

Ethical consequences

PTV learning outcomes

- Students are aware of the opportunities for using public transport
- Students understand the personal and societal benefits of public transport
- Students are confident to use public transport
- Students understand why their actions are important to being safe on and around public transport

Duration

Sequences are intended to be delivered in 2–4 lessons.

Overview

Access to safe, reliable and affordable transport in urban, rural and regional areas presents many young people (as well as those who are economically disadvantaged, aging or living with disabilities) with concerns about their safety while waiting for, travelling on or departing from public transport, and about their ability to access employment and education opportunities from wherever they live.

In this learning sequence, students consider the relationship between public transport and youth disadvantage. They explore a number of hypothetical prospective government-sponsored transport projects and the reasons for prioritisation of infrastructure projects based on community need and public advocacy. Students analyse how government budget allocation aims for an ethical balance between public projects that are sustainable and support the majority of their constituents, and projects that are focused on marginalised or disadvantaged groups such as young people in rural, regional or outer urban areas.



Curriculum alignment

Ethical capability Levels 7–8

VCECD017

Explore the extent of ethical obligation and the implications for thinking about consequences and duties in decision-making and action

VCECD018

Discuss the role of context and experience in ethical decision-making and actions

English Level 7

VCELY396

Plan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content and multimodal elements to promote a point of view or enable a new way of seeing, using body language, voice qualities and other elements to add interest and meaning

English Level 8

VCELY427

Plan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content, including multimodal elements, to reflect a diversity of viewpoints, using voice and language conventions to suit different situations, modulating voice and incorporating elements for specific effects

Engage

In small groups, ask students to develop a concept map identifying the various modes of public transport available in their community, the reasons why people in their community use or don't use public transport, and the advantages and disadvantages of using public transport.

Discuss the meanings of 'rural', 'regional' and 'metropolitan', and the differences between them in relation to location, industry and population. Use maps of the state (eg, Victoria's Regions: <http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/victorias-regions#>) to provide a visual sense of which areas are designated rural and regional, and the wide range of suburbs that cover a vast area within the Melbourne metropolitan area (Melbourne suburbs map: <http://melbournesuburbsmap.com/>).

Propose a scenario in which students represent a young person living in a rural/regional town who needs to travel to Melbourne, or to another rural/regional town for work, to go to hospital or for their education etc. The scenario may also incorporate the need to travel at different times of day or night.

Using the Public Transport Victoria (PTV) Journey Planner (<https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/journey>) website or app, ask students to plot a commuter's journey from a rural/regional Victorian town to another rural/regional town, to a suburb in Melbourne, or from one side of Melbourne to the other eg, Mildura to Morwell, Wonthaggi to Wangaratta, Sunshine to Templestowe. Students record the forms of transport and the times for each leg of the journey, then list any consequences for the commuter if they miss transport connections for each step of the journey, and what alternative transport or timetable possibilities would be available to them to continue the journey.

In small groups, ask students to use a Venn diagram and identify transport availability/difficulties (ie, same and different) for their own community as opposed to either a rural/regional Victorian town or a metropolitan Melbourne suburb. The groups could use the PTV (<https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/>) website to view schedules and transport types. Invite the groups to present their ideas to the class. Collate a class list of advantages and disadvantages for each context.

Explore

View a selection of video clips (2) on transport safety, such as:

- *Police target violence on public transport* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQWPmlDqIOM>)
- TrackSAFE Education videos (<https://tracksafeeducation.com.au/students/high/media-library/rail-safety-videos/>).

Add to the concept map any further disadvantages or safety risks that commuters (particularly young people), might experience on public transport. Have students investigate the public transport concerns of a young person living in rural/regional areas or in the outer suburbs of Melbourne – for example, what concerns might they have in accessing education, employment, health and entertainment or social life?

As a Think, Pair, Share activity, list the equity issues and consequences for young people of not having reliable, accessible and affordable public transport. Provide access to statistics on Victorian commuting preferences and on safety across a range of transport and travel modes (refer to Australian government safety statistics: <https://bitre.gov.au/statistics/safety/>)

Ask students to gather facts about issues of equity, reliability, access, affordability, and any safety concerns experienced by young people using public transport in their community or in the wider community and add these facts to their concept map.

