ThinkCERCA™

CERCA SET

Railway Infrastructure
English Language Arts

What factors should the U.S. government take into account when making decisions about investing in rail infrastructure?

LESSON TITLE

Smarter Ways to Get from Here to There

CERCA QUESTION

Is it possible for people in the United States to eliminate their reliance on cars in favor of public transportation?

RESOURCES

- **Build Background Knowledge** https://www.pinterest.com/thinkcerca/railway-infrastructure-cerca-set-board/
- **CERCA Framework**
- **Vocabulary Routine**
- **Speaking and Listening Routines**

Legend:
- Whole group
- Small group
- Individual activity
- Speaking and listening activity
- Online
- Offline
- Activity time period
- Audio
- En | Sp Available in English and Spanish

Introduce the CERCA Question

Make sure students understand the term "public transportation." You can support understanding with visuals if public transportation isn't commonly used in your area. Make sure students understand the terms *eliminate* and *reliance*.

LEVEL 3-4 Expanding

▶ **ASK: What is something you rely on every day?**

Support language acquisition with the sentence frame:

> *I rely on _____.*

Connect the noun *reliance* and the verb *rely* for students.

LEVEL 4-5 Bridging

Ask students to brainstorm ways that your community could eliminate its reliance on cars. You might prompt students to think about alternate methods of transportation, more centralized housing options, or more use of technologies like going to school or work online.

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1 Connect

Have students log in to ThinkCERCA and click into this lesson.

LEVEL 3-4 Expanding

Read the overview aloud and discuss vocabulary. Then read the writing prompt aloud for students before they answer.

Complete Step 1: Connect.

LEVEL 4-5 Bridging

Complete Step 1: Connect.

Introduce Vocabulary

Use **Semantic Webbing** to introduce vocabulary.

NOTE: Some students will need support for additional words not listed on the student support page. Weave them into the instruction.

LEVEL 3-4 Expanding

Assign vocabulary words to small groups, or to partners. For small groups, assign a word and have them map it out on the whiteboard. Depending on student familiarity with the vocabulary words you can create webs for all new words, or just the most challenging words. When they are finished they can take a minute to explain it while classmates copy the map down. For partner work, have mixed ability pairs create maps for all assigned words in their notebooks.

After the routine have students add the focus words to their word notebooks.

LEVEL 4-5 Bridging

Have students work in pairs to write their own definition of the word in English. Next, have them brainstorm an image or mental picture to illustrate each word.

After the routine have students add the focus words to their word notebooks.

INTRODUCE

Introduce the Summary En | Sp

Remind students that this is a summary for the passage they will read. Point out the Vocabulary as you read.

LEVEL 3-4 Expanding

Have students read the Spanish version on the student support page, if applicable, before you read the summary aloud and have students follow along.

LEVEL 4-5 Bridging

Ask a student to read aloud the summary in English to practice their fluency.

2 Read

Have students read the text, using Vocabulary from the student support page as appropriate.

LEVEL 3-4 Expanding

Read comprehension questions with students before they begin reading the passage.

Complete Step 2: Read.

Discuss comprehension questions. Point out key vocabulary words in the text, especially as they are relevant to finding answers.

LEVEL 4-5 Bridging

Complete Step 2: Read.

Discuss comprehension questions. Point out key vocabulary words in the text, especially as they are relevant to finding answers.

3 Engage with the Text

NOTE: If you have concerns that your students are struggling with comprehension, you may wish to work with them on Step 4: Summarize before Step 3: Engage with the Text.

LEVEL 3-4 Expanding

Model highlighting the text for students.

Complete Step 3: Engage with the Text.

Use the following sentence frames to discuss the highlights students made.

_____ *is evidence provided by Styer in favor of Perugia's transportation system. This could serve as a model for other cities because _____.*
On the other hand, _____ is one piece of evidence provided by Mitchell-Larson to demonstrate why Perugia's transportation system would be problematic for other cities because _____.

LEVEL 4-5 Bridging

Complete Step 3: Engage with the Text.

Discuss the highlighting students did. Ask students to share their highlights and notes, and use the following sentence stems to support student engagement in the conversation.

Styer states that Perugia's transportation system could be a good model for other cities because _____ and _____.
Mitchell-Larson counters this claim by citing evidence such as _____. He believes the Perugia model would be problematic for other cities because _____.

4 Summarize

Prepare students to write a CERCA by having them summarize the text.

LEVEL 3-4 Expanding

Complete a summary of the article together using either the suggested sentence frames below or the stems in the product. Encourage students to use Vocabulary from the lesson.

Use the following sentence frames to create a summary.

