EVERY TRIP HAS A STORY

OBJECTIVE

Students will imagine the life of a different member of their community and practice their storytelling skills by mapping out that person’s trips for that day.

Students will be encouraged to think about different modes of transportation, and questions of access and feasibility.

PRELIMINARY SET-UP

The facilitator may want to create a sample map and story for reference, but otherwise there is no set-up.

Students participating in this activity do not need to all start at the same time, as long as facilitators are on-hand to walk students through the instructions.

The “Every Trip Has a Story” planning handout features a person icon and space for taking notes on that person’s story, as well as brainstorming question prompts: “What is your person’s name? Who are they? Where do they need to go today? Where should they go first? Last? Where on the map could they go by bus? Where on the map could they safely go on foot?... Draw the route for their whole day on the map, using different colors to indicate different transportation modes. You can write out (or take notes on) the story of their day here...”

The “Every Trip Has a Story” map handout features a full-page basic street grid with location icons (home, school, grocery, doctor, office), sidewalks, crosswalks, and a few public transit stops.

Teacher Instructions

Facilitators: At least 1, but ideally several who could circulate through the students and engage with them throughout the activity

Ideal Age Range: All Ages, but especially mid-to-late elementary

Length of Time: 20-40 min depending on engagement level

Supplies:

⭐ “Every Trip Has a Story” planning handout
⭐ “Every Trip Has a Story” map handout
⭐ Markers for drawing in their routes and notes
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**Student Activity**

**STORYTELLING: HOW I GO FROM HERE TO THERE**

1. This activity is primarily completed individually, rather than as a group.
2. Each student will need their own “Every Trip Has a Story” planning handout, “Every Trip Has a Story” map handout, and several markers.
3. Younger students will need hands-on help from facilitators as they complete their individual handouts. If there are enough facilitators present, they can help the youngest students write out story notes. Otherwise, the youngest students can primarily verbalize their stories and then just draw the map.
4. If everyone is starting at the same time, the students can be walked, as a group, through the instructions provided on the planning handout, which asks them to give their person a name and some identifying characteristics. The facilitator can elaborate on the instructions to help the students get started.
5. The students should work through the brainstorming questions found on the planning handout before beginning their map, since these questions are meant to help them think about their person’s tasks for the day, the narrative order of those tasks, and what modes of transportation would actually work for different locations.

**WHERE DID MY FRIEND GO TODAY?**

1. When the students are done, the facilitator can ask them to turn to a partner and tell their partner the story of their person’s day.
2. If there is not time for discussion in partners at the end, the facilitators should try to check in with each student about their narrative during the course of the activity.

**CONCLUSION: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How many ways did you discover that you could get from one place to another in your story?
2. Who was your person and why did you choose them?
3. What types of transportation do you take each day?

**DEFINITIONS:**

Transportation: the movement of humans, animals and goods from one location to another.

Multi-Modal: using more than one mode of transportation - car, bus, train, airplane, biking, walking, etc.

Route: a way or course taken in getting from a starting point to a destination.

**WHAT DO PLANNERS DO?**

An urban planner is a professional who works to enhance the quality of life. A planner is a person who helps shape the design and form of a city or place, from buildings to roads, and parks and more. Planners observe and analyze the communities around them and with the help of community members, make recommendations to policy makers for improvements. Transportation Planners are dedicated to designing and improving our transportation systems, including various modes of travel; by car, bus, train, boat, biking, and walking. All of the multi-modal solutions contribute to a healthy transportation system.