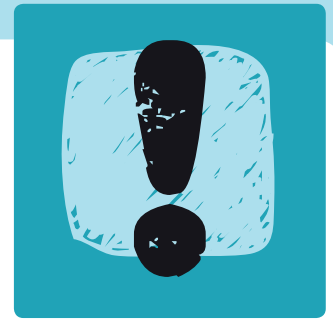




# Staying Safe



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## Hi-vis treasure hunt



10 minutes



None



Solo or pairs activity

### Aim

Pupils explore what they can do to make themselves more visible when they are on their journey to school.

### Instructions

Pupils rummage through the classroom, their bags and their clothes to scavenge anything they can find that is reflective, fluorescent, illuminated or simply bright and shiny.

It might be a set of bike lights, but could equally be a piece of tin foil from their sandwiches.

### Extension

Pupils discuss what's easiest to see. Turn the lights off. Is it still the same result? What happens if you shine a mobile phone light on materials, get closer or further away, or see it out of the corner of your eye? Is a flashing or steady light more noticeable?

## Hazard map



20 minutes



Paper, pen



Solo activity

### Aim

Pupils identify the potential hazards they experience on their journey to school.

### Instructions

Pupils draw their journey to school, not in streets or distance, but with what they perceive to be possible problems, or unpleasant situations. They could write a list of words or situations or draw different features – maybe busy roads, litter, bad crossings, dirty buses, other schools, poor lighting or even dog mess (we find that comes up a lot). It might even be the weather.

### Extension

Pupils compare their list with another pupil. Is there a common class theme and what problems are identified most? Do two children on the same journey identify different issues? Would it be different if doing this exercise in a different season? You could get local maps another time and actually plot routes and identify better alternatives – using advice from other children.

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# Staying Safe



30 minutes



None



Group activity

## The great safety debate

### Aim

Pupils discuss solutions to common safety concerns.

### Instructions

Split pupils into groups to discuss safety on the school journey, either their own or in general. Use prompts like:

- should all children have to wear helmets?
- are cycling and scooting safe?
- should helmets be a legal requirement?
- do helmets actually make us safer?
- what helps us stay safe on the journey to school?
- what things make the school journey unsafe?

Pupils can sort their findings into an order of importance, or discuss solutions to issues they raise, and present these to the rest of the class. Set time limits for each part of the task.



### Extension

Expand into a full debate. Either choose a subject to debate, or have the class vote on the issues they discussed. Pick two teams of three and a chairperson, the rest of the class listen and vote. You can allow a certain number of questions as time permits.



**Sustrans' School Mark** recognises and supports schools' excellence in active and sustainable travel. It enables them to be beacons of best practice and consists of three progressive levels for schools to work through – Bronze, Silver and Gold.

On successful achievement of Bronze the school will receive a plaque, plus a certificate and digital motif to use for each level gained. For more information, visit [www.sustrans.org.uk/schoolmark](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/schoolmark)



Sustrans' annual **Big Pedal** is the UK's largest inter-school cycling and scooting challenge. Each spring, schools compete to see who can get the most pupils, families and staff members to arrive on two wheels. The more that do, the greater the chance to win some fantastic prizes from scooter storage to cycle stunt shows by the UK's best riders. The competition is weighted according to school size, so everyone has a fair chance to win!

For further information on this event, visit [www.sustrans.org.uk/bigpedal](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/bigpedal)

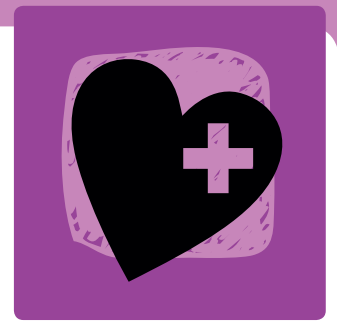
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# Being Healthy



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## Finger on the pulse



10 minutes



Pens, paper, watches



Pairs activity

### Aim

Pupils learn about the effect of activity on the heart.

### Instructions

Help pupils find their pulse on their left wrist, just beneath the thumb. Make them sit quietly for two minutes to ensure their pulse is at rest. One pupil counts their pulse while the other times 15 seconds on a watch. Multiply by four to get beats per minute. Record and swap roles.

