From Here to There

Goal: Use timetables and maps to plan a trip

1. Where would you go?

Gather children around a state or regional map. Help them find where they are now and a few familiar places.

If you could go anywhere on this map, where would you go? Does it look close? How long do you think it would take to get there?

2. Plan a trip

Give out maps and timetables. Each pair chooses a destination and plans how they’ll get there. They jot down the trip segments, and they tally up how long the trip will take, including wait times.

What time will you start your trip? Which is the fastest train? How long a wait for the next ferry?
Tell about your trip

Each pair explains:
• When they’d start out;
• How long they’d spend at their destination and what they’d do there;
• When they’d return.
• Who had the shortest trip? the longest? Who had the most wait time at the bus terminal?

Variations

Go local (easier). Use city or local maps and related local public transportation schedules. Children choose a destination they could reach with just one bus or train.

Go global (harder). Use world maps. Print out flight timetables from your closest airport, or show children how to find them online.

Grades
• 4-6+

Minimum number of participants
• 1

Suggested grouping
• divide into pairs

Time
• 20-60 minutes

Math
• reading maps, timetables
Materials

• state or regional maps including your location and places of interest nearby: 1 per pair
• timetables for buses, trains, ferries, or other public transportation in the area the map covers: several of each, for children to share
• scrap paper and pencils
• brochures on local places of interest (optional): a selection

Prerequisites

• some experience reading maps and transportation schedules

Books about maps

• Transportation: From Walking to High Speed Rail. Raum, Elizabeth, (Heinemann, 2010).