

# **SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AT THE RAILWAY**

## **SOCIO-CULTURAL SIGNALS**

### **LEVEL**

Year 11

Geography Unit 2 Tourism: Issues and Challenges

### **ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION**

The study of tourism at local, regional and global scales emphasises the interconnection within and between places as well as the impacts, issues and challenges that arise from various forms of tourism. There is an interconnection between places tourists originate from and their destinations through the development of communication and transport infrastructure, employment, and cultural preservation and acculturation. The growth of tourism at all scales requires appropriate management to ensure it is environmentally, socially, culturally and economically sustainable.

Tourists are often attracted by features of historical or cultural interest. This makes Puffing Billy Railway an internationally marketable tourism