



Lesson 11: Let's count our local area, part 1

AGE RANGE Primary

TIME 1 – 2 hours

CURRICULUM LINKS

KS1 and KS2: Geography, art and design, maths (year 6)

Early Years: Communication and language, understanding the world, expressive arts and design

INTRODUCTION

The census takes place every 10 years. It counts people and households. It counts how many people work in different jobs. It counts the many different ways people travel to work. These counts are very important because it allows the government, local business and charities to plan for important services, such as hospitals, housing and schools. In this lesson, we're going to carry out our own counts in our local area.

LESSON OVERVIEW

This is a whole school activity to explore the local area and get counting! Select your special Let's Count! Day at your school. Let children and families know about the day in good time so that you can gather as many volunteers as you might need!

LEARNING INTENTIONS

To make observations about the geography of your local area.

To plan what you will count with the children.

To create displays and artworks based on your local area. (Don't forget, entering these displays into the Let's Count! competition could give your school the chance to win £1,000 of equipment!)

KEY VOCABULARY

Geography, landmarks, observation, survey

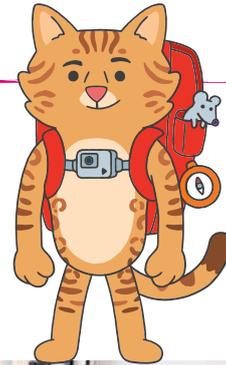


Let's count our local area, part 1

whole school activity

CURRICULUM LINKS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

EYFS	Communication & Language; Understanding the world.
Maths (KS1)	Interpret and present data using bar charts, pictograms and tables.
Maths (KS2)	Interpret and present discrete and continuous data using appropriate graphical methods, including bar charts and time graphs.
Geography (KS1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their school and its grounds and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment. • Use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to key physical features and key human features.
Geography (KS1)	Describe and understand key aspects of: physical geography and human geography.



1. Discuss why you are doing this? You may find out some interesting facts about how things are different in different places or at different times of day, week or even year. Introduce the concept of conducting a survey, often recorded as a tally.
2. Plan what you will count with the children. Will all groups count the same thing? Will the groups make single counts (trees) or multiple counts (types of vehicles).
3. Pick any items which give a snapshot of your local area and which may vary in number from place to place. Use the tables provided in the children's leaflet and the PowerPoint slide. Some counts will not be effective in your locality; for example some single counts such as trees, although statistically valid, may not maintain children's interest if the numbers are too low.
4. Where will you conduct your survey? Will it be a continuous count along a 'transect' (set route) or broken down into separate static counts at different locations. (The latter would provide multiple data sets which would allow for comparisons to be made if they were each carried out over an identical time span.)



Let's count our local area, part 1 whole school activity

5. Once you have chosen what to count and where to conduct your survey, ask the children what they expect to find. It will be interesting to compare their expectations against what they discover during their survey.

6. Plan some stopping points (perhaps up to five) to take pictures and explore each place with the senses (sight, sound and scent) during your survey. This will also facilitate any groups that are conducting multiple static counts.

- If you're walking through your local street, you could stop at a crossroads or at the school entrance.
- If you're walking through a footpath, you could stop at a gate or at every third tree.
- If you're conducting your survey within your school grounds, stop at the playground or school entrance.
- If you're unable to leave the school building you could even simply look out of the window in different directions.

When you analyse your findings, the children will be able to make comparisons and think about how things are different at different locations.

7. Consider how the children will record their survey data. Each group can work collaboratively to ensure that photographs are taken during the walk. After the walk the groups can design and make their own table or chart and again work collaboratively to complete their display. In this case, group size should be small (2-3) to keep children engaged.

