



LESSON PLAN

Lesson 1: On the Move – Why Active Travel Matters



LESSON SUMMARY

In this foundational lesson, students explore the concept of active travel and its growing relevance as they seek greater independence during adolescence. Through personal reflection, group collaboration, and visual resources, students investigate the ripple effects of their travel choices and consider how one decision can impact their health, family, community, and the environment. The lesson introduces key vocabulary and concepts such as sustainability, greenhouse gas emissions, and greenhouse gasses and supports students to critically evaluate their current travel behaviours and identify ways to travel smarter and more independently. This lesson builds the groundwork for deeper learning about responsible, safe, and sustainable travel.

SEQUENCE TITLE:

TRAVEL WISE – Empowering independence through active, safe and sustainable travel



LEVEL

Years 7-8



LESSON NUMBER

1 of 7



LESSON LENGTH

50 - 60 minutes

CURRICULUM AREAS



LEARNING AREAS

- Health and Physical Education



CAPABILITIES

- Critical and Creative Thinking



CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES

- Sustainability

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Victorian Curriculum 2.0 Content Descriptions



LEARNING AREAS

Health and Physical Education

VC2HP8P02 analyse the impact of changes and transitions, and devise strategies to support themselves and others through these changes.
VC2HP8P10 plan and implement strategies, using health resources, to enhance their own and others' health, safety, relationships and wellbeing.

VC2HP8M07 design and justify a physical activity plan that incorporates strategies to increase physical activity levels to achieve health and wellbeing outcomes.



CAPABILITIES

Critical and Creative Thinking

VC2CC8Q02 When and how judgment is suspended to support generating and evaluating alternative ideas and possibilities.

VC2CC8Q03 Strategies for generating new ideas and possibilities including identifying a pattern across multiple information sources.



CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES

Sustainability

VC2CCPSIS3 Economic, social, environmental and cultural systems influence the sustainability of Earth's systems.



PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

- Understand basic differences between active and passive travel.
- Have some awareness of how travel choices affect health and the environment.

VOCABULARY

Active travel – travelling using human-powered methods (e.g., walking, biking, scooting).

Passive travel – travel involving motorised transport with little physical effort.

Sustainability – making long-term choices that reduce harm to people and the planet.

Greenhouse gas emissions – greenhouse gases released by transport and industry.

Urban mobility – how people move through city and suburban environments.

Public transport integration – combining walking or riding with train, tram, or bus travel.

Independence – ability to travel safely and confidently without adult supervision.

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MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Whiteboard or smartboard.
- Student journals or digital device.
- Sticky dots or coloured markers.
- [Independent Travel – Why it matters Infographic](#).
- [Active Travel – It's Good for You and the Planet Poster](#).
- [Ripple Effect of Active Travel Worksheet](#).
- [Ripple Effect Mapping A3 Worksheet](#).
- Video: [Better Streets Australia - Better Streets election ask](#)

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will investigate the concept of active travel in the context of increasing independence. They will analyse its benefits from a personal, community and environmental perspective and apply this understanding to evaluate their own travel choices.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- I can explain active travel in my own words and list types relevant to my lifestyle.
- I can identify and explain at least three personal, environmental and community benefits of active travel.
- I can reflect on my travel behaviours and identify areas for change or improvement.

TEACHING CONSIDERATIONS

- Be sensitive to students who do not have safe or easy access to active travel.
- Provide multiple options for expressing ideas (e.g. verbal, written, digital).
- Frame travel differences positively and inclusively.
- Promote awareness of different family routines, cultural norms, or geographic barriers.

Extend

- Students research an urban planning initiative (e.g., Melbourne Bike Plan, 20-Minute Neighbourhoods).

Enable

- Provide simplified versions of worksheets, allow oral explanations, pair with a peer or use visuals to scaffold ideas.

ASSESSMENT

- Responses during class discussions and group activities.
- Completed [Ripple Effect worksheet](#).
- Verbal or written reflections on independent travel and sustainability.

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LEARNING CONTINUUM

Focus: Analysing the personal, community and environmental benefits of active travel and evaluating actions that support independent, sustainable and inclusive travel choices.

Learning Continuum	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Students investigate the concept of active travel and its personal, social, and environmental benefits. They begin to connect these ideas to their own experiences and make suggestions for inclusive and sustainable travel choices.	Student identifies what active travel is and gives one example with support. Basic awareness of one benefit is shown. Suggestions for action are simple and unconnected to wider ideas.	Student describes active travel and names multiple benefits across personal, community, and/or environmental domains. Connects actions to positive outcomes. Some inclusive ideas may be evident.	Student explains active travel benefits with clear, relevant examples and justifies actions that promote accessibility, sustainability and community wellbeing. Demonstrates understanding of shared responsibility and connected impacts.

