

What is RideSharing?



Target Grade Levels

Third - Twelfth

Time

One hour

Materials

- glossary (Appendix A)
- rideshare Information (visit: www.aacog.com/commutesolutions for more information)
- ozone Information (visit: www.aacog.com/air for more information)
- magazines/Newspapers
- construction Paper

Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)

- Science:
 - The student shall be provided opportunities to identify and demonstrate an individual's responsible behavior for protecting and preserving the environment;
 - The student shall be provided opportunities to identify and classify natural and human resources in the community and explain the interdependence of people and products in the world;
 - The student shall describe the relationship between people and their environment; and
 - Identify an environmental issue in the community and analyze it to propose possible solutions.

Overview

To help students understand what the term ridesharing means and why it is important to air quality.

Educational tools include: spelling, creative writing, and word association.

Background

If you can't avoid traffic, help reduce traffic. Carpooling or any other type of alternative transportation will help drivers lower personal stress, improve air quality, and save money on gas and parking.

Procedure

1) Vocabulary

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| a) transit | o) RideSharing |
| b) congestion | p) electricity |
| c) environment | q) atmosphere |
| d) fossil fuel | r) stratosphere |
| e) contaminant | s) tires |
| f) fumes | t) troposphere |
| g) pollution | u) walking |
| h) particulate | v) ozone |
| i) ambient air | w) emission |
| j) gasoline | x) alternative fuel |
| k) vanpool | y) SchoolPool |
| l) bicycling | z) walking school bus |
| m) carpool | aa)bike buddies |
| n) pollutants | |

2) Activities

- a) Before beginning, it will be helpful for you to read the RideShare and ozone information listed under materials to familiarize yourself with ridesharing issues. To assist the students in understanding the unit, begin with a spelling/vocabulary list.
- b) Have your class cut out magazine/newspaper pictures and articles pertaining to ridesharing and air quality to create a collage or design a classroom display or bulletin board. These pictures can be organized according to categories of ridesharing or students may choose to paste them to a landscape. Discuss with the students how they can participate in programs relating to the activities in the cutouts to protect air quality in their area.
- c) Have a discussion about what ridesharing means.
 - i) Examples of why ridesharing is important for our community.
 - It decreases air pollution and traffic congestion, etc.
 - ii) Examples of why it is important to reduce air pollution.
 - Improve quality of life and health, etc.
 - iii) Examples of how air pollution affect each of us?
 - Damage to lungs, irritates eyes, etc.
 - iv) What are some things we can we do about air pollution and traffic congestion?
 - Ride a bicycle,
 - walk,
 - bus or
 - carpool to and from school, carpooling with classmates to after school activities, encourage parents to drive one or two of your friends to school with you, etc.
 - v) How are you already helping to reduce air pollution by ridesharing in your area?
 - Riding the school bus to and from school,
 - riding your bicycle or
 - walking to school,
 - encouraging your fellow students and parents to rideshare, etc.
- d) Have the students to write a short story relating to their rideshare collage and using the vocabulary words they have learned in this lesson. Begin by starting the story for the students. Write an introductory sentence on the chalkboard. For example: Ridesharing is good for the environment because... or, Anyone can participate in ridesharing. Here is how I plan on participating.

For younger classes, ask the students to explain their collages and explain how they plan to participate in ridesharing activities now and in the future. A story about transportation can be read. (See list of suggested reading material following Glossary.)

- e) Make a large sign for the classroom showing what rideshare elements your class uses traveling to and from school.

Example:

RIDESHARING = CARPOOLING + SCHOOL BUS + BICYCLING + WALKING

Divide the class into four groups. Each group can work on one section of the sign and add their own ideas and art about their topic. The sign should be displayed in the classroom to remind students of the definition of ridesharing and how it can benefit air quality in your area.

- f) Have students create a bar graph and a pie chart showing the forms of transportation they use traveling to and from school.
- g) Extension
Have students track their transportation modes for all the trips they take in one school week. Then have them create bar graphs and pie charts showing that week's results. Have a class discussion on the forms of transportation used most and for which trips students might have been able to use an alternate mode. (Make sure that safety concerns and parent's permission are emphasized if encouraging students to walk or bicycle as alternate modes.)

Adapted from: "What is RideSharing?" *Texas Commission on Environmental Quality*.
www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/air/monops/lessons/lesson_plans.html.

Resource: *Ease on Down The Road*, Sacramento Area Council Of Government Rideshare Program. California.

Acknowledgment: Kim Herndon, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Mobile Source Division, Commute Options Team, 1997