> *In these articles, two authors express differing perspectives on _____.*
>
> *Rachael Styer argues that public transportation could be _____ based on _____.*
>
> *However, Eli Mitchell-Larson claims that _____ because _____.*

Complete Step 4: Summarize.

LEVEL 4-5 Bridging

Complete Step 4: Summarize.

Review the summaries to ensure that all students understand the big ideas of the passage. Encourage students to use Vocabulary from the lesson.

5 Build Your Argument

Practice creating a CERCA together using the CERCA graphic organizer (online or offline) and the leveled frames below and on the student support pages. Remind students that some of their evidence can come from their highlighting work.

> **NOTE:** You may wish to have students orally respond to the CERCA question using a Listening and Speaking Routine instead of writing a response.

LEVEL 3-4 Expanding

Use the following sentence frames to complete the CERCA graphic organizer.

> Claim *People in the United States [can/cannot] eliminate their reliance on cars*
> Reason *because _____.*
> Evidence *Styer contends that light rail systems _____,*
> Reasoning *which means that commuters _____.*
> Counterargument *It may appear that it [is/is not] possible for people in the United States to stop using cars. However, it is actually _____.*

Complete Step 5: Build Your Argument.

LEVEL 4-5 Bridging

Have students share their thoughts with the group.

Use the following sentence frames to complete the CERCA graphic organizer.

> Claim *It [is/is not] possible for people in the United States to eliminate their reliance on cars*
> Reason *because _____.*
> Evidence *For example, Styer contends that light rail systems _____,*
> Reasoning *which means that commuters _____.*
> Counterargument *It may appear that _____. However, _____.*
> Evidence *On the other hand, Mitchell-Larson argues that if people lived in a place like _____ they might _____,*
> Reasoning *and that could result in _____.*

Have students complete the graphic organizer with at least one more piece of evidence and associated reasoning. Assist as needed.

Complete Step 5: Build Your Argument.

6 Create Your CERCA

Have students write their CERCA in the lesson online so that you can provide feedback and monitor growth.

NOTE: Remind students that they can use the Copy all button to move their work into the text box.

LEVEL 3-4 Expanding

Use the responses students made in the graphic organizer to model writing in response to the CERCA question.

Have students reread their draft. Then have them submit to complete Step 6: Write Your CERCA.

LEVEL 4-5 Bridging

Have students write their CERCA. Provide support as necessary. Remind students that they can use vocabulary words as they write.

Use this sentence frame to help students conclude their CERCA:

[Insert author's name] is correct when [he/she] argues that Perugia's model is _____ for cities in the United States.

Have students add a conclusion and then reread their draft. Then have them submit to complete Step 6: Write Your CERCA.

Complete Speaking and Listening Activities

Complete a whole group speaking and listening activity with all students who completed the grade level lesson. Prompt students to use the vocabulary from the passage in the activity.

LEVEL 3-4 Expanding

Do the **Think-Pair-Share** activity.

LEVEL 4-5 Bridging

Do the **Think-Pair-Share** activity.

Modify this activity by having students start with simple partner talk and then expand to small group discussion (4-6 students).

WRITE AND DISCUSS

![ThinkCERCA™]

LESSON   Smarter Ways to Get from Here to There

CERCA QUESTION   Is it possible for people in the United States to eliminate their reliance on cars in favor of public transportation?

Vocabulary

*accessible (adj.): easy to get to and use

*adapted (verb): changed in order to be useful for a new purpose

aqueduct (noun): a structure through which flowing water is directed

commuters (noun): people who travel along the same route regularly, usually to and from work

*compelling (adj.): causing people to pay attention

convey (verb): get across; communicate

de-incentivizing (verb): discouraging

*eliminating (verb): getting rid of

*fossil fuel emissions (noun): carbon dioxide and other gases released when coal, oil, and gas are burned

inherently (adv.): naturally

*insight (noun): a clear understanding

interlocking (adj.): things connected tightly together

Vocabulary continued

laudable (adj.): worthy of praise
medieval (adj.): relating to the Middle Ages
*perpetuate (verb): continue
seamlessly (adv.): in a smoothly continuous way
*streamline (verb): make more efficient
suburbia (noun): the outlying residential areas of a city
transit system (noun): a network of buses, trains, or trams that provide transportation for a lot of people at once along established routes in a specific area
*unsustainable (adj.): not being able to last for a long time
void (noun): an empty space

Smarter Ways to Get from Here to There

Is it possible for people in the United States to eliminate their reliance on cars in favor of public transportation?

Summary

This article provides two different perspectives on various public transit solutions that have been adopted in cities around the world.

