

A changing demography: Investigating changes to public transport in The Hills Shire

Key Learning Area	Unit or lesson title and main focus questions	Most appropriate level and suggested number of lessons
History	A changing demography: Investigating changes to public transport in The Hills Shire How has the demography of The Hills Shire changed over the past 100 years and what has been the effect on public transport infrastructure?	Stage 2
Geography		4-6 lessons
English		

Teacher briefing

Students investigate the evolution of public transport in The Hills Shire over the past century. They watch an online video of local historian, Bruce Irwin, discussing changes to the local transport infrastructure from the 1900s. Using the video and maps, students explore local changes. A class eBook of journal entries about travelling on the Sydney Metro Northwest is created.

Requirements for these lessons

- Internet connected interactive whiteboard
- Computers (or paper and pens)
- Cardboard strips and markers
- Hard copies of the images from Bruce Irwin's 'Trams and Trains in the Hills' website
- Paper, pens and pencils
- Computers, laptops or iPads
- Microsoft PowerPoint.

Assessment

There are opportunities for teachers to observe student participation in class discussion and in small groups. In addition, teachers can assess the depth of analysis and students' ability to link concepts such as population increase and land use to the evolving local public transport system. Individual formative assessment can be undertaken on narratives and electronic journal entries.

Key terms and vocabulary

Community, demography, The Hills Shire, semi rural, urban, population, trams, trains, buses, routes, Sydney Metro Northwest.

Background information

A steam tramway opened between Parramatta and Baulkham Hills in 1902, and was extended to Castle Hill in 1910, carrying passengers and produce to and from the area. In 1919, the New South Wales Government decided to convert the tramway into a railway to encourage the subdivision of estates for residential use. The new section between Westmead and Northmead was built in 1922, and the line opened traffic to Castle Hill in 1923. It was extended to Rogans Hill in 1924. The line was single track throughout, and ran alongside Windsor and Old Northern roads between Northmead and Castle Hill. It was closed in 1932.

Web links



'Trams and Trains in the Hills' Bruce Irwin and Noelene Pullen, 2009 (Online 'Hills Voices' video and transcript of an interview with local train and tram enthusiast and historian Bruce Irwin in costume).

<https://www.thehills.nsw.gov.au/Library/Library-e-Resources/Hills-Voices-Online/Changing-Shire/Bruce-Irwin>

Links to 'Hills Voices' interviews

<http://www.thehills.nsw.gov.au/Library/Library-e-Resources/Hills-Voices-Online>

Other suitable interviews on the same site

<http://www.thehills.nsw.gov.au/Library/Library-e-Resources/Hills-Voices-Online/Changing-Shire/Barry-Gilbert>

www.thehills.nsw.gov.au/Library/Library-e-Resources/Hills-Voices-Online/Changing-Shire/John-Allen

Good quality map of The Hills Shire

http://www.mapparade.com/map-of-hills-district-in_au-ound

Other good map sites

<http://www.scribblemaps.com/#lat=4.28&lng=162.03&z=3&t=Map&y=0&p=0>

<http://www.aus-emaps.com>

Hills Bus route maps

<http://www.cdcbus.com.au/HillsBus-Maps.html>

Sydney Metro Northwest - project map

<https://www.sydneymetro.info/map/interactive-map>

Syllabus links

Geography K-10

Stage 2 – Places are similar or different – the settlement patterns and demographic characteristics of places and the lives of people who live there

(GE2-1) examines features and characteristics of places and environments

(GE2-2) describes ways people, places and environments interact

(GE2-4) acquires and communicates geographical information using geographical tools for inquiry.

History K-10

Stage 2 – ONE important example of change and ONE important example of continuity over time in the local community, region or state/territory

(HT2-2) describes and explains how significant individuals, groups and events contributed to changes in the local community over time

(HT2-5) applies skills of historical inquiry and communication.

English K-10

(EN2-2A) plans, composes and reviews a range of texts that are more demanding in terms of topic, audience and language.

Learning experiences

Step 1 – Introduction

Students watch the video of Bruce Irwin discussing public transport in The Hills Shire from the 1900s, 'Trams and Trains in the Hills' (see web links).

<https://www.thehills.nsw.gov.au/Library/Library-e-Resources/Hills-Voices-Online/Changing-Shire/Bruce-Irwin>



Figure 2: 'Trams and Trains in the Hills'. Bruce Irwin, in period costume

Step 2 – Group activity (three to four students)

Focus question:

What are the changes to The Hills Shire public transport?

Groups are given the transcript of 'Trams and Trains in the Hills' (see web links) and assigned different areas of inquiry to research and report back to the class. Research strategies will need to be put in place to define some of the language used during the interview such as surplus, patronage, penny, curtailed.

Use these questions and ideas as a guide for group inquiry areas.

Community/Suburbs

- List the important suburbs and areas discussed in the interview
- Explain why these areas are important to changes to the local public transport system.

Significant dates

- List the important dates mentioned in the interview
- Explain why these dates are significant. (Tip: think about what happened on these dates and how they were important to the development of the tram or tram service).

Tram service

- What or who was the tram built to service in The Hills Shire?
- What or who did the tram actually service?
- List the main problems with The Hills Shire trams.