Next, repeat the measurements immediately after one minute of an activity that makes pupils slightly out of breath (eg running on the spot or moving arms vigorously) and record, before resting completely for two minutes and recording a third pulse rate.

Compare measurements. How do they differ? Do pupils know that the heart is a muscle that pumps blood and oxygen round the body? Explain that a slower resting heart rate suggests a stronger heart, as it can pump more blood with one contraction. Why does activity raise the heart rate?

### Extension

Discuss the findings. Why is it better for the heart rate to get close to normal quickly after exercise? What happens to the heart if we do more activity and what changes to the results would we expect after several weeks of increased activity? Chart the pupils' heart rates. Who had the highest or lowest after exercise, whose was the lowest to start with and whose recovered the fastest?

## Get creative



20 minutes



Pens, paper



Solo or pairs activity

### Aim

Pupils use creative writing to promote active journeys.

### Instructions

Pupils write a slogan, message, strapline or advert saying why being active on the school journey is wise. You could set a character limit and suggest it's for a Twitter or text campaign.

### Extension

Create a poster to accompany the message. You could use cameras or mobiles to capture an appropriate image.

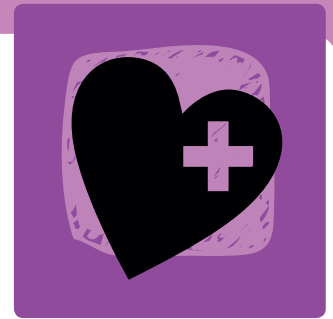
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# Being Healthy



30 minutes



Pens, paper, whiteboard



Group activity

## The great activity-off!

### Aim

Pupils consider what counts as activity and work out what is most effective.

### Instructions

As a class, come up with a list of things they do every day, from sleeping to eating, studying to watching TV. How do they spend their spare time and get to school?



Discuss which they consider active and which they don't, then place in order of intensity. This could be a class vote or pair activity. Pupils could be given an activity each holding it on a piece of paper, then organise themselves into a line from most active to least. Be prepared for lively debate! Go to class vote if individuals can't agree.

### Extension

If you've done Finger on the Pulse, overleaf, pupils could measure their pulses during the activities selected to get another idea of how demanding they are. Alternatively, they could research how many calories are burned during the activities selected.

Discuss the effect of time. Is walking for an hour considered more active than 20 minutes of running? Is an hour of video-gaming actually more active than a 10-minute walk?

Sustrans  
**BIG SHIFT**  
for schools



The Big Shift is a free-to-access online challenge. It is designed to motivate schools to travel actively, with schools set individual targets based on how pupils currently travel to school.

The Big Shift then helps each school to make a Small Step, a Big Stride or a Giant Leap towards increasing its active travel. Individual classes, year groups or whole schools can take part in Sustrans' Big Shift. For more information, visit [www.sustrans.org.uk/bigshift](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/bigshift)

**Increasing active travel to school** is a step-by-step guide to increasing walking, cycling and scooting on the school journey. Designed for teachers, governors and parents, it contains a suggested programme and tips for events.

The stages include Getting Started, Raising Awareness, Empowerment and Action and can delivered over six weeks culminating in a celebratory week of action – a perfect build up to the Big Shift challenge, a Bike to School Week or our annual Big Pedal event. Visit [www.sustrans.org.uk/teachers](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/teachers)

### Increasing active travel to school

a six-week step-by-step guide



Sustrans is the charity that's enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day. [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

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# Exploring



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## I spy, with my school journey eye...



10 minutes



Pens, paper



Pairs activity

### Aim

Pupils start to see the school journey as an opportunity to discover new things.

### Instructions

Pupils make an I Spy list of things for a partner to look out for on their next journey to school. The partner has to see how many they can spot.



## Human map



20 minutes



None



Group activity

### Aim

Pupils learn about mapping and where they live compared to classmates, how far they travel and discover who they could travel with.

### Instructions

Pick a spot in the class that represents the school. Either depict north, east, south and west, or use local landmarks, eg well-known roads, shops, parks or leisure spots, to give an idea of direction.

Using a scale of one stride to half a mile/five-minute walk (or a bigger scale if you have access to the school hall or an outdoor space), pupils start mapping out where they live relative to the school.

