In the first half of the 1900s, before airplane travel was common, many people traveled by rail. Railroads moved about 80% of passengers and goods.

Today, passenger trains carry more than 5% of travelers between cities. Still, more people are riding the train every year. Trains serve them.

Train travel today
Between 1945 and about 1970, railroads lost a lot of money. It cost a lot to run the railroads, and many people were choosing to fly or drive instead. The government was concerned about keeping passenger trains in business. In 1971, Amtrak took over the operation of the passenger trains in the United States. Amtrak is a company partly financed (or paid for) by the U.S. government.

Why ride the train?
Some people don’t like to fly. Others feel more comfortable on the train, where they can move around. Some trains get people to their destinations in about as much time as it would take to fly. Some people like to take the train to help save energy. Moving many people in a train is more energy-efficient than moving those same people in many cars.

Resources
On the Web:
• bit.ly/MaPlarium
At the library:
• “The Transcontinental Railroad” by Joan Perritano
• “Passenger Trains” by Jenna Lee Gleiner
• “Freight Trains” by Nikki Bruno Clapper

Train Fact: The Auto Train, which travels between Virginia and Florida, carries people and their cars.

Passenger trains
Two types of trains carry passengers:
• Commuter trains carry people around a city or to and from their homes outside the city. They generally have a lot of seats but no dining or sleeping cars.
• Intercity trains carry passengers longer distances, sometimes overnight. Overnight trains often have sleeping cars and dining cars.

Who’s who on the crew?
• A conductor takes tickets and is responsible for the safe operation of the train. He is the first one off the train when it pulls into a station.
• Assistant conductors carry two-way radios and stay in touch with the engineer.
• Engineers and assistant engineers run the train.
• The steward manages the dining car. The chef and cooks prepare the meals, and waiters serve them.

Try ’n’ Find
Words that remind us of trains are hidden in this puzzle.

Try ‘n’ Find
Words that remind us of trains are hidden in this puzzle.

1. facial hair (8)
2. it comes before thunder (9)
3. take prisoner (7)
4. it comes before a city (9)
5. a city or to and from their homes outside the city (8)
6. keep in touch with the engineer (9)
7. the faster one, Banyan, made an epic 4,500-mile journey from East Africa to China in just seven days. (13)

Eco Note
Birding enthusiasts used GPS to track a pair of common cuckoos as the faster one, Banyan, made an epic 4,500-mile journey from East Africa to China in just seven days. Banyan reached China’s Yunnan province on May 8, while Onon paused briefly in northeastern India to rest. Both, and others of their species, are in a race to reach their summer breeding grounds in eastern Mongolia, where they will compete with others for the best spots to raise their young.

On the Web:
• bit.ly/flying

For later:
Look in your newspapers for stories about transportation.

Mini Jokes
Casey: Why should you never complain about the price of a train ticket?
Carrie: It’s bound to be fare!

Cook’s Corner
Energy Snack Mix
You’ll need:
• 1 cup dried apricots, chopped
• 1 cup dark chocolate yogurt raisins
• 1 cup sunflower seeds
• 1 cup walnuts, chopped

What to do:
1. Mix all ingredients in a large bowl.
2. Transfer to plastic bag or covered bowl for storage. Makes 5 cups.

7 Little Words for Kids
Use the letters in the boxes to make a word with the same meaning as the clue. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in the solution. Each letter can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

1. take prisoner (7)
2. handicap (5)
3. blood-pumping organ (5)
4. it comes before thunder (5)
5. Scar to Mutua (7)
6. bring in the crops (7)
7. facial hair (8)

The NEW Mini Spy Booklets volumes 4 and 5! Find them under Book Section I of your local toy store or order them from The Mini Page. Volumes 1, 2, and 3 are still available. Join the Mini Spy and other classic characters from The Mini Page in adventure-filled books for kids ages 6–10.

The NEW Mini Spy Booklets volumes 4 and 5! Find them under Book Section I of your local toy store or order them from The Mini Page. Volumes 1, 2, and 3 are still available. Join the Mini Spy and other classic characters from The Mini Page in adventure-filled books for kids ages 6–10.

Mini Spy
Info: 844-426-1256 for more information.
Mail payment to:
Editions Michael Universal
Mini Page Books
1130 Widym, Kansas City, MO 64116.

Eco Note
Birding enthusiasts used GPS to track a pair of common cuckoos as the faster one, Banyan, made an epic 4,500-mile journey from East Africa to China in just seven days. Banyan reached China’s Yunnan province on May 8, while Onon paused briefly in northeastern India to rest. Both, and others of their species, are in a race to reach their summer breeding grounds in eastern Mongolia, where they will compete with others for the best spots to raise their young.

For later:
Look in your newspapers for stories about transportation.

Teachers:
Follow and interact with The Mini Page on Facebook!