One point of view:

For mid-sized European cities like Perugia, Italy, concepts like MiniMetrò - a tram-style transit system - are a unique solution to an ages-old transportation problem: the modern city is built atop and among the narrow streets of the hilly medieval city, causing motorized transport in and out to be challenging. Although the concept of a rail system and escalators is nothing new to most city planners, the MiniMetrò offers valuable insight into a future in which commuters and long-distance travelers can be less reliant on personal forms of transportation. Movement towards easily accessible, interlocking mass transit systems offer cities opportunities to reduce air and noise pollution, which accompanies motor traffic into downtown areas.

A second point of view:

In an effort to tackle congestion in crowded city centers, some major cities like London have tried charging large, blanket fees to anyone who wants to drive within a central area. Although this is a laudable strategy, the author appreciates Perugia's efforts to reduce car traffic, which focus on providing effective public transportation alternatives instead of simply de-incentivizing driving.

In suburban areas, however, solutions like Perugia's are not likely to work. Developing a public transportation system to serve this expanding, low-density suburbia could merely perpetuate an inherently unsustainable lifestyle in which every family owns a large, isolated home and multiple cars. The ultimate solution might be to provide people with compelling reasons to stay in dense urban environments instead of moving to the suburbs in the first place.

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LESSON TITLE

Smarter Ways to Get from Here to There

CERCA QUESTION

Is it possible for people in the United States to eliminate their reliance on cars in favor of public transportation?

¿Es posible que las personas de los Estados Unidos eliminen su dependencia de los automóviles para favorecer el transporte público?

Vocabulary

English	Español
*accessible (adj.): easy to get to and use	***accesible** (adjetivo): fácil de conseguir y usar
*adapted (verb): changed in order to be useful for a new purpose	***adaptar** (verbo): modificar con el fin de ser útil para un nuevo propósito
aqueduct (noun): a structure through which flowing water is directed	**acueducto** (sustantivo): una estructura a través de la cual se dirige el agua que fluye
commuters (noun): people who travel along the same route regularly, usually to and from work	**viajeros cotidianos** (sustantivo): personas que viajan a lo largo de la misma ruta con regularidad, por lo general de la casa al trabajo y viceversa
*compelling (adj.): causing people to pay attention	***atractivo** (adjetivo): algo que hace que la gente preste atención
convey (verb): get across; communicate	**transmitir** (verbo): hacer que llegue al otro; comunicar
de-incentivizing (verb): discouraging	**desincentivar** (verbo): desalentar
*eliminating (verb): getting rid of	***eliminar** (verbo): deshacerse de algo
*fossil fuel emissions (noun): carbon dioxide and other gases released when coal, oil, and gas are burned	***emisiones de combustibles fósiles** (sustantivo): dióxido de carbono y otros gases liberados cuando el carbón, el petróleo y el gas se queman
inherently (adv.): naturally	**intrínsecamente** (adverbio): naturalmente

Vocabulary continued

*insight (noun): a clear understanding	***conocimiento** (sustantivo): una comprensión clara
interlocking (adj.): things connected tightly together	**convergente** (adjetivo): que está conectado estrechamente
laudable (adj.): worthy of praise	**loable** (adjetivo): digno de elogio
medieval (adj.): relating to the Middle Ages	**medieval** (adjetivo): en relación con la Edad Media
*perpetuate (verb): continue	***perpetuar** (verbo): continuar
seamlessly (adv.): in a smoothly continuous way	**fluidamente** (adverbio): suavemente o de una manera continua
*streamline (verb): make more efficient	***dinamizar** (verbo): hacer que algo sea más eficiente
suburbia (noun): the outlying residential areas of a city	**suburbios** (sustantivo): las zonas residenciales de la periferia de una ciudad
transit system (noun): a network of buses, trains, or trams that provide transportation for a lot of people at once along established routes in a specific area	**sistema de tránsito** (sustantivo): una red de autobuses, trenes o tranvías que proporcionan transporte a una gran cantidad de personas a la vez a lo largo de rutas establecidas en un área específica
*unsustainable (adj.): not being able to last for a long time	***insostenible** (adjetivo): que no durará por mucho tiempo
void (noun): an empty space	**vacío** (sustantivo): un espacio hueco

![ThinkCERCA™ logo]

Smarter Ways to Get from Here to There

Is it possible for people in the United States to eliminate their reliance on cars in favor of public transportation?

¿Es posible que las personas de los Estados Unidos eliminen su dependencia de los automóviles para favorecer el transporte público?

Summary

English This article provides two different perspectives on various public transit solutions that have been adopted in cities around the world.