8. On the survey walk (either within the school or out in your local area):

- Count the agreed objects at each point.
- Ask the children to also use other senses:
What can they hear? Do the sounds vary from place to place? Why might this be?
What can they smell? Do the different areas have different scents? Why might this be? Do the children have a different emotional response (like/dislike etc) to the different places? Why might this be?
- Have the children spotted any evidence of change? This might be seasonal or linked to building or development work. It may draw on previous knowledge of a familiar area: for example, some roads now have 20mph signs or have been recently pedestrianised. How does this make the children feel? And why?
- Does one part of their walk have less traffic? Does this make it quieter? Do they think it would always be like this? What is their emotional response?
- Talk about negative factors: Are there factors which evoke a negative response in the children? For example, litter, graffiti and dog mess. Does the weather influence how a place is experienced? What else might influence how we feel about a place?



Let's count our local area, part 1

whole school activity

9. Compare the data when you return to the classroom.

- Ask the children whether what they found matched what they were expecting? For example, if children arrive at school by car each day, and you asked them how busy they would expect the road outside school to be, they may say 'busy' as that is their experience of that location. However, at midday, the road may be much quieter. Can the children articulate reasons for this difference?
- Are there more or fewer buses at different times of the day? Why?
- Is the playground quieter during lesson time? Why?

Any differences offer an opportunity to discuss why this might be the case.

10. You could link these to the census data and the local history you may have already explored in earlier lessons.

KS2

Discuss what the children may want to change:

For example:

- Would they like to reduce traffic? How would they do this?

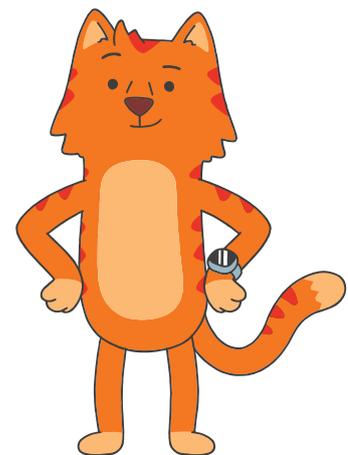
Traffic can cause air pollution. Discuss ways to mitigate air pollution with the children.

- Fewer cars (where possible)
- Cut down on idling engines.
- Where possible, encourage use of public transport.
- Where possible, encourage walking or cycling.

Discuss children's emotional response to:

- What they saw on their walk
- What they heard on their walk
- What they smelled on their walk

Make a pictogram or bar chart of the counts. Compare counts from different groups and discuss reasons for any differences.



PICTOGRAM

Subject	Number of sightings
Cars	
Dogs	
Cats	
Buses	
Vans	

	=2
	=2
	=2
	=2
	=2

Let's count our local area, part 1 whole school activity

Key
Stage 2

Interpretation: The pictogram on the previous page shows 14 cars and 4 buses.

- What does this mean?
- Is that what the children would expect?
- Would the children expect the road to be busier at the beginning and end of the day, rather than the middle of the day?
- What if the survey were on a Saturday?
- Where might the passengers have been going?

The photos and observations from this activity will be useful for Lesson 12, Let's count our local area, part 2, when the children will contribute pictures and models to create a whole school display of the area.

If your school has access to Digimaps, the children might be able to compare data from different years. Comparing a current map with an historical map will show children how a settlement has changed. When does your school appear?

Upload photos or a video of your display to the Let's Count! website (www.letscount.org.uk), which offers a range of tools to create a really colourful display. And - **you could win £1000 worth of equipment for your school!**

Please see the Let's Count! website for more information.



HOME LEARNING PROJECT: OUR LOCAL HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

History Project

Set children and families a whole school home learning project to research the history of their home, street or area. Children could present their research in a film, photos, slides, a model, pictures or writing.

Geography Project

Ask the children to look at changes over time: conduct the same survey in the morning, afternoon or evening, or conduct a second survey at a later date. This will give different children different sets of data to compare. They might also be able to conduct a survey in an alternate location as part of a future fieldtrip or on the street they live on as part of their home learning.

KS2: Ask the children to create bar graphs showing the first and second location, changing over time.

You can download this lesson plan and the PowerPoint presentation slides from the Let's Count! website, www.letscount.org.uk.

