise to agree the safest walking route to school with parents. A copy of the agreed safest route can be signed and returned to the school for reference.

For those who come by bus or car, they could also draw their route, noting any important or interesting landmarks on the way.

It is interesting to compare the amount of detail in a walker's route to a passenger's route. How many child passengers only see their local environment as a passing 30mph blur?

This is a good opportunity to discuss safe walking behaviour and how to make themselves more visible as a pedestrian or cyclist.

### **Town or Country**

Ask the children to collect or draw pictures of things they might see on their way to school. Sort them into sets of things they might see mainly in the town or mainly in the country. How will they sort things they might see in both?

Introduce two large rings - label one "TOWN" and the other "COUNTRY". Let them put their pictures into the most appropriate ring. Can they create a third area for things seen in both, by overlapping the rings?

Detectives

If you are taking the children out as part of a local study, you can use the opportunity for them to act as detectives.

What lies under the pavements outside school? What clues are there to help them? What do all the manhole covers "cover"? Take rubbings - can they find out what the letters on the covers mean?

How can they tell whether a road or pavement has been dug up recently? How has it been repaired? Is it safe? Where will they find information about future local road closures? What effect could this have on their journey to school?

Compare recent local photographs of the area around the school, with those taken 50 or more

years ago. Look at buildings, street furniture and road names. What clues do they give about the history of the local area?

### **Hazards**

Ask the children if they know what a hazard is.

Can they give examples of any hazards they have seen on their way to school?

Ask them to consider what hazards there may be for particular groups of people walking the same route as them e.g. disabled, elderly, people with pushchairs or pets.

Do/would hazards change with the time of year? e.g. because of weather conditions or the amount of daylight.

Carry out a risk assessment of part of the journey to school - outside the school gates is a good starting point.

With younger children it is important to discuss what they think is meant by something being "risky". Can they give examples of risky behaviour?

Draw or write about the potential hazards they find e.g. cracked paving, potholes, worn road markings, bad parking, speeding etc. Write or draw how it could be improved. Act on the findings. Let the children write to the appropriate authorities.

### **Crossing Places**

Ask the children to think of a safe crossing place - can they make a model of it and write an explanation of how they would use it?

Do the children actually know how to walk safely where there is a pavement?

Discuss safe behaviour, walking on the inside away from traffic and the kerb edge.

Discuss what to do if there is no pavement, particularly in a rural area.

Do they know how to make themselves more visible if they have to walk in poor daylight or darkness?

### **Signs**

What sort of road signs do the children see on their way to school?

Which give warnings (triangular), which are orders (circular) and which give information (rectangular)?

Find out where the busy junctions are in school.

Discuss and decide which would be the most suitable signs to use and where to position them e.g. slippery floor,

Think about signs for rules e.g. no running, keep left.

Where will they put information signs? E.g. visitors this way, please report to school office etc.