Teachers may find useful information for this discussion in Key messages from 'The relationship between transport and disadvantage in Australia' (Rosier, K & McDonald, M 2011, Community and Families Clearing House Australia resource sheet), Australian Institute of Family Studies (<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/relationship-between-transport-and-disadvantage-austr>).

Explain

Explain that there is a wide range of opinions held by various interest groups in regard to issues around public transport. These interest groups could include political parties, cycling groups, providers/users of transport for people with disabilities, rural youth groups, community groups expressing local concerns, parent groups, advocates for walking to school etc.

Ask students to identify and analyse the issues, reasoning and language (in respect to social/community values) actually outlined by the various groups, or to envisage what the issues and reasoning might be for such interest groups. Students can identify the demographic each group represents and then assess why these groups need representation about public transport.

Some useful sites to explore that represent a range of opinions on public transport policy or advocacy include:

- Bicycles Network Australia (<https://www.bicycles.net.au/2017/06/federal-cycling-advocacy-evolves-with-the-new-australian-cycling-promotion-foundation-stephen-hodge/>)
- Public Transport Users Association (<https://www.ptua.org.au/>)
- RACV (<https://www.racv.com.au/on-the-road/public-transport.html>)
- Municipal Association Victoria (<http://www.mav.asn.au/>)
- State political parties
- Public Transport Ombudsman (<https://www.ptovic.com.au/>)

Introduce the student resource, Ethical Consequences Scenario, about government expenditure and four transport projects proposed for the spending. The teacher and/or students could vary these proposals given the context of the transport needs of their community, or could generate an alternative project.

Designate each corner of the classroom with a colour and make it the home of an advocacy group supporting one of the proposals. Each group has the colour as their name or as part of a name they devise. (The colour or name could also have symbolic/cultural meaning about each group's basic principles/values or demography). Divide the class equally between the four advocacy groups and have each group develop a set of reasons why their transport proposal is best.

Ask each group to develop two or three value statements about their principles (representing their demography) and an argument as to why their transport proposal is best. The proposal should contain points of factual and ethical argument - what evidence and what principles are at the heart of their argument?

Students could use the resource 'Student resource sheet: Persuasive text structures' (http://education.abc.net.au/res/teacher_res/8-persuasive-texts/TR_8_eng_studentsheet_persuasive_text_structures.pdf) to assist them in developing their arguments, or view 'What is debating?' (ABC Splash: <http://education.abc.net.au/home#!/media/2211783/what-is-debating->) for advice from other students on how to approach the task.

Elaborate

Pair the advocacy groups, and have each present their proposal to the other. Ask each group to develop a counter argument to their opposing group's proposal. By developing an argument that encapsulates the pros and cons of both sides, students identify and analyse how they can most effectively justify and validate their own group's argument.

Each group then presents a 3-minute campaign presentation to the whole class about the 'ethical' issues that underpin why their proposal is the right proposal, aiming to persuade other students to register their approval for it.

The campaign could take the form of an oral presentation, a poster advertisement or billboard design (and voiceover), a multimedia/screen media commercial, or series of social media posts. In making their case, students should also consider how 'fake news' is unethical and could lead to the creation of poor policy and infrastructure, with dangerous consequences for people and their travel safety.

Each group also presents a 2-minute rebuttal argument for their opposition's transport proposal. While the proposals may be similar, students should find the points of difference in each.

Evaluate

Use a simple voting system, hard copy or online tool, for all students to vote for whichever proposal they believe is the most advantageous to the Victorian society and economy, and/or their local community, not just for themselves individually, or just their advocacy group. Which did they find was the most compelling argument for an ethical solution?

Discuss the results, and have students propose strategies that they could use to build awareness of the problems of transport for disadvantaged groups, particularly youth experiencing issues in accessing public transport.

Potentially the local member of parliament or municipal councillor could be invited to the school to hear the proposals, or students could email or write to their local parliamentarian with their ideas.