



## A Lesson on Changing Transportation Routes by Jennifer Harlan Becher

**Grade Level:** Grade 4

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts

**Lesson Length:** 2 hours 45 minutes

**Lesson Keywords:** reading, writing, changing transportation routes

**Lesson Description:** In this lesson, students will expand upon their reading to gain information and determine the author's purpose for writing this text. In reading the text, students will learn how to use context to determine the meaning of words, and provide reasons that are supported by details from the text. In their writing, students will write a story from their perspective that includes details that support their point of view.

### Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.4a: Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1b: Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.4a: Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

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## Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

**Instructions:** Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

### Changing Transportation Routes

by

**Content:** Every day before we go to school, our mother has to leave. She has to walk twelve blocks to get to the bus stop. Then she takes the bus to work. She is a commuter. But some days it is raining or snowing. We really think it's terrible that there isn't a bus that comes closer to our street.

At school, we learned about the city transit system. It includes buses, trains, and even trolleys. It is a public system. We have to pay for the rides, but the government pays a lot, too. The government gets its money from taxes. If you own your own car and drive to places, then you use private transportation.

I said to my mother, We pay taxes. This is a public transportation system. It is our system. It should come closer to our home. I do not want you to have to walk so far to get to the bus.

She agreed that would be great. But she said it would take more than one family to get the bus line to change. I said I would ask my teacher about it. We could do a study and maybe get a petition.

Our teacher had told us about service learning. That is a way of learning when you study something, learn something, and help make your community better. I thought that having the bus be more available to us would be a great way to do service learning.

My teacher liked the idea. He talked with the principal. They said we could do the study. So our class surveyed all our parents. How many of them had to walk how many blocks to the bus stop, we asked. How many would use the bus more if it was easier to get to.

We collected our survey data. Then we made a table. We found that 90% of all the parents would use the bus more if it was easier to get to. We also found that only 20% of the parents could get to it easily, just by walking five blocks. For all the others, it took between six and 12 blocks. My mother was one of the people with the longest walks to the bus.

We made a map. We showed how the bus route could be changed to reach people better in our community. We showed where it could stop. We looked at corners to make sure the bus could turn on different blocks. Then my teacher called the alderman. He asked the alderman if we could meet to talk about our study.

We met with the alderman. She was impressed. She said we had done a really good job of figuring out the problem and a solution. She promised she would talk with the head of the transportation system about it.

We thought that something would happen quickly, but it didn't. Just when we were giving up, our teacher got a call. It was from the transportation office. They said we were getting the change we asked for.

Now my mother only has to walk four blocks to get to the bus. So she can leave later. When she leaves in the morning, if it is raining or snowing, she always says, I am so glad you got the bus route changed.

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## Task 1: Vocabulary

**Instructions:** Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

**Q: 1 WordPhrase:** commuter **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** She has to walk twelve blocks to get to the bus stop. Then she takes the bus to work. She is a commuter. What does "commuter" mean in this passage?

- A:** A person who regularly travels from one place to another
- B:** A person who works from home
- C:** Someone who takes a one time trip to the city
- D:** An airplane carrying passengers

**Question:** Which of the following sentences uses the word "commuter" correctly?

- A:** They are commuters because they are going on a trip to see the beaches of North Carolina.
  - B:** Tom is a commuter since he takes the train to work everyday.
  - C:** When I walk to a restaurant to have dinner, I am considered a commuter.
  - D:** Families that take yearly cruises are commuters.
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**Q: 2 WordPhrase:** public transportation **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** I said to my mother, "We pay taxes. This is a public transportation system. It is our system. It should be closer to our home. I do not want you to have to walk so far to get to the bus." What does "public transportation" mean in this passage?

- A:** Cars owned by individuals
- B:** A school bus
- C:** Bicycles that are loaned to friends for temporary use
- D:** Vehicles that are used by the general public

**Question:** Which sentence below uses the phrase "public transportation" correctly?

- A:** When John drives his own car to work, he is using public transportation to get around.
  - B:** If I ride my bicycle to school, I am using public transportation.
  - C:** Riding a bus to school is a form of public transportation
  - D:** In order to reduce pollution in the city, the mayor is urging people to use public transportation.
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**Q: 3 WordPhrase:** surveyed **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** They said we could do the study. So our class surveyed all our parents. What does "surveyed" in this passage?

- A:** To inform
- B:** To educate
- C:** To carefully question
- D:** To plot a map

**Question:** Which sentence below uses the word "surveyed" correctly?

- A:** The principal surveyed the parents when he told them too many tardies would result in detentions.
  - B:** When the comissioner needed to know if the community wanted a new bridge, she surveyed the people within the town.
  - C:** After we got home, we surveyed the movie listings to determine which movie we wanted to see.
  - D:** Our teacher surveyed the lesson in order to teach us about multiplication.
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**Q: 4 WordPhrase:** alderman **WordPhraseTier:** 3

**Question:** We looked at the corners to make sure the bus could turn on different blocks. Then my teacher called the alderman. He asked the alderman if we could meet to talk about our study. What does "alderman" mean in this passage?

- A:** The driver of the bus
- B:** The principal
- C:** The author's mother
- D:** A local government official

**Question:** Which sentence below uses the word "alderman" correctly?

- A:** My brother is an alderman since he helps the neighbor with her yard every week.
  - B:** An alderman let the train conductor know when it was time for the train to leave the station.
  - C:** The alderman worked hard to make sure that the voters' wishes to have the road repaved were realized.
  - D:** An alderman usually helps carry the supplies need for the church service into the sanctuary.
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## Task 2: Forum Discussion

**Instructions:** This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

### 1 - Difference between public and private transportation

The author spoke of both public and private transportation.? What is the difference between public and private transportation?

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### 2 - Why author wanted a different bus route

In the story, why did the author want to change the bus route?

### 3 - What is service learning

What are the three parts of service learning?

### 4 - What did the author do with the survey results

After they surveyed the parents, how did the author use the results and what did the results prove?

### 5 - Author's purpose for writing "Changing Transportation Routes"

What was the author's purpose for writing Changing Transportation Routes?? Please provide two details to support your claim.

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Task 3: Writing Activity

**Instructions:** For your writing assignment, you will choose a service learning project that you would like to see in your community.? You will explain how you would study and learn about the project and how it would benefit your community.? Your essay needs to be 2-3 paragraphs (minimum 200 words).

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