Do some pupils have a better idea of where they live compared to others? Do walkers and cyclists have a more accurate idea than those who are driven or go by bus? Who lives closest and furthest, and how do they travel? Does distance make a difference, or do other factors matter more, such as an idea of time, perception of danger, or parental views?

### Extension

Take a photo of the final map or mark it out. Then use a real map of the area to see how accurate it is. Pupils can discuss the quickest or best ways to get to school, depending on what form of transport they use. Pupils could discuss the opportunity of travelling in with people who live nearby.

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# Exploring



30 minutes



Pens, paper



Solo activity

## Portable poetry

### Instructions

Pupils write a poem about a school journey. It might be:

- the best journey they ever made to school
- the worst journey they ever made to school
- their dream journey to school
- the journey they made that very morning
- how they think others get to school (by boat in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland? In a sea of bikes in China? By space rocket in the future?)

### Extension

Swap poems and read each other's out. Can pupils guess who wrote which poem about their journey to school that day?

### Aim

Pupils view the school journey in a creative way.



Sustrans' Superheroes is an individual award scheme recognising pupils' skills and achievements in walking, scooting and cycling to school.

Based on an activity booklet, it provides the structure and inspiration for children to learn and practice the skills essential for fun, safe and sustained active travel to school. Aimed at seven to 11-year-olds, pupils gain points for activities completed to become a Sustrans Hero or Superhero.

For details, visit [www.sustrans.org.uk/superheroes](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/superheroes)

Big Street Survey is an exciting curriculum resource enabling pupils to investigate the area around their school, creating a manifesto on making their streets safer and greener.



Young people identify the good and the bad, and deliver their manifesto to local and national decision-makers – meeting numerous curriculum objectives en route.

Big Street Survey resources are free to download and include activity sheets, lesson plans and a pupil's handbook. To find further details, please visit [www.sustrans.org.uk/bigstreetsurvey](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/bigstreetsurvey)

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# Looking after your world



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## Pollution solution



10 minutes



None



Group activity

### Aim

Pupils understand that noise is a form of pollution.

### Instructions

Decide on a noise that represents the modes of transport. Walking might be shuffling shoes, cycling might be a soft bell noise, cars an engine or horn. Either split the class evenly into different modes or pupils use the one they usually travel to school by.

The pupils then make their noise. Start with the different groups in turn. Which is the most pleasant, which is the

loudest? Adjust the volumes to try to be more accurate. Try adding them together or changing the percentages of different modes to represent different road scenarios. Pupils can move closer or further away to replicate living closer or further away from a main road.

### Extension

Discuss different types of pollution. Is noise really pollution? Is it comparable to air pollution? Is something worse if we can see it or smell it? What could be the effect of noise pollution on people or perhaps nature?

## Carbon footprint



20 minutes



Paper, coloured pencils, crayons



Solo activity

**Aim** Pupils think about who creates carbon emissions and how we can change this.

### Instructions

Discuss what generates carbon dioxide and how it affects our climate. List emission-generating activities eg transport, agriculture, manufacturing and industry. Is it something we can affect, or is it due to other people?

Pupils then draw around their foot on a piece of paper. If you decide pupils should leave their shoes on, add toes to the drawing. Colour in each toe depending on how they get to school on each weekday (one toe = one day). Red for car, orange for public transport or car-sharing, green for walking, cycling or scooting. If they travel by car part of the way and then walk, that can be orange.

### Extension

Inside the foot they can write things within their control that could help lower their carbon emissions. Outside the foot they can write things they don't feel they can control or influence, or which are other people's responsibility.

Repeat the exercise in a few weeks. Have any of the children turned red to amber or green, or amber to green?

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# Looking after your world



30 minutes



Paper, coloured pencils, crayons



Solo activity

## The big picture

### Aim

Pupils think about how they can improve their local environment.

### Instructions

Pupils draw something that they think would improve the area around the school. It could be shops, people, friends, houses, animals, parks, leisure places, trees, bikes, scooters, bike lanes, safe crossings – but it may even be cars and planes. The idea is to discover what the pupils see as positive. Post the pictures on the wall to create a virtual neighbourhood.

### Extension

Discuss as a class what makes a good neighbourhood. Is it the same for all people? You could do this exercise by creating a list from class discussion and then allocating the things pupils want according to how popular they are, eg four pupils might draw trees, one



draws the sun, one draws birds, three draw parks, two draw bike lanes etc. This reflects the class as a group rather than a collection of individual visions.

