



# Transportation

The February topic involves something we all use every day, whether we think about it or not: transportation. Students travel to school by car, bus, bike, or on foot. Some modes of transportation have greater environmental impact than others, and by understanding them, students can make smart decisions about how to incorporate sustainability into their lives.

The transportation sector makes up about 30% of energy use in the U.S., and large amounts of energy use can be avoided in many cases through awareness and more conscious decisions. These activity ideas for February will help students understand why certain types of transportation are greener than others by outlining alternative forms of transportation and how they work. The activities are organized by grade level but may be applicable across ages.

## Activity Ideas

### Pre-School + Kindergarten

1. **Mime the modes of transportation.** Use [this lesson plan](#) to introduce students to the different options by which we travel from place to place, and connect it to sustainability by making paper “traffic jams” out of the modes that cause the most pollution.
2. **Watch a video.** In [this video](#), Gecko from Gecko’s Garage learns how to service Evie, the electric car who needs more energy.

### Grades 1-3

1. **Combine sustainability and math by learning about transportation emissions.** Make simple graphs using [these instructions and materials](#), and learn about the environmental impact of transportation along the way.
2. **Read a book.** [This website](#) lists three picture books on green transportation—one on biking, one on walking, and one on traveling green in general. Visit your library to see if these or any other green transportation books are available!
3. **Watch a video.** [This video](#) explains smart transportation and some simple things students can think about in order to make smarter decisions on how they travel.

### Grades 4-6

1. **Interpret data from the EPA on the different types of automobile emissions.** Using [this lesson plan](#), students make bar graphs from EPA data and share with the class how impactful their group’s emission is.
2. **Use pretzels to learn about transportation efficiency.** In [this activity](#), students are given pretzels as “fuel” to get from one place to another in their particular automobile. They will also learn the benefits of carpooling as a way to save on pretzels!
3. **Watch a video.** [This video](#) explains why transportation can be an environmental issue, along with possible innovative solutions.

## Grades 7-12

1. **Learn how electric vehicles work by designing one.** Research and design electric vehicles using [this handout](#) to get a real-world sense for what's under the hood and why it matters.
2. **Watch a video.** [This video](#) explains sustainable transportation, along with pros and cons, and the energy use involved in transportation. [This TED Talk](#) discusses the future of sustainable transportation and what is needed to make transportation more sustainable.

## Everyone

1. **Plan a Bike-to-School Day.** Encourage students school-wide to bike (or walk) to school instead of using less environmentally friendly methods. This can include an incentive for the class or grade that has the most participants.
2. **Host a bike drive.** Allow those in need to utilize sustainable transportation by providing a platform for students to donate used (or new) bikes to a local charity.

## Let Us Know What You Did!

Report your progress and earn recognition for your school. Fill out your school's row in the [GSC Tracking Document](#) to let us know which activity you did for this month!

## Questions?

We're here to answer any questions you may have, talk through ideas or provide further resources. Just email [gogreen@kearneycats.com](mailto:gogreen@kearneycats.com).

### RECOGNITION LEVELS

All KPS schools have the opportunity to earn recognition for their participation in the Green Schools Initiative each year. The more activities you complete, the more recognition you receive! For 2019-2020, the following three levels of recognition are available:

- **Level 1 (Green Performance)** - Participation in 5 activities during the year. Schools receive a framed certificate of recognition, \$50 for Green Team Activities next year, and \$100 for the Principal's budget.
- **Level 2 (Green Achievement)** - Participation in 6 - 9 activities during the year. Schools receive \$150 for Green Team activities next year, an award banner, and \$200 for the Principal's budget
- **Level 3 (Green Excellence)** - Participation in 10 or more activities during the year. Schools receive \$300 for Green Team activities next year, a large award banner, and \$400 for the Principal's budget. In addition, all schools that achieve Level 3 participation are placed into a raffle; the selected school receives \$450 to spend on district-approved items. Approved items could entail smart power strips, vending machine energy misers, native landscaping/trees, rain barrels, native plants for classrooms, and indoor/outdoor recycling containers. All items must be approved by the district office prior to purchase.