

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 **Public Transportation: Who Pays the Bill?**

RESOURCES

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

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

CERCA QUESTION How should public transportation be funded?

Introduce the CERCA Question



Introduce the question by making sure students understand what public transportation is and then asking students how often they use it. Make sure students understand the concept of funding.

1 Connect



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

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

► **ASK: Do you use public transportation?**

Support language acquisition with the following sentence frame:

I [do/do not] use public transportation because _____.

► **ASK: Do you think that public transportation is important to our community? Why or why not?**

Public transportation [is/is not] important to our community because _____.

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 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 discuss the kinds of public transportation they know about in their community and whether or not they think public transportation is important. If public transportation is not commonly used in your community, spend some time explaining the different types used around the country with supporting visuals.

LEVEL 4-5 Bridging

Complete Step 1: Connect.

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 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.

One benefit of raising fare prices to pay for public transportation is _____.

One benefit of raising taxes to pay for public transportation is _____.

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.

One benefit of raising fare prices to pay for public transportation is _____, but the downside is _____.


One benefit of raising taxes to pay for public transportation is _____, but the downside is _____.

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.

Public transportation is _____.


One way to pay for public transportation is to raise fares, which has the benefit of _____ **but the downsides of** _____.

Another option is to raise taxes, which some say is a good thing because _____, **but others say is unfair 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 *Improvements in public transit systems [should/should not] be funded by the government*

Reason *because* _____.

Evidence *Keeping public transport effective means* _____.

Reasoning *and the cost of this should fall on* _____.

 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 *Fares [should/should not] be raised in order to fund improvements in public transit systems*

Reason *because* _____.


Evidence *Keeping public transport effective means* _____,

Reasoning *and the cost of this should fall on* _____.

Evidence *Today, many people argue that* _____,

Reasoning *which implies that* _____.

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:
The best way to fund public transportation is _____.

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).

Vocabulary

bonds (noun): legal agreements that guarantee the government will pay a sum of money by a specific date

*burden (noun): stress; hardship

counterintuitive (adj.): opposite of what is expected

domino effect (noun): a situation in which one action can cause a series of things to happen

*efficiently (adj.): quickly

emit (verb): release

*fares (noun): the amount of money charged for transportation

finance (verb): provide money

grants (noun): money given for a specific cause without needing to be paid back

*inflation (noun): an increase in the prices of goods and services

*infrastructure (noun): public projects such as streets, bridges, water lines, and sewers

maintenance (noun): the work needed to support or keep up a building or structure

Vocabulary continued

| |
|--|
| occupant (noun): person who stays in one place |
| revenue (noun): the money generated from the sale of a good or service |
| tends (verb): is likely to |
| urged (verb): encouraged |

Summary

Most people agree that public transportation, especially in large cities, is a valuable system. But the infrastructure of these systems requires a lot of maintenance and improvements. Who should be responsible for paying the bills that keep a public transportation system working effectively and efficiently? Should it be funded by the passengers? Or should it be funded by the government through taxes or grants?

On the one hand, if the public transportation system is improved, it can create a positive domino effect. Better transportation means more riders. More passengers mean more revenue from ticket sales. More money from tickets means more money for improvements and repairs. Raising the average fares on public transportation can often earn much of the cost needed to maintain the system's infrastructure. However, some lower income riders frequently struggle with meeting the new rates. The occasional rider may not mind paying a quarter more for a ticket here and there. But the regular passenger on a strict budget might find that that same quarter multiplied by two trips a day, five days a week is a significant burden. Also, people object to having to pay for public transit through taxes, especially if they don't use it.

It is easy to agree on having a safe and efficient public transportation system. It is far less simple to decide how to properly fund those services.

Public Transportation: Who Pays the Bill?

How should public transportation be funded?

¿De qué forma se debería financiar el transporte público?

Vocabulary

English

bonds

(noun): legal agreements that guarantee the government will pay a sum of money by a specific date

***burden**

(noun): stress; hardship

counterintuitive

(adj.): opposite of what is expected

domino effect

(noun): a situation in which one action can cause a series of things to happen

***efficiently**

(adj.): quickly

emit

(verb): release

***fares**

(noun): the amount of money charged for transportation

finance

(verb): provide money

grants

(noun): money given for a specific cause without needing to be paid back

***inflation**

(noun): an increase in the prices of goods and services

Español

bonos

(sustantivo): acuerdos legales que garantizan que el gobierno pagará una suma de dinero en una fecha específica