### Benefits of active travel for young people

**Key facts**

- Active travel to school can reduce greenhouse gas by up to four hours
- The health benefits of cycling are immense
- 15 minutes of exercise can improve a child's mood
- The Department of Health recommends that 5-11 year olds should be active for at least 60 minutes every day
- Almost 90% of five to 11 year olds spend 15 to 30 minutes

**Introduction**

Research shows that active travel to school makes children more alert and ready to face the school day than if they had arrived in a car: walking, cycling or scooting to school wakes up the mind and body.

Active travel doesn't have to end at the school gates. As well as keeping young people fit and healthy, being fun and promoting independence, school travel can be used as a topic to deliver the curriculum. It can be incorporated into classroom activities and help in the delivery of a variety of subjects from Geography and English to PE and PSHE.

Encouraging children to think about and explore their school journey can make daily classroom sessions incorporating elements of active travel work. This booklet provides the facts and figures you need to encourage your school or college to meet this need and incorporate it into your curriculum, promoting or increasing active travel to your site.

**sustrans**

**Sustrans' free information service** provides a telephone and email helpline to help you address your area's active travel and transport issues. We can answer enquiries and provide a range of high quality resources to enable more schools, colleges and universities to benefit from our experience.

**Sustrans officers** work directly in schools to give pupils the skills and confidence to travel under their own steam and parents the confidence to let them.



We create active travel cultures in school communities, with far-reaching benefits beyond the school gates for health, emotional wellbeing, independence and social development. To find further information, please visit [www.sustrans.org.uk/education](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/education)

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# Future journeys...



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## Going for a ride



10 minutes



Paper, pens



Solo activity

### Aim

Pupils develop knowledge of how to prepare for a bike ride or walk.

### Instructions

Pupils plan a walk or bike trip. They can decide where they are going and why. Next, make a list of everything they will need to take. Don't forget clothing, equipment, tools, food, money, maps...

### Extension

Pupils compare their list with another pupil's. What are the similarities and what are the differences? Do they agree with the other pupil's list? Would it be different if doing this exercise in a different season?

## The journey onwards



20 minutes



Paper, pens



Pairs activity

### Aim

Pupils think about their school journey and discuss what could improve it.

### Instructions

In pairs, pupils describe their current school journey to each other (and previous school journeys if different). This could be from getting ready to leave home to the actual journey. Whatever they see, hear and do on the way, and how they feel about it. Then they plan how they could change this journey to make it better. It might be the route, the method of travel, going with friends, or being more independent. Then pupils make a pledge or resolution to do this by a certain time in the future.

### Extension

If in primary school, pupils could consider how they will travel when in secondary school. If at secondary school, they could think about how that might change if they move onto college or university, or when they start work.



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# Future journeys...



30 minutes



Paper, pens



Solo or group activity

## Letter to 'future me'

### Aim

Pupils consider how they will travel in the future and what the consequences of their travel choices are.

### Instructions

Pupils write a letter to their future self about their travel habits – persuading them to use more active and sustainable journeys if possible, and why it is important for both themselves and the local and global environment.

Encourage them to think broadly and imaginatively. They might want to consider how people may travel in the future, fossil fuels and renewable energy, a growing population, climate change, technology changes, changes in jobs and so on.

### Extension

Pupils could write a newspaper article or front page from 2050, covering some of the issues mentioned. They might be very positive...or could paint a less rosy future because of the actions of humans now.



Sustrans' e-bulletin has regular updates and features the latest news, events, resources, research and competitions regarding active travel and young people. It goes to school staff, parents and professionals in the fields of health, transport and education. You can sign up at [www.sustrans.org.uk/youngpeople](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/youngpeople)

**Moving Up** is a guide for those working with 11- to 18-year-olds, setting out how to promote active travel at secondary schools, colleges and in the community. It has best practice guidance and case studies of activities and methods proven to enthuse, engage and inspire young people to walk and cycle more.



Using our officers' experience working with 250 secondary schools and colleges across the UK, this comprehensive free resource is for teachers, community and youth workers, and education travel professionals. Please visit [www.sustrans.org.uk/teachers](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/teachers)

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