



**LIVING**

**STREETS**



**LET'S  
WALK TO  
SCHOOL**

**WOW LEARNING RESOURCES KS2/P4-7**

# ENVIRONMENT



**DURATION** Approximately 60 mins  
(excluding the extension and at home section).

## AIM

To help pupils consider the benefits of creating a traffic exclusion zone around school during drop off and pick up times.

## OBJECTIVES

This lesson will enable pupils to:

- compare school drop off and pick up times as they are now with what it might be like without vehicles;
- consider how having fewer vehicles can benefit the environment, the wider school community, and the physical and mental health of pupils;
- create a persuasive argument for having fewer vehicles around the school and start a conversation about making this a reality.

## RESOURCES

- Council Letter Writing pupil sheet
- Writing materials
- Whiteboard or flipchart

## CURRICULUM LINKS

- **ENGLISH/LANGUAGES** – letter writing, persuasive writing
- **GEOGRAPHY/SOCIAL STUDIES** – local area
- **SCIENCE** – plants, animals (including humans), everyday materials



# ENVIRONMENT

## PREPARATION

It would be best to start this activity in the morning soon after coming to school, if possible, so drop off time is fresh in everyone's minds.

## INTRODUCTION

- 1 To start the lesson, ask for some volunteers from the class to talk about the area outside the school at drop off and pick up time. Ask questions such as:
  - ✓ What can they see, hear and smell?
  - ✓ Is the area busy with cars and buses picking up pupils?
  - ✓ Do some drivers leave their engines running while they wait?
- 2 Follow up by asking how this affects pupils on their journey to or from school. Perhaps they need to be extra careful when crossing the road, or can smell exhaust fumes in the air?
- 3 Now ask the children to imagine that for a whole month no motor vehicles are allowed into the streets around the school during drop off and pick up times, which is called a traffic exclusion zone. Explain that emergency and disabled access vehicles still have access.
- 4 Ask them what they would see, hear and smell at drop off and pick up times. Write these on the board. Use the following as conversation starters if you need them:
  - ✓ Would the air quality be better for people, plants and trees?
  - ✓ Think about parents and carers. Would they have more of a chance to socialise if they didn't have to move on as quickly?
  - ✓ Could pupils cross the road or play with their friends more safely?
  - ✓ Would it help people to feel calmer and ready for the rest of their day?



# ENVIRONMENT

## DEVELOPMENT

- 5 Explain that today, the class is going to write to the council and try to convince them that a traffic exclusion zone around the school would be a good idea to try for a week or a month, as it will help the environment, which benefits everyone.
- 6 Distribute the Council Letter Writing pupil sheets.
- 7 Talk about the components of letter writing and encourage them to write a letter using strong, persuasive words and create convincing arguments by using the PEEL technique, for example:
  - ✓ **Point:** I believe that less traffic around the school at drop off time will help improve air quality;
  - ✓ **Evidence:** Sometimes car drivers leave their engines running and the exhaust fumes smell quite strong;
  - ✓ **Explanation:** The fumes smell bad and make people cough;
  - ✓ **Link:** This is unhealthy for everyone at a time when we are all outside, and less traffic would reduce this issue.

### The PEEL technique can make arguments stronger:

**P**oint: state the point you want to make;

**E**xplanation: explain to the reader why this is important;

**E**vidence or example: give an example or a reason for your point;

**L**ink: refer back to your point and add more detail.

Help them personalise the letter by finding out who they should be addressing the letter to at the local council.



# ENVIRONMENT

## PLENARY

- Once they've spent some time on their letters, invite a few pupils to read them out and encourage others to give constructive feedback on what might work best.
- Then, work as a class to combine all the best arguments into one letter to send to the council requesting a meeting about creating a traffic exclusion zone, perhaps during Walk to School Week in May. Alternatively, you could send all the pupils' letters to the council.
- End with a think, pair, share activity, where pairs of pupils choose their favourite reason why walking, cycling or scootering to school is preferable to travelling in a motor vehicle.
- Make sure the pupils know that it's fine if several pairs have come up with the same idea – perhaps it's a really good reason.

**Think, pair, share:** pupils think of some ideas on their own, then chat with a friend about their ideas and together pick one idea to share with the class.

## EXTENSION

- Use some of the ideas generated in the lesson to make posters to put up around the school that aim to persuade families to walk more.
- Pupils could also write an article for the school newsletter or website about why they think a traffic exclusion zone is a good idea; create a magazine ahead of Walk to School Week in May; or a podcast. This could contain interviews, information about the benefits of walking, tips and ideas and fun activities like competitions and quizzes.



# ENVIRONMENT

## AT HOME

- Encourage everyone to look at their route from home to school and, as a family, plan one thing they could do to help the school move closer to traffic exclusion, such as walking, scootering or parking nearby and walking the rest of the way.
- Ask pupils to think of ideas that could encourage families to make these changes to their routine, such as making sure there is plenty of bike and scooter parking at school, having enough shelter or benches for families to sit on while they wait. Perhaps some families can help plant flowers and plants in the waiting area outside school. There are lots of tips to get you started on the [Living Streets website](#).
- Encourage the pupils to bring in feedback from parents and families who have made changes already/when they make changes. The class could then include these in an article for the school newsletter.

We are Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking. These learning resources support participation in WOW – the year-round walk to school challenge.

For further information on WOW, visit [www.livingstreets.org.uk/WOW](http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/WOW)

Get in touch: [walktoschool@livingstreets.org.uk](mailto:walktoschool@livingstreets.org.uk) 020 7377 4900

If you require these learning resources in Welsh, please email [wales@livingstreets.org.uk](mailto:wales@livingstreets.org.uk)

# ENVIRONMENT WORKSHEET



LIVING  
STREETS

LET'S  
WALK TO  
SCHOOL

CLASS

SCHOOL

ADDRESS

DATE

Dear

I am writing to you to ask if you would consider implementing a traffic exclusion zone around our school for the duration of Walk to School Week in May.

**I believe this would have a positive effect on the local environment and community for the following reasons:**

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

**Yours faithfully,**

