Lesson Plan © Easy Access English

Railways

Preparation time 15 minutes

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

You will learn new technical railway vocabulary, practice the past tenses and practice dialogues as well as doing comprehension practice.

Activity 1 questions

1. Do you enjoy travelling on public transport?
2. Have you travelled on a train before – can you talk about a good experience and a bad experience?
3. What is the longest journey you have taken on a train?
4. What do you think about the French railways?
5. What do you know about the history of trains as a mode of transport (or SNCF)?

Activity 2

- Have a look at this picture – what does it show?
- What does it tell you about railway construction?
- What else can you comment on about the picture?



Activity 3 – Railway vocabulary
(check the link for more vocabulary) - http://www.railway-technical.com/newglos.shtml
Match the railway vocabulary with the correct definition

VOCABULARY
1. up line
2. down line
3. turnout
4. track gauge
5. tamping
6. sleepers
7. shuttle
8. running rails
9. rail anchor
10. ballast
11. bank
12. bogie
13. buffer stop
14. diamond crossing
15. floating slab track



DEFINITIONS
A. a service operating back and forth between two stations with no intermediate stop
B. a track system with a concrete base mounted on rubber pads to reduce vibration
C. where a single track splits to become two tracks
D. the track used by trains that proceeds towards the main terminus
E. the point where two tracks cross without connection
F. the part of the track, made of wood, concrete, or sometimes steel, which are used to secure the rails at the correct gauge
G. the track used by trains that proceeds away from the main terminus
H. the process where ballast is packed around the sleepers of a track to ensure the correct position for location, speed and curvature
I. a section of a railway line on a gradient
J. structure at the end of the track to prevent vehicles proceeding off the end of the line
K. a device attached to the base of a rail to keep the rail from moving under traffic
L. the distance between the rails
M. the two rails of a track upon which the wheels of the train rest
N. a truck used in pairs under long railway vehicles which allows it to turn as the track curves
O. the material used to form the road bed of a railway track

Activity 4 – Read the paragraph and identify past tenses, then answer the comprehension questions

(check this link to read more about it - **http://www.sncf.com/en/meet-sncf/sncf-history**)

On 5 May 1821, the French government received a request for a concession to build a 21-km rail line from Saint-Étienne to Andrézieux, near Lyon.
Completed in July 1827, the line was used to transport coal between the Saint-Étienne mines and the banks of the Loire River.

The trains, which consisted of three mine cars, were powered by gravity on downhill trips. Horses pulled them back up until 1844. The line began official operation on 1 October 1828.

On 24 August 1837, Queen Marie-Amélie of Bourbon-Sicily, wife of King Louis-Philippe I, officially inaugurated the first rail line departing from Paris—which was also the first built specifically for passenger traffic.

The new line served 18,000 passengers on its very first day in operation. Enormously successful from the beginning, it was said to carry twenty times as much traffic as the road that ran parallel to it. The Paris-LePecq line was built by Émile Péreire, who won the concession and invested six million francs to found the Compagnie du Chemin de Fer de Paris à Saint-Germain “at his own risk”.

In the 15 years from 1827 to 1842, only 569 km of line were built in France, but it was clear that rail could play a vital role in economic growth—advancing the industrial revolution, facilitating trade and making people more mobile.

Baptiste Alexis Victor Legrand, the nation’s Superintendent of Civil Engineering, presented the government with a master plan for a full-fledged national rail network—a five-pointed star that radiated out of Paris to the Belgian and German borders, the English Channel, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. This meant building five new lines: Paris-Lille, Paris-Strasbourg, Paris-Le Havre, Paris-Lyon-Marseille, and Paris-Bordeaux-Hendaye.
As the great rail companies were founded, they built monumental stations all over Paris.

Questions

1. When was the first railway line built in France?
2. How were the first trains powered?
3. What could railways play an important part in?
4. How long did it take to build just under 600km of railway line
5. Who offered the plan to build major lines running out of Paris?

Activity 5 – Use the correct past tense in the gaps using the verbs given
(check this link to read more about it - **https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGV_Sud-Est**)
The history of the LGV Sud-Est railway line which links Paris to Lyon

- 10 July 1967: SNCF research management _____ project C 03 on high speed, titled "Rail Transport Possibilities through New Infrastructure" – **(to launch)**
- 26 March 1971: The new line project _____ by inter-ministerial committee – **(to approve)**
- 23 March 1976: declaration of public utility, the decree _____ by Jacques Chirac, prime minister **– (to sign)**
- 7 December 1976: works _____ at Écuisses (Saône-et-Loire) – **(to commence)**
- 14 June 1979: first rails laid near Montchanin (Saône-et-Loire)
- 20 November 1980: track laying _____ (Cluny) – **(to end)**
- 26 February 1981: trainset no. 16 (TGV Sud-Est) _____ the world record for rail speed at 380 km/h between Courcelles-Frémois (Côte-d'Or) and Dyé (Yonne) in a gradually descending portion of the line - **(to break)**
- 22 September 1981: of first section (Saint-Florentin to Montchanin) _____ by President of the Republic, François Mitterrand before commercial service _____ on 27 September - **(to inaugurate) (to begin)**
- 27 September 1981:

- 25 September 1983: service begins on northern section (Combs-la-Ville - Saint-Florentin)
- 31 August 1992: derailment at 270 km/h of TGV in Macon-Loché station; several waiting passengers on the platform are slightly injured by flying ballast
- 13 December 1992: service _____ on northern section of LGV Rhône-Alpes (from Montanay to Saint-Quentin-Fallavier) before 26 May 1994 when service _____ on LGV Interconnexion Est (connection with LGV Nord) – **(to begin)**
- March 1996: beginning of line renovation works (replacement of ballast and points, works designed to last until 2006)

2 June 1996: service _____ at the junction with Villeneuve-Saint-Georges by the Coubert triangle - **(to begin)**

Activity 6 -**Roleplays**

a. Your director wants to know the status of the current project, and you have just visited the railway site that is currently being built. Tell him what you saw and your thoughts on the progress you have made. He is your manager so you need to tell him good news and make it sound like everything is going smoothly.
b. Your friend thinks bla-bla car is a better alternative to trains. Argue against him by showing the advantages and benefits of railway travel.
c. You are looking to hire another person to help construct the railway - tell them what their responsibilities will be, and their contribution to the overall project.
d. You are in a meeting talking about cut-backs. They might have to fire someone to keep in line with the budget, but you think there is another solution. Present it.

Activity 7 – watch the video and answer the questions

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=htraayYmKjI

1. How many miles of track are network rail responsible for?

2. What advantages do railways have over roads?

3. How many times safer is it to travel by train than by car?

4. Why is it so safe?

5. Where are their huge steel works?

6. How long is the production line?

7. How does the production process begin?

8. What is the process for making the lines?

9. Why do they get bent when they are hot?

10. Why do they want less joins in the railway tracks?

11. What are the four main types of degradation?

12. Which season do they see the most corrosion in the rail?

13. What are the different ways they check the condition of the tracks?

Activity 8 – Listen to the song and fill in the gaps

Mystery Train Junior Parker

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KbjWK6kTQg

Train I _____ , sixteen _____ long x 2
Well that _____, _____ train carry my baby _____
Train train, comin' on round the _____ x 2
Well it _____ my baby, it's gonna do it again

Train train, comin' on down the _____ x 2
Well it's _____ my baby, because she's mine all, all mine

What is he talking about in this song?

