

WHERE CAN THE NAUGHTY BUS TAKE US GEOGRAPHICALLY?

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Chris starts our journey into playful geographies through the use of story.

Early years foundation stage and key stage 1 teachers love using the *Naughty Bus* (Oke, 2005) to engage pupils and develop their English, but the story also has the potential to develop mapping and fieldwork skills. After reading the story with your pupils, maximise geographical learning by carrying out the following fun, playful activities.

- Encourage pupils to draw a toy bus from above and the side to explain plan views. Make a plan of their desk to show routes the *Naughty Bus* takes as it drives around, knocking things over.
- Oke's (2005) *Naughty Bus* is from London, where many buildings are tall and the streets are busy – consider roads in your locality and take advantage of opportunities for traffic flow surveys.
- Make a town from construction materials – build up pupils' directional and positional language as they 'drive' a bus along streets. Encourage pupils to view the model town from the side and above. Take photographs of their 'town' from above and add labels to buildings.
- Set up a disaster zone where the *Naughty Bus* has caused havoc. As detectives, pupils can use plans of the room to mark on the scenes of the crimes.
- Use the picture of a bus stop queue to discuss where characters want to go and journeys the pupils have been on. Discuss why we queue at a bus stop.
- Set up a role-play area of a bus depot. Display local maps, routes, journeys, ticket prices and posters of places to visit and add geographical experiences.
- School site managers can provide school plans. Pupils first work out which rooms are shown, then identify and mark the locations from photographs that show the *Naughty Bus* causing mayhem or hiding.
- When the *Naughty Bus* causes trouble by driving through a plate of baked beans at lunchtime it is sent outdoors. Time for fieldwork: the bus asks 'What's that over there to the north/south/east/west?' to encourage use of compass directions. Pupils can sketch, annotate and label human and physical features, and add emoticons to different features to show their feelings. Record what they hear or smell to develop sense of place.
- Find where the *Naughty Bus* could have adventures in the playground and map each location. Satellite images can support drawing a map with aerial views. Make a story map with routes and locations for encounters.
- A viewing option on the National Library of Scotland (see web panel) and similar websites shows two maps from different times side-by-side. Use these for fieldwork, recording similarities, differences and changes over time.
- Develop numerical and quantitative skills through measurements – pupils work out how far the *Naughty Bus* travels to get from your classroom to different places around the school.
- The book offers opportunities to discuss sustainability. For example, the *Naughty Bus* brushes its teeth – pupils can investigate how much water it wastes by leaving the tap running. How could they persuade it to become a good bus by not wasting water?
- Tantalisingly, at the end of the book, we are told that the *Naughty Bus* is a night bus (Figure 1). Enter a pupil's postcode into TripGeo (see web panel)



Figure 1: *The Naughty Bus* spending the night with a pupil helps to take the play and the geography home too. Photo © Chris Trevor.

to compare animated views through the windscreen of the bus with a map. The bus could spend a night with a pupil, who shares its antics with the class.

Engaging purposeful play links this story to all curriculum areas, but make sure the geographical experiences are at the front of the queue.

Reference

Oke, J. (2005) *Naughty Bus*. Devon: Little Knowall Publishing.

WEB RESOURCES

Download a unit plan for the *Naughty Bus*: www.geography.org.uk/pg
 National Library of Scotland: maps.nls.uk/
 TripGeo: www.tripgeo.com/Directionsmap.aspx

Having taught all year groups in the primary range, Chris Trevor is now a freelance consultant and a member of the GA's Early Years and Primary Phase Committee.