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Organising Element	Action	Insufficient Evidence	Quality Criteria		
Understanding of personal and community benefits	1. Explain how active travel supports both personal health and community wellbeing	1.0 No response or shows no understanding	1.1 Identifies a basic health or community benefit with limited detail	1.2 Explains multiple benefits across health and community with relevant examples	1.3 Analyses how active travel promotes short- and long-term wellbeing and justifies its social value with examples linked to equity or accessibility
Understanding of environmental impact	2. Describe how active travel impacts the environment	2.0 No response or off-topic answer	2.1 States that active travel helps the environment with minimal reasoning	2.2 Explains environmental benefits (e.g. fewer emissions, cleaner air) with clear examples	2.3 Connects active travel to broader sustainability issues such as climate change and transport planning
Critical thinking and connection-making	3. Make connections between health, social and environmental benefits	3.0 No clear connections made	3.1 Lists benefits but treats them separately	3.2 Explains how two or more benefits are interrelated (e.g. less traffic improves air quality and reduces stress)	3.3 Demonstrates integrated thinking by mapping how active travel has ripple effects on personal, community and environmental wellbeing

* continued overleaf

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ASSESSMENT RUBRIC (Cont'd)

Organising Element	Action	Insufficient Evidence	Quality Criteria		
Personal and social capability	4. Suggest actions to increase independent and inclusive active travel	4.0 No suggestion or vague response	4.1 Suggests a general or idealistic action without practical steps	4.2 Describes a realistic and achievable action they could personally take or promote	4.3 Proposes a well-considered action that addresses barriers and supports inclusion or equity in travel choices for others

Structure of lesson:

1

LESSON PHASE: Introduction (Hook)



TIMING: 10 mins

Display a Melbourne map (or relevant local area such as around the school).

Ask students to place sticky dots (or digital annotations) where they live.

Facilitate a quick **think-pair-share** using the following questions:

- How did you travel to school in primary school?
- How do you travel to school most days now?
- What are some changes that you notice?
- Have you ever walked, biked or used public transport on your own? What was that like?

Create a class tally of transport modes on the board and ask:

- What do you think counts as active travel? What about catching a train?

Clarify that active travel includes partial journeys (e.g. walking to a bus stop).

DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

Enable

- **Visual Prompts:** Provide images of different travel modes (bike, scooter, bus, walking) to support students with verbal expression and recall.
- **Guided Partner Talk:** Give sentence starters for Think-Pair-Share (e.g., "In primary school I usually...", "Now I mostly...").

Extend

- **Data Analysis:** Ask advanced students to quickly group transport modes into categories (active, passive, public, private) and explain patterns they observe in the tally.
- **Personal Insight:** Invite capable students to write a short reflection on how their independence has changed since primary school and why.

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LESSON PHASE: Explicit Teaching & Modelled Learning



TIMING: 15 mins

Explain that using public transport is considered a form of Active Travel because it often includes walking, riding, or scooting to and from train stations, tram stops, or bus routes.

Emphasise the message *Part Way is Okay* – choosing to walk, ride, or scoot even part of your journey, instead of being driven the entire way, is a positive step for your health and helps reduce traffic and pollution.

Acknowledge that not everyone can complete their journey in the same way due to accessibility or other personal circumstances – and that's completely valid. Active Travel looks different for everyone; it's about making choices that are active and realistic for you.

Discuss the concept of independence in travel and why it matters.

Distribute the Independent Travel – Why it matters infographic to assist with prompts for discussion.

Cover the following details:

- Promoting travel independence for all Victorian teenagers is about **equity, opportunity, and empowerment**. Whether a student lives in suburban Melbourne, rural Gippsland, or has mobility challenges, fostering independent travel is a key step toward building **resilient, connected, and capable young adults**.
- It's important to be able to plan and undertake a journey safely and confidently without constant adult supervision.
- Independent travel involves making choices about transport modes, routes, and personal safety.
- It encourages self-reliance, critical thinking, and responsible decision-making.

Display and **discuss** the Active Travel – It's Good for You and the Planet poster

Ask students:

- Which of these benefits would matter most to you right now? Why?
- Which would matter to your family? Why?
- Which would matter to your community? Why?

