

1.7 New Methods of Transportation, including the railway, steamships, cars, and aircraft

Railways: Connecting Canada Across Long Distances



*Script

S1

Person (left) : Canada is huge. Many places are far apart.

Person (right) : We need a way to connect the east and the west.

S2

Person (left) : Workers, including many Chinese labourers, built the railway in dangerous conditions.

Person (right) : The work was hard and risky.

S3

Train : The railway carries people, crops, and goods across long distances.

House : It helps new towns grow and connects the country.

Vocab	Easy Definition
railway	a system of tracks used by trains
distance	the amount of space between two places
labourer	a person who does difficult physical work
Chinese railway workers	Chinese labourers who helped build important Canadian railways
dangerous conditions	working situations that can cause serious injury or death
crop	a plant grown by farmers for food or sale
settlement	a place where people begin to live and build a community
trade	buying, selling, and moving goods

Easy Explanation:

Canada is very large, so travelling between the east and west was difficult. Railways helped connect distant parts of the country.

Building the railway was dangerous work. Many **Chinese railway workers** helped build tracks through mountains and difficult land. They often faced dangerous conditions, low pay, discrimination, and serious risks.

After the railway was built, trains could carry people, **crops**, and goods over long distances. New towns and **settlements grew** near railway lines, and **trade** became easier.

Steamships: Faster and More Reliable Water Travel



*Script

S1

Man : The wind is weak today. Sailing can be slow and uncertain.

Child : We need a faster way to move people and goods.

S2

Ship : This steamship uses an engine, so it does not depend only on the wind!

Ship 2 : Now travel on rivers and lakes is more reliable.

S3

Person (left) : Steamships carry passengers and goods more quickly.

Person (right) : They help connect towns and markets.

Vocab	Easy Definition
steamship	a ship powered by a steam engine
sailing ship	a ship that moves mainly because of wind
engine	a machine that provides power
reliable	able to work regularly and dependably
passenger	a person travelling in a ship or vehicle
goods	products or items that are moved or sold
market	a place or system where goods are bought and sold
connect	to link people or places together

Easy Explanation:

Before steamships, many ships depended on **wind**, so travel could be slow or uncertain. Steamships used **engines**, which made travel on rivers and lakes faster and more **reliable**.

Steamships could carry more **passengers** and **goods** between communities. They helped towns trade with larger **markets** and made different places easier to **connect**.

Cars: More Freedom and New Road Networks



*Script

S1

Person 1 : Cars let people travel without following train tracks.

Person 2 : We can leave when we want!

S2

Farmer : As more people buy cars, governments build roads and highways.

Truck driver : Trucks can deliver goods directly.

S3

Family : Cars give families more freedom to live and work in different places.

Blue car : But more cars also mean traffic and pollution.

Vocab	Easy Definition
automobile	another word for a car
railway track	the metal tracks that trains travel on
highway	a major road used for longer-distance travel
road network	a connected system of roads
truck	a road vehicle used to carry goods
deliver	to take goods to a person or place
mobility	the ability to move easily from one place to another
traffic	many vehicles moving or waiting on roads
pollution	harmful materials released into the environment

Easy Explanation:

Cars gave people more freedom because they did not have to follow train tracks or train schedules. People could choose when to leave and where to travel.

As more people used cars, governments built more roads and **highways**. **Trucks** also became important because they could **deliver** goods directly to stores, businesses, and communities.

Cars increased people's **mobility**, but more cars also created more **traffic** and **pollution**.

Aircraft: Reaching Remote Places Faster



*Script

S1

Person 1 : This early aircraft shows that people can travel through the air.

Person 2 : Flying could save a lot of time.

S2

Plane : Planes can reach remote places that are hard to reach by road or rail. We can carry mail, supplies, and people.

S3

Person 3 : Aircraft connect distant parts of Canada very quickly.

The tower : Long trips that took days can now take hours.

Vocab	Easy Definition
aircraft	a machine that can fly, such as an airplane

powered flight	flight using an engine
remote	far away from cities or major transportation routes
bush plane	a small plane used to reach remote areas
supplies	useful things such as food, tools, or medicine
mail	letters and packages sent to people
long-distance travel	travelling between places that are very far apart
travel time	the amount of time needed to reach a place
region	a large area of a country

Easy Explanation:

Early **aircraft** showed that people could travel through the air using engines. This created a much faster way to travel over long distances.

Aircraft were especially useful in Canada's **remote** areas. **Bush planes** could carry people, **mail**, and **supplies** to places that were difficult to reach by road or railway.

As air travel improved, aircraft connected distant **regions** of Canada much faster. Trips that once took days could eventually take only hours.

Final Summary

Easy explanation

Steamships made water travel faster and more reliable because they used engines instead of depending only on wind.

Railways connected distant parts of Canada and helped move people, crops, and goods over long distances.

Many Chinese labourers helped build the railway, often in dangerous conditions and while facing discrimination.

Cars gave people more freedom to travel and encouraged the growth of roads, highways, and truck transportation.

Aircraft made long-distance travel much faster and helped connect remote parts of Canada.

Check Your Understanding

1. Why were steamships more reliable than sailing ships?

2. How did railways help connect Canada?

3. What challenges did many Chinese railway workers face?

4. How did cars change the way people travelled?

5. Why did governments build more roads and highways?

6. Why were aircraft especially useful in Canada?

7. Which transportation technology do you think changed Canada the most? Use two facts to explain your answer.

Teacher Answer Key

1. Steamships used engines, so they did not depend only on wind and could travel more regularly and reliably.
2. Railways linked distant regions and allowed people, crops, and goods to move across long distances more quickly.
3. Many Chinese railway workers faced dangerous work, low pay, discrimination, injuries, and deaths during railway construction.
4. Cars gave people more freedom because they could travel without following railway tracks or train schedules.
5. Governments built more roads and highways because car and truck use increased and people needed better road networks.
6. Aircraft could reach remote places that were difficult to access by road or railway and could move people, mail, and supplies quickly.
7. Answers vary. Strong answers use two accurate facts and explain how one transportation technology changed travel, trade, settlement, or connections between regions.

Sources used for fact-checking

BC Curriculum — Social Studies 9: Political, social, economic, and technological revolutions

Parks Canada — History of early steam transportation and aviation in Canada

Canadian Museum of History — Canadian Pacific Railway and the Last Spike

Parks Canada — Railway development and transportation history in Canada

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