

## Example #54 Transport and Service

### What if students learnt about serving through studying transport?

Phil's class had begun a unit on transport. They had already constructed a chart of the various forms of transport systems and what they are used for.

"I introduced the second lesson by writing on the board the sentence beginning: 'We need to travel so that we can ...!' The pupils were asked in pairs to come up with some endings for the sentence. Their suggestions were recorded. Then I completed the sentence myself by adding 'serve others!'. This led into a time of discussion on how could transport be used for travelling to serve others.

"I divided the class into groups of three or four and asked for one person from each group to select an unseen card from a box. I had written a scenario on each card, for example:

- In Haiti there has been a big earthquake. The people have no fresh water.
- The Carter family live in a remote location a long way from the hospital. Mrs Carter is very sick.
- Mr Jones is very old and lives alone. He cannot cook anymore.

"Each group was asked to think of a way in which transport could be used to care for or serve these people. They drew simple charts demonstrating their ideas. I invited a volunteer driver to speak about using her car to take people to hospital, do shopping and other tasks needing transport. The students then discussed what the transport needs of the community might be and how transport could serve those needs.

### What's going on here?

The existing unit focused on how transport is used to make our own lives easier but Phil also saw transport as a means of service and seeking the good of others.

He engaged students in rethinking existing assumptions (brainstorming endings) and then challenged them to actively respond (service focus, groups coming up with suggestions). He also had students interact with someone from the community.

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He [reshaped his practice](#) by using a [key concept](#) (service) to refocus the lesson, designing [activities](#) to get students to actively engage with the focus and express their responses (card activity, charts), and making space to learn from a [visitor](#) from the community.

[How do I do this myself?](#)

## What does this have to do with faith, hope and love?

[Service](#) is a practical aspect of [love](#). Jesus modelled service and said that he had come to serve others, not to be served. Christians describe Jesus as the 'servant king'. He redefined service as having status in the Kingdom of God, saying that those who want to be 'first', must serve (Mark 9:35). Any gifts Christians possess are entrusted to them in order to be used in the service of others.

## What difference does it make?

Much of the information in Phil's transport unit would be unchanged, but the change of framework meant that students could engage with the material differently. They saw transport as serving people's needs. Phil did not need to focus only on volunteer and charity service; a focus on service could be widened so that food transport is seen as servicing people's physical needs, library vans as serving intellectual and leisure needs, and so on. This means that people working in a range of spheres can view their work in terms of service.

## Where could we go from here?

As well as the above suggestion, the following could be explored:

- Look into charities and organisations that use travelling for compassionate ends, e.g., Flying Doctor Service, Mercy Ships, Missionary Aviation Fellowship, organisations fulfilling the wishes of very sick children (Make a Wish, Starlight Foundation).
- Explore Christian concern for the environment in relation to transport choices – wise stewardship of God's creation, e.g., sustainability, pollution.
- Study Christian pilgrimages (modern and past) and biblical pilgrimage festivals.
- Use excursions – rather than taking students on the regular 'transport experience', plan a trip using a few forms of transport with serving others as the aim, e.g., to sing at a nursing home or a shopping centre at Christmas.
- Look for other curriculum units that focus on fulfilling our own needs and consider how you could adapt them to a service emphasis.

## Digging deeper

The Bible states that Jesus gave up everything and came in human form as a [servant](#) (Philippians 2:7). Jesus said that he had not come to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). Servants were the hired hands and slaves of Jesus' time. Jesus took this word and gave

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it a new and radical meaning. He took a word that described a person of lesser status under the authority of others and redefined it in terms of leadership and greatness. He washed his disciples' feet and expected his followers to be willing to act similarly (John 13:14-15). Jesus made it clear that in the kingdom of God those who are greatest are those who serve God and others.

... the duty is now emphasized of serving God in the world, in every position in life. Abraham Kuyper

For Christians, giving is in response to God's giving of himself in Jesus. Giving and receiving are essential parts of Christian community life and part of serving the wider community (1 Peter 4:10). The Bible describes this as 'sowing': putting time, love, skill, effort or money into others. In turn people 'reap' what they 'sow'. It is not a rigid equation, but those who sow love are more likely to reap it (2 Corinthians 9:6-7). Service should distinguish the Christian way of life; at work, in the home and in relationships.

Our society looks for freedom and happiness in wealth, fame and power. The Bible sees it in giving and serving others. One Anglican prayer describes the service of God as 'perfect freedom'. Those words translate 'cui servire, regnare est': 'To serve is to reign'. To serve God and others is the highest honour; it is what we were created for.

One thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve. Albert Schweitzer

## Explore similar examples:

[What if looking at the local area helped children to see people as wholes?](#)

[What if a topic on 'People who help us' became 'Serving the community'?](#)

[What if design and technology were about serving communities?](#)