Explain the **Ripple Effect** concept:

The **ripple effect** is when one small action causes a chain reaction of other changes, just like when you drop a stone in water and the ripples spread out.

In active travel, it means your choice to walk, ride or take public transport can lead to bigger, positive impacts. For example:

- You get fitter and feel better.
- There's less traffic and pollution.
- Other people notice and might start doing it too.

Your one action can help your health, your community, and the environment - all from one small choice.

DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

Enable

- **Infographic:** Provide a scaffolded version of the infographic with key terms explained or highlighted to support comprehension.
- **Think Aloud:** Model one or two examples out loud of how active travel benefits a person, using first-person language ("If I walk, I feel more alert when I arrive at school....").

Extend

- **Argument Creation:** Ask students to form a short persuasive argument using 2–3 benefits from the infographic (e.g., "Independent travel is important because...").
- **Personal Connection:** Invite students to connect a benefit to a real-world issue they care about (e.g., climate change, traffic congestion, youth fitness).



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LESSON PHASE: Guided Practice



TIMING: 15 mins

Show video: [Better Streets Australia - Better Streets election ask](#)

Explore key statistics presented in the video and discuss **Better Streets Australia** priorities –

To create safer, healthier, more people-friendly and climate-friendly streets all around Australia. The Better Streets team works with the media, local communities, businesses and advocates to share ideas and shape plans that lead to better streets for everyone.

In groups of 3–4, students choose one method of active travel (e.g., riding bike) or a combined method (e.g., Walking to train station, then catching a train).

Distribute Ripple Effect Mapping A3 Worksheet.

Groups write how the active travel mode they selected affects:

1. Them personally (inner circle)
2. Their family (1st outer circle)
3. Their school or community (2nd outer circle)
4. The planet (3rd outer circle)

Groups present highlights of their ripple maps to the class.

Encourage all students in each group to present one area or feature of their Ripple Effect Mapping worksheet.

DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

Enable

- **Pre-filled Prompts** – Provide a partially filled ripple map template with examples in each category to guide thinking.
- **Role Assignment** – Assign clear roles in each group (writer, presenter, idea sharer) to help students contribute equally and stay focused.

Extend

- **Compare Methods** – Ask students to compare two different modes (e.g., walking vs. bus) and map how their ripple effects differ.

4

LESSON PHASE: Independent Application



TIMING: 15 mins

Students complete the [Ripple Effect of Active Travel](#) worksheet.

Reflection questions include:

- *What are three small things I could change about how I travel?*
- *What gets in the way of me travelling actively?*
- *What's one way I could increase my independence this term?*

Invite students to think critically about balancing convenience and sustainability.

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DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

Enable

- **Reflection Starters** – Provide sentence starters for each reflection question (e.g., "One small change I could make is...").
- **1:1 Conference Option** – Allow struggling students to verbally discuss their answers with the teacher or a peer instead of writing independently.

Extend

- **Personal Goal Setting** – Ask students to write a SMART goal related to increasing active travel independence.
- **Solution Focus** – Challenge students to identify not just barriers but possible strategies to overcome each one (e.g., "Too far – I could ask a friend to walk partway with me").

5

LESSON PHASE: Review / Reflection



TIMING: 5 mins

Students complete this sentence:

- One way I could be more independent and travel smarter is...

Students reflect individually and write their response in their workbook or on their worksheet.

They share their response with a peer, discussing how their idea could work in their own daily routine and what support they might need to make it happen.

Invite a few volunteers to share with the whole class, highlighting a range of ideas—e.g. catching the bus with a friend, walking part of the way, or planning their route the night before.

Use follow-up questions to prompt deeper thinking, such as:

- What would make that goal achievable for you?
- What might get in the way, and how could you overcome it?

Encourage students to take their ripple map or worksheet home to start a conversation with their family about their goal and the small changes they want to try.

Remind students that small steps can lead to bigger independence over time.

DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

Enable

- **Sticky Note Option** – Allow students to write their reflection on a sticky note instead of sharing aloud if they are anxious or unsure.
- **Think-Pair Prompt** – Provide visual cue cards with prompts like "What is independence?" or "Why does travel matter?" to guide the peer share.

Extend

- **Family Connection Task** – Ask students to draft a short conversation starter they can use at home (e.g., "Did you know walking to school helps reduce pollution?").
- **Peer Influence Reflection** – Invite students to consider how their travel choices could influence younger siblings or friends.