Train service

- What or who was the train built to service in The Hills Shire?
- What or who did the train actually service?
- List the main problems with The Hills Shire trains.

Using trams and trains

- Were there tram stations? If so, where were they located?
- Were there train stations? If so, where were they located?
- How much did it cost to travel by tram?
- How much did it cost to travel by train?
- How many passengers travelled by tram per year?
- How many passengers travelled by train per year?

Community concerns

- Briefly explain what the tram service meant for the people of The Hills Shire
- What types of people used the tram? Briefly explain why they used the tramway?
- What types of people used the train? Briefly explain why they used the railway?

Step 3 – Class activity

Students create a class wall 'Local Transport' concept map. Groups take turns presenting their answers and ideas. Using the material presented, they create a wall 'Local Transport' concept map using cardboard strips and hard copies of photos from the interview.

Step 4 – Group activity (Split class into two groups)

Relating historical events to people's lives. Teacher asks students to form two circles. Each circle is given a question to discuss and debate with one another:

- What did the tramway mean to different groups of people in The Hills Shire at that time?
- What did the railway mean to different groups of people in The Hills Shire at that time?

Class discussion: Group representatives explain the key points their group came up with to the class.

Step 5 – Individual activity

Writing historical personal narratives. Students are asked to assume the role of a person travelling on a tram in the early 1900s and write a narrative about using the tram in The Hills Shire. If time allows, students can explore the 'Changing Shire' link on the 'Hills Voice' website. This provides interviews with other community members including members of the local fruit growing families. (See web links).

Ask students to fill out simple narrative worksheets prior to writing their narrative. Use these questions as suggestions:

- Who is the main character?
- Why do they use the tram to travel around The Hills Shire?
- Where do they travel on the tram?
- What would they be wearing?
- What does the setting (The Hills Shire) look like?
- What do they see, smell and hear as they travel on the tram?

Students write their narratives using their narrative worksheets. Students can use a wall 'Local Transport' concept map as stimulus for their narratives.

Step 6 – Group activity (Groups of four to six)

'Writers' conference' – students take turns reading their narratives to the group. Other students and the teacher ask questions to enhance the narrative. Students publish their stories. These can be displayed in a folder for each student to read, or on the 'Local Transport' wall.

Use these analytical questions as a guide:

- Do you have more than one story in your narrative?
- Is there more you could add?
- What is the main character doing in the text?
- Can you tell us in detail what your character does on the journey?

Students edit their narratives.

Step 7 – Class activity

Students map changes to The Hills Shire public transport using a suitable map of The Hills Shire on the interactive whiteboard. (See web links for map suggestions). They:

- Use the maps on the interview site 'Trams and Trains in the Hills' to plot the tram and train routes
- Use the 'Hills Bus' site to plot the current bus route
- Use a map to plot the Sydney Metro Northwest route.

Step 8 – Class discussion

Discuss the similarities and differences between the routes. Use these questions as a guide to stimulate class discussion:

- Why do people travel on public transport?
- Why has public transport changed?

Consider changes to suburbs, local population increases and workplace location changes. Discuss the reasons behind the Sydney Metro Northwest route.

Step 9 – Individual activity

Imagining the future: Using Sydney Metro Northwest.

Using the characters from their historical tram narratives, students imagine their character in the future, travelling on Sydney Metro Northwest. In order to stimulate the students' imaginations, ask them to close their eyes and take them on an imaginary train trip on Sydney Metro Northwest.

Ask students to fill out another simple narrative worksheet to outline their narrative prior to commencing the next activities. Use these questions as suggestions for the narrative worksheet:

- Where does their character travel to on Sydney Metro Northwest?
- What would they be wearing?
- What does the setting (The Hills Shire) look like now?
- What do they see, smell and hear as they travel on Sydney Metro Northwest?

Individual electronic journal entry activities:

- Students write a first person journal entry draft about this trip on Sydney Metro Northwest
- Students use 'writing workshop' strategy discussed above
- Students illustrate a scene from their journal entry.

Step 10 – Making an eBook

Students record each other reading their journal entries using iPads, iPods or laptops. Students scan their drawings and create a PowerPoint slide using the illustrations. Students then insert their recordings into the PowerPoint slide and add animation for effects. Teacher collates the individual journal entries and creates a class eBook.

Step 11 – Reflection activity

Class views the class eBook. Teacher asks students to reflect on the focus question: How has the demography of The Hills Shire changed over the past 100 years and what has been the effect on public transport infrastructure?

Teacher facilitates a discussion about how the journal articles describe changes to local public transport as a result of the Sydney Metro Northwest.

Teacher references and extension work

Explore demographic changes to the suburb in which the school is located using Google Maps and other suitable map Internet sites.

Stage modifications: Stage 3

Extend the task by asking students to investigate demographic changes to their own suburb using Census data. Use websites such as:

<http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au>

The Hills Shire Council site on 'Demographic Information'

<http://www.thehills.nsw.gov.au/Business-Investment/Business-Support-in-The-Sydney-Hills/Demographics-Resource-Centre>

Bureau of Transport Statistics

<https://data.nsw.gov.au>

Ask students to research population changes to a suburb in the North West region of Sydney in four increments over the past 100 years (for example, 1920, 1933, 1967 and 1990).



Topic Two:
Linking the nation

Train testing at Tallawong Station, May 2018.