***carga**

(sustantivo): estrés; obligación

contradictorio

(adjetivo): lo contrario de lo que se espera

efecto dominó

(sustantivo): una situación en la que una acción puede causar que sucedan una serie de cosas

***eficientemente**

(adjetivo): rápidamente

emitir

(verbo): publicar

***tarifas**

(sustantivo): la cantidad de dinero que se cobra por el transporte

financiar

(verbo): proporcionar dinero

subsidios

(sustantivo): dinero donado para una causa específica, sin necesidad de ser devuelto

***inflación**

(sustantivo): un aumento en los precios de los bienes y servicios

Vocabulary continued

***infrastructure**

(noun): public projects such as streets, bridges, water lines, and sewers

***infraestructura**

(sustantivo): proyectos públicos como calles, puentes, líneas de agua y desagüe

maintenance

(noun): the work needed to support or keep up a building or structure

mantenimiento

(sustantivo): el trabajo necesario para sostener o mantener un edificio o estructura

occupant

(noun): person who stays in one place

ocupante

(sustantivo): persona que se queda en un solo lugar

revenue

(noun): the money generated from the sale of a good or service

ingreso

(sustantivo): el dinero generado por la venta de un bien o servicio

tends

(verb): is likely to

tender

(verbo): ser probable

urged

(verb): encouraged

instar

(verbo): animar

Public Transportation: Who Pays the Bill?

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Summary

English Most people agree that public transportation, especially in large cities, is a valuable system. But the infrastructure of these systems requires a lot of maintenance and improvements. Who should be responsible for paying the bills that keep a public transportation system working effectively and efficiently? Should it be funded by the passengers? Or should it be funded by the government through taxes or grants? On the one hand, if the public transportation system is improved, it can create a positive domino effect. Better transportation means more riders. More passengers mean more revenue from ticket sales. More money from tickets means more money for improvements and repairs. Raising the average fares on public transportation can often earn much of the cost needed to maintain the system's infrastructure. However, some lower income riders frequently struggle with meeting the new rates. The occasional rider may not mind paying a quarter more for a ticket here and there. However, the regular passenger on a strict budget might find that that same quarter multiplied by two trips a day, five days a week is a significant burden. However, people also object to having to pay for public transit through taxes, especially if they don't use it. It is easy to agree on having a safe and efficient public transportation system. It is far less simple to decide how to properly fund those services.

Español La mayoría de las personas están de acuerdo en que el transporte público, especialmente en las grandes ciudades, es un sistema valioso. Pero la infraestructura de estos sistemas requiere mucho mantenimiento y mejoras. ¿Quién debería ser responsable de pagar las facturas por mantener un sistema de transporte público funcionando eficazmente? ¿Deben ser financiadas por los pasajeros? ¿O deben ser financiadas por el gobierno a través de impuestos o subsidios? Por una parte, si el sistema de transporte público se mejora, se puede crear un efecto dominó positivo. Mejor medio de transporte significa más usuarios. Más pasajeros significan más ingresos por venta de boletos. Más dinero de los boletos significa más dinero para mejoras y reparaciones. El aumento de las tarifas promedio en el transporte público a menudo puede ganar gran parte del costo necesario para mantener la infraestructura del sistema. Sin embargo, algunos de los usuarios de más bajos ingresos a menudo tienen problemas para pagar nuevas tarifas. Puede ser que al usuario ocasional no le importe pagar más cada cierto tiempo. Sin embargo, los viajeros regulares tienen un presupuesto estricto y podrían encontrar que esa cantidad multiplicada por dos viajes al día, cinco días a la semana sea una carga significativa. Sin embargo, la gente también se opone a tener que pagar por el transporte público a través de impuestos, sobre todo si no lo usan. Es fácil estar de acuerdo en tener un sistema de transporte público seguro y eficiente. Es mucho menos sencillo decidir la forma de financiar adecuadamente esos servicios.

4 Summarize

Public transportation is _____.

One way to pay for public transportation is to raise fares, which has the benefit of _____

but the downsides of _____.

Another option is to raise taxes, which some say is a good thing because _____,

but others say is unfair because _____.

5 Build Your Argument

Claim *Improvements in public transit systems [should/should not] be funded by the government*

Reason *because* _____.

Evidence *Keeping public transport effective means*
_____.

Reasoning *and the cost of this should fall on*
_____.

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Reason *because* _____.

Evidence *Keeping public transport effective means*
_____.

Reasoning *and the cost of this should fall on*
_____.

Evidence *Today, many people argue that*
_____.

Reasoning *which implies that* _____.

6 Create Your CERCA

The best way to fund public transportation is
_____.