

# Feet First inquiry topics

Updated 2023



Key understanding: Walking benefits people, places and our planet.

Driving question: Walking – what difference can I make?

- Define walking.
- Explain the benefits of walking.
- Predict how using sustainable transport such as walking might improve people, places and the planet.

## Term 1: Walking and road safety

### Scenario: Walking to the big game

Sometimes, New Zealand plays host to large sports tournaments. Many visitors come from overseas to watch the games, and lots of New Zealanders also travel to attend the games held in stadiums around the country.

Examples include:

- 1990 Commonwealth Games in Auckland
- 2011 men's Rugby World Cup
- 2022 women's Rugby World Cup
- 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup

Imagine another big sports tournament is coming up in New Zealand with events around the country. Due to the high numbers of people expected at this international event, it has been decided to ban the use of private vehicles in the streets around each stadium on the weekend of each game.

People can catch public transport to nearby train stations or bus stops. From there, only foot power or pedal power can be used. Investigate the topic and produce a feasibility study on the safety issues involved. Remember to look at all perspectives and include a range of resources as part of your feasibility study.

## Other local, national, global topics

### Skiing, horses and self-propelling booster packs

In stories from the past students rode horses to school in NZ. In other countries students ride snowmobiles or ski to school. Select a very different mode of transport for your school. Future technology can be included! Design a safety plan for this alternative means of transport.

### Changing behaviours

Changing behaviours and mindsets is part of the mix in achieving sustainable transport systems. Investigate a road safety issue in your community and design a plan of action that could make people reconsider their options. You may wish to look at the statistical investigation for some ideas.

Read about the 6 'E's of school travel behaviour change on pages 10-13 of this report:

[Travel behaviour change \(Waka Kotahi – PDF\)](#)

### Jammed

Investigate road safety issues in another country that has issues with traffic congestion. Compare the similarities and differences and write a report stating what we could learn as a country.

[The 10 most traffic congested cities of the world \(YouTube\)](#)

### Road diet

Identify an area of congestion in your community and present a “road diet action plan” for how to reduce the amount of traffic at peak times of day.

### The chicken or the egg?

What comes first, the roads or the towns? Explore road safety in new urban developments. In older cities, the towns were built without regard to the roads and many today have inadequate transport systems. How are new urban areas designed today? Examine the issues, trends, different points of view and consult the experts (e.g. town planners) to create your own inquiry.

## Glossary

**Road diets:** Roads or lane numbers are reduced to curb the traffic flow, perhaps for safety reasons.

**Traffic jam:** A slowing of traffic that often leads to a standstill due to the heavy use of the road at a particular time. Traffic congestion and traffic jams are common in large cities.

**Town planner:** Person whose job is to plan and design the infrastructure of urban and rural developments. Also investigates the environmental impact on new and existing developments.

## Links

[Eden Park transport options \(Auckland Transport\)](#)

[Waka Kotahi Education Portal – school community partnerships](#)

[Getting to school \(Greater Wellington Regional Council\)](#)

[Walking \(Waka Kotahi\)](#)

[Living Streets Aotearoa](#)

## Term 2: Walking and exploring

### Scenario: landmarks

Imagine that an ecotourism company has identified a market for kids' walking tours in your local area. However, there are no guides available that describe places that children would enjoy walking around and exploring.

So, the company has approached your school to see if you will prepare guides that describe walking routes around local landmarks of special interest to children of your age.

The walking route you design should describe each special place on the way and explain why it has landmark status from a kid's point of view. For example, it may be a kids' landmark because of:

- something funny that happened there in the past
- a person who is great to talk to
- a friendly dog
- a bumble bee nest
- a funny-shaped crack in the pavement
- an over-bridge
- glow worms.

Include kid-friendly information on distance covered, estimated walking time, places to rest, places to get a drink or ice-cream, safety information etc.

Produce your "landmarks for kids" guide as: a brochure, a website, a Google Map, a slideshow, a walking video, pavement art, or another format.

### Other local, national, global topics

#### Natural features

If you could walk around a natural feature anywhere in the world, describe where you would go and what you would see. Explain why you would choose to walk around this natural feature rather than any other.

#### Man-made features

Identify a man-made feature people have walked on or around in your local area. Describe where the materials to make the feature came from (for example, how they were extracted), how they were sold, how they were used and predict how they will be disposed of.

#### Famous world walkers

Walkers become famous for all sorts of reasons; some because of their age or youth, the distance they walked or where they have walked. Create your picks for a list of 10 world walkers for a new television series 'Walking with the stars'. Explain the background of each walker chosen and justify the reasons for their selection.

#### Pavements

Create a collage of photographs of all the different walking surfaces in your local area. Search for living things that make their homes on or in the surfaces we walk on. Describe the texture and condition of each walking surface and explain how the living things manage to make the surface into a home (habitat). Design a walking surface that could also be a habitat for living things.

## Walking tracks

You're doing research for a TV documentary based on the earliest walking tracks in New Zealand. Your job is to profile two track locations and describe them in terms of what was going on at the time they were developed. Your report should include images, drawings, and what people have said about these tracks. You need to recommend one track to be featured in the documentary and give reasons for your choice.

## Baby carriers

All over the world people walk and carry babies. Investigate the many different strategies people have used to help them when they walk with babies. Compare these strategies with the way people carry babies in your local community. Make a prediction about how people will walk with babies in the future.

## Glossary

**Natural features:** Something not made by human action, e.g. mountains, rivers, waterfalls, geysers.

**Man-made features:** Something made by human action, e.g. monuments, bridges, towers, buildings.

**Pavement:** A smooth hard surface for walking on, usually called a footpath in New Zealand.

**Baby carriers:** Something used to carry a baby when you are out walking.

## Links

[Walkability checklist for schools \(Greater Wellington\)](#)

[Walking tracks - Māori highways \(Te Ara\)](#)

[Baby carriers, slings and backpacks: safety guide](#)

[Innovative Lives: Protecting Precious Cargo: Ann Moore](#)

## Term 3: walking and creating

### Scenario: Create a town centre that supports safe sustainable transport

You have been hired to design a town centre for the future, with a main street that meets the needs of a growing population of local people. You can present your design in a mixture of writing, drawings or other formats such as video or a website. You should consider the following in your design:

- people and their needs are the basis for the design, not just vehicles.
- there are walkable distances between where people live and where they work, shop and meet
- walkers and cyclists can travel safely.
- there is a sense of the street being an enjoyable place that people celebrate as their own local patch.
- the street supports public transport, electric vehicles, Mobility for the aged and disabled, and safety for young people.

See the links section below for Term 3 for inspiration.

### Other local, national, global topics

#### Kids walk space

Create a Google map of your area and pin all of the walks that families could participate in. You will need to investigate the safety issues and assess how accessible it is for children, the elderly, pushchairs, mobility aids etc.

#### Walking trail

Design a walking trail for your school that could be included in the daily fitness plan. You will need to establish the wants of the students and teachers and consult with experts in your community. Develop a feasibility study that you could present to your Board of Trustees.

[A school nature trail creates a pathway to learning](#)

#### Walk the talk

Talk to your family and find out how and for what reasons your family and ancestors walked. Compare and contrast with your attitudes on walking. Predict the impact of walking for children in the future. Create a resource that could be put into a time capsule.

Or create an oral history resource that shares stories about walking. Interview several people from your community who have a story to share from their past.

#### My feet were made for walking

Locate and listen to the songs and lyrics that you can find on walking. Create a music video to encourage people to get out in their community and walk more. You will need to create your own track and lyrics using apps such as GarageBand or Audacity.

This could make up part of a film festival night that you can share with your community.

### Walk in someone else's shoes

Research a child your age from a country very different to New Zealand. Investigate how much they rely on walking to get around. Present their story. Compare and contrast it to the amount of walking that you do. Formulate a judgement.

### Walk score

Investigate where a few of your classmates live and generate a walk score for their homes. The Walk Score website gives ratings on how far and how 'pedestrian friendly' it is to walk to shops and services. Ask your classmates what where they walk in their neighbourhood. Write about what enables walking and what creates barriers for walking for your classmates.

Share your research with an expert. Make suggestions to improve this area. How could you rate the bumpability of this area?

## Glossary

**Walkability:** A rating that is given depending on how close, safe and easy it is to walk to places in your community.

**Bumpability:** Refers to the number of people that you know and 'bump into' when you walk to and from places in your local community.

**Road diets:** Roads or lanes are reduced to curb the traffic flow perhaps for safety reasons.

**Shared space:** A street space that can be shared by vehicles at low speed, pedestrians, diners etc.

## Links

[Walk Score](#) Calculate the walkability of any address.

[Street Wise \(NZ Geographic\)](#)

[Streets for People \(Waka Kotahi\)](#)

[Roads Gone Wild: No street signs. No crosswalks. No accidents \(Wired Magazine\)](#)

[Streets for Kids \(Global Designing Cities Initiative\)](#)

## Term 4: walking and helping our planet

### Scenario: Sustainability

Congratulations, you have been chosen as the New Zealand representative in the Walking for our Planet Awards.

You are required to submit a proposal that describes how walking can support the thing that is most valuable to you as a young person living in Aotearoa.

This can be an environmental resource, a social resource or an economic resource.

For example, you could choose to explain how more people walking helps:

- clean air (environmental)
- spending time with friends (social)
- getting to a job when you are older (economic).

You must explain why this resource is important to you and predict 3 ways you believe increased rates of walking ensure this resource is protected for young New Zealanders to enjoy in the future.

Your proposal can be submitted in a text document, slide show, website or video.

### Other local, national, global topics

#### Carrying things

Which is better for the environment, carrying things in plastic bags when walking or carrying things in paper bags? What other materials could bags be made from and why?

#### Climate change and us

How can my family reduce emissions of greenhouse gases from our typical weekly travel arrangements? How can I calculate our emissions before and after we make changes to our travel?

#### Food for hungry feet

We have laws about energy efficient fuels for cars. Should we also have laws about energy efficient foods for people who walk?

#### Deep dive into dumpsters

Is freeganism a good idea to reduce food waste? Why and why not. Should we be foraging for our school lunches as we walk to school?

## Glossary

**Sustainability:** Balancing human social, economic and environmental needs in a way that does not compromise future generations.

**Resource:** Something that is useful to people.

**Natural Environment:** All the factors in the surroundings that affect a living thing. These can be physical factors (moisture, temperature, oxygen levels) or biological factors (other living things).

**Social Environment:** All the factors in the surroundings related to people and culture.

**Economic Environment:** All the factors in the surroundings related to production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.

**Ecological Footprint:** The impact of human activity on the natural environment.

**Freeganism:** Taking food that shops have thrown away, in order to reduce waste. Also known as dumpster diving.

## Links

[Future Fit carbon calculator by Auckland Council](#)

[What is sustainability \(UCLA, YouTube\)](#)

[Learn how to live a lower carbon lifestyle \(Gen Less\)](#)

[Walking \(Waka Kotahi\)](#)

[Air pollution exposure in walking school bus routes: a New Zealand case study](#)

[Electric vehicles and Aotearoa \(EECA insights\)](#)

[NZ air quality monitoring map and data \(LAWA\)](#)