One point of view:
For mid-sized European cities like Perugia, Italy, concepts like MiniMetrò - a tram-style **transit system** - are a unique solution to an ages-old transportation problem: the modern city is built atop and among the narrow streets of the hilly **medieval** city, causing motorized transport in and out to be challenging. Although the concept of a rail system and escalators is nothing new to most city planners, the MiniMetrò offers valuable **insight** into a future in which **commuters** and long-distance travelers can be less reliant on personal forms of transportation. Movement towards easily **accessible, interlocking** mass transit systems offer cities opportunities to reduce air and noise pollution which accompanies motor traffic into downtown areas.

A second point of view:
In an effort to tackle congestion in crowded city centers, some major cities like London have tried charging large, blanket fees to anyone who wants to drive within a central area. Although this is a **laudable** strategy, I appreciate Perugia's efforts to reduce car traffic, which focus on providing effective public transportation alternatives instead of simply **de-incentivizing** driving.

In suburban areas, however, solutions like Perugia's are not likely to work. Developing a public transportation system to serve this expanding, low-density **suburbia** could merely **perpetuate** an **inherently unsustainable** lifestyle in which every family owns a large, isolated home and multiple cars. The ultimate solution might be to provide people with **compelling** reasons to stay in dense urban environments instead of moving to the suburbs in the first place.

Español Este artículo proporciona dos perspectivas diferentes sobre varias soluciones al transporte público que se han adoptado en ciudades de todo el mundo.

Un punto de vista:
Para algunas ciudades europeas medianas como Perugia, Italia, conceptos como MiniMetrò - un **sistema de tránsito** estilo tranvía - son una solución única a un problema antiguo de transporte: la ciudad moderna está construida encima y entre calles estrechas de la ciudad **medieval** entre las colinas, haciendo que el transporte motorizado sea un gran desafío.

Summary _{continued}

Aunque el concepto de un sistema de rieles y escaleras mecánicas no es nada nuevo para la mayoría de los planificadores de ciudades, el MiniMetrò ofrece **conocimiento** valioso sobre un futuro en el que los **viajeros cotidianos** y los viajeros de larga distancia puedan depender menos de las formas de transporte personal. Pasar a sistemas **convergentes y accesibles** de sistemas de tránsito masivo ofrece a las ciudades oportunidades para reducir la contaminación del aire y el ruido que acompaña la circulación de automóviles en las áreas del centro.

Un segundo punto de vista:
En un esfuerzo por hacer frente a la congestión en el centro de las ciudades atestadas, algunas de las principales ciudades como Londres han tratado de cobrar altas tasas a cualquier persona que quiera conducir dentro de un área central. Aunque se trata de una estrategia **loable**, aprecio los esfuerzos de Perugia por reducir el tráfico de automóviles, que se enfocan en proporcionar alternativas eficaces de transporte público en lugar de simplemente **desincentivar** la conducción.

Sin embargo, en las zonas suburbanas las soluciones como la de Perugia, probablemente no funcionarían. Desarrollar un sistema de transporte público para servir a estos **suburbios** en expansión con poca población, podría meramente **perpetuar** un estilo de vida **intrínsecamente** insostenible en el que cada familia tiene una casa grande, aislada y varios autos.

La última solución podría ser proporcionar a las personas razones **atractivas** para quedarse en entornos urbanos densos en lugar de mudarse a los suburbios en primer lugar.

Smarter Ways to Get from Here to There

Is it possible for people in the United States to eliminate their reliance on cars in favor of public transportation?

4 Summarize

In these articles, two authors express differing perspectives on

_____.

Rachael Styer argues that public transportation could be

_____ *based on* _____.

However, Eli Mitchell-Larson claims that _____

because _____.

5 Build Your Argument

Claim *People in the United States [can/cannot] eliminate their*

reliance on cars

Reason *because* _____.

Evidence *Styer contends that light rail systems* _____,

Reasoning *which means that commuters* _____.

Counterargument *It may appear that it [is/is not] possible for people*

in the United States to stop using cars. However, it is actually

_____.

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Is it possible for people in the United States to eliminate their reliance on cars in favor of public transportation?

❺ Build Your Argument

Claim *It [is/is not] possible for people in the United States to eliminate their reliance on cars*

Reason *because _____.*

Evidence *For example, Styer contends that light rail systems*

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Reasoning *which means that commuters _____.*

Counterargument *It may appear that _____.*

However, _____.

Evidence *On the other hand, Mitchell-Larson argues that if people lived in a place like _____ they might _____,*

Reasoning *and that could result in _____.*

❻ Create Your CERCA

[Insert author's name] is correct when [he/she] argues that

Perugia's model is _____

for cities in the United States.