Railways

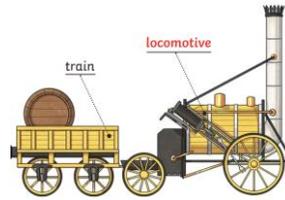The History of Railways in the United Kingdom

Key facts

Great Britain was the first nation to use steam locomotives and Britain's railway is the oldest in the world.

• A train is made up of carriages (also known as wagons or cars) pulled by an engine (or locomotive).

• A steam engine pulls a tender (a wagon containing fuel).

• Steam trains were first built in the early 1800s to carry goods and materials, but they soon were used to transport passengers too.

• In 1825, George Stephenson opened a railway in the north of England. He designed a steam train called Locomotion and used it to pull wagons full of coal.

• Diesel trains started to replace steam trains in the middle of the 20th century (1950/60's).

• The fastest trains in the world are powered by electricity. The electricity is transmitted to the train, either by overhead cables or through special rails running alongside the track.

1698 Thomas Savery invented a steam engine used to pump water out of coal mines

18th century James Watt improved Savery's steam engine

1804 Richard Trevithick invented a steam locomotive to carry iron over long distances in Wales

1812 Matthew Murray invented a steam locomotive called the Salamanca

1813-14 William Hedley's Puffing Bully was used to pull coal wagons. This engine was used for over 50 years.

1825 George Stephenson's Locomotion No.1 was the first locomotive to carry passengers along the Stockton to Darlington line.

1829 George Stephenson's Rocket won the Rainhill Trials. It could travel up to 28 miles per hour.

1830 Stephenson built the Liverpool to Manchester railway line. It was very successful and led to many more railway lines being built and used.

Key vocabulary

Carriage- one of the vehicles that is joined to make a train.	**Porter**- someone who helps people with their bags.
Locomotion- an act or the power of moving from place to place.	**Railway**- the system of travelling by train.
Parapet- a low wall or railing to protect the edge of a platform, roof, or bridge.	**Station master**- the person in charge of a railway station.
Passenger- a person riding in a vehicle	**Tunnel**- a passage through a hill or underground.
Platform- an area next to a railway track from which passengers can get on and off trains.	**Train spotting**- looking for different sorts of trains.

Railway Art

Many artists painted scenes of railway stations and trains as there was huge public interest in the world of locomotives.

	'A Railway Terminus' by Henry Carr, 1941, shows St Pancras station and what it was like living in wartime London.
	'Taking on Water' by Thomas Bury, 1831, shows a train stopping to fill up on water for its onward journey.

Many people throughout history have had strong feelings, both good and bad, towards locomotives and railway lines.

Positives	Negatives
Allows people to visit different places in the country.	Spoils the beautiful countryside.
Features, such as railway stations and bridges, enhance the scenery.	Concerns over the safety of people travelling on trains.
Allows goods to be transported quicker to stores for the customer.	

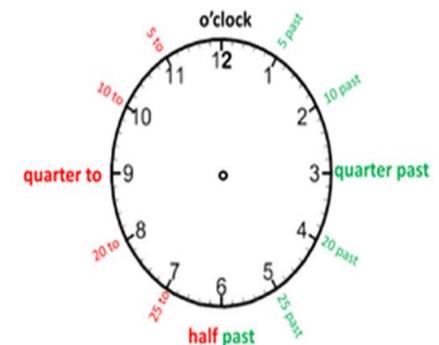| Rocket	Flying Scotsman	Mallard	Evening Star
George Stephenson 1829	Sir Nigel Gresley 1923	Sir Nigel Gresley 1938	RA Riddles 1960
Record speeds of 29mph (miles per hour).	First steam locomotive to travel non-stop from London to Edinburgh.	Broke the world record in 1938 for the fastest ever steam locomotive – 126mph.	The last steam locomotive for British Railway.
Won the Rainhill Trials.	The first steam locomotive to reach a top speed of 100mph.	Travelled nearly 1.5 million miles in its 25-year career.	Could transport passengers at over 90mph.

Other curriculum:

English: Playscripts and Newspaper reports

Maths: Decimals, Money and Time

Science: Classifying living things and Food chains

Telling Time

- There are 7 days in 1 week.
- There are 14 days in a fortnight.
- There are 12 months in a year.
- There are 10 years in a decade.
- There are 100 years in a century.
- There are 60 seconds in a minute.
- There are 60 minutes in an hour.
- There are 24 hours in a day.

To support at home, you could read and understand timetables e.g. for a train.