



Healthy People, Healthy Planet

Transporting Food Around the World

In Scotland we import food from far and wide and send our produce all over the world. This activity allows students to investigate the types of transport used to do this and the impact this can have on the environment.

You will need;

- Student transport worksheet and cards (pages 5 - 7)
- Transport answers (page 4)

To prepare;

- The transport answers sheet (page 4) should be stuck on a wall where everyone can see. It can either be put up the wrong way round so the answers cannot be seen or, ideally, each answer should be covered with a piece of cardboard (paper may be too thin). These can be removed one at a time whilst discussing the answers with the students.
- Print one transport worksheet (page 5) per group.
- Cut out the cards with the different types of transport – you will need one card of each of the 9 types of transport per group.



Ask the students to suggest some transport that could be used to send food around the world
e.g. lorry, plane, boat, car, train.

Part of the food journey is also how we get our food home from the shops. Ask the students to suggest some means of transport people can use to get to and from the shops
e.g. bus, train, car, walk, cycle.

Ask the students what the main problem is with some of these transport methods, in particular, planes, lorries and cars. You may get a variety of feasible answers but the point to pick up on is the fact that these all burn fuel thus creating harmful gases that pollute the environment.

Continuing from this, the next activity asks students to compare different methods of transport in terms of how harmful they are to the environment.

Give each group of students a transport worksheet and one card for each of 9 transport methods (pages 5 - 7).

Ask the students to organise the transport methods from least harmful to most harmful to the environment. Draw attention to the two different types of car – a grey car representing small cars and a blue car representing large cars (e.g. 4x4s).

When they have all had a chance to do this, reveal the answers one by one. Going over the answers offers time for discussion about what kinds of things will affect which transport we can use i.e. the distance, if there is water to be crossed, if the food will go off if it is not transported quickly.

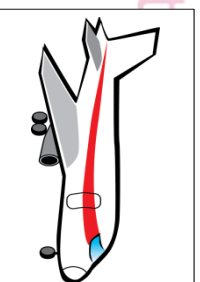
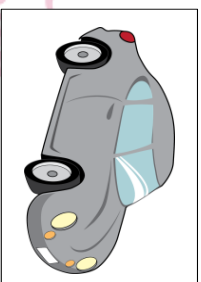
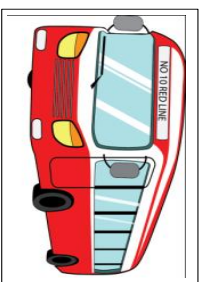
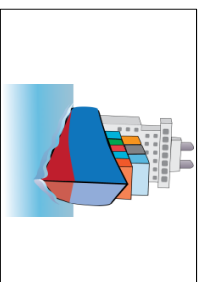
Answers pages 3 - 4.



Least Harmful	Walk	Provided you don't throw your litter on the ground as you go, walking is not harmful to the environment at all. It is good for you too – gets you out in the fresh air and doing some exercise.
	Cycle	Cycling is not harmful to the environment and, as above, it helps keep you healthy.
	Boat	Most people expect the boat to be much further down the list. Boats do use fuel to run but, they are fairly environmentally friendly because they can carry lots of cargo so, for each single item being transported, the pollution is very small in comparison to other methods. The main problem with using a boat is that it is very slow so, if food is going to go off quickly and has to travel a long distance a plane would be more suitable. Travelling by boat is 100 times better than completing the same journey by plane.
	Train	Many trains now run on electricity but some are still diesel. Trains are capable of carrying cargo or passengers and are a great alternative to lorries or buses. Obviously the train network does not cover everywhere so it may not be an appropriate method of transport in all cases.
	Bus	Obviously buses will cause emissions but, if they are used instead of cars, the quantity of emissions per passenger is far less as more people can be carried on a bus. So, where possible, using a bus instead of a car is beneficial to the environment. If where you live is not served by the bus network then obviously an alternative has to be found.
	Most Harmful	Small Car (grey)
Large Car (blue)		
Lorry		Creates more emissions than all other road transport.
Plane		This is the worst of all the transport methods mentioned here. Having said that, planes are sometimes necessary if food needs to get to us from a long distance quickly. The effect of the emissions from planes are 2 to 3 times higher compared to emissions on the ground, because planes release the gases at high altitudes into the atmosphere, where they do much more harm.

Least

harmful



Most
harmful

Least
harmful



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Most
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