

Pre-Visit Lesson #1: An Introduction to *Going Places*

Objectives

- Students will discuss questions related to the content of the *Going Places*.
- Students will explore the themes presented in the exhibit.
- Students will create a class mural depicting horse-drawn transportation in the nineteenth century.

Materials

- A large piece of butcher paper
- Drawing materials such as crayons, markers, paints, colored pencils, etc.
- *Travel in the Early Days* by Bobbie Kalman and Kate Calder (pages 8–23) or *Life in America 100 Years Ago: Transportation* by Linda Leuzzi (pages 9–26). Your hosting museum has a copy of both of these books, if necessary.

Student Instruction

1. Tell the class you are taking a field trip to see *Going Places*, an exhibit at your local museum. Explain that you're going to talk a bit about the exhibit before you go so that they can best be prepared for the experience.

2. Ask them to predict what they think this exhibit will be about. Discuss what they already know about horse-drawn transportation and life in the 1800s.

3. Ask students:

- What is a horse-drawn vehicle?
- What are some types of horse-drawn vehicles that you can think of?
- How would horse-drawn transportation have been convenient for people in the nineteenth century?
- Who used carriages?
- What do you think were some disadvantages to horse-drawn transportation?
- What types of horse-drawn vehicles do you imagine were used in the country?
- What types of horse-drawn vehicles do you imagine were used in big cities?
- What kinds of special skills would be needed to make carriages and to care for horses?

How about to drive a carriage?

- Do you think most people in 1900 owned a carriage? Why or why not?
- What do you think was the biggest cost to owning a carriage? (It was the care and maintenance of the horse.)
- What technological advancements replaced the carriage? What prompted these changes?
- How do you think riding in a carriage was different from riding in a car?

Some ideas to discuss with students include:

1. No pavement: Early roads were often rough dirt paths. Much, rocks, potholes, and fallen trees made travel difficult and dangerous.

2. No seatbelts: With nothing to hold you in your seat, a deep rut or a big bump could make you bounce around or crash into other passengers.

3. Leather windows: Most coach windows were covered with leather shades that could be unrolled and buckled to the walls. Glass windows would have shattered on bad roads.

4. Horse power: A team of horses pulled the coach, and they needed special care, food, and handling, and clean-up.

4. Read with your class a book about nineteenth century transportation, such as *Travel in the Early Days* by Bobbie Kalman and Kate Calder (pages 8–23) or *Life in America 100 Years Ago: Transportation* by Linda Leuzzi (pages 9–26). Your hosting museum has a copy of both of these books, if necessary. Discuss with the class what they learned from the readings about transportation in the 1800s.

5. Tell students that horse-drawn vehicles were essential to American life in the 1800s. They came in lots of sizes and shapes and had many different uses such as transporting goods and people, demonstrating owners' pride and accomplishments, and providing leisure opportunities.

There are five basic themes in the exhibit *Going Places*. Break students up into groups to discuss each theme, what they already know about it, and what they expect to find out about it at the museum.

- Horse-drawn vehicles moved people (some horse-drawn vehicles discussed in this section include carriages, wagons, carriages for hire, stagecoaches, and omnibuses)
- Horse-drawn vehicles moved goods (some examples of horse-drawn vehicles discussed in this section include farm wagons, delivery wagons, and peddler wagons)
- Horse-drawn vehicles helped to provide better services (some examples of horse drawn vehicles discussed in this section include postal, medical, and firefighting services)
- Luxury horse-drawn vehicles became symbols of wealth and status (some ideas discussed in this section are driving a carriage in order to “see and be seen,” how to order and purchase a horse-drawn vehicle, and what servants and custom options could enhance the vehicle)
- The growing middle class began to have more leisure time and money to spend (some ideas discussed in this section are seasonal horse-drawn vehicles such as sleighs, specialty vehicles such as those made for children, and speed vehicles made for racing)

6. Go over some of the specialized vocabulary your students will encounter in the exhibit.

Blacksmith: Person who creates and mends metal tools and metal shoes for horses

Bucket brigade: Two lines formed between a lake and a fire; one line passed full buckets toward the fire while the other line passed empty buckets back to the lake

Buggy: Basic utilitarian, lightweight, four-wheeled vehicle of many varieties with a single seat for two people; the most popular one-horse vehicle ever produced

Carriage: Any of the elegant four-wheeled family driving vehicles; can be either open or closed

Cart: Simple two wheeled or four-wheeled vehicle that is always open; generally named for its region of origin, builder, or purpose

Coach: A four-wheel enclosed vehicle that derives its name from the Hungarian village of Kocs, where wagon builders improved the stability and comfort of passenger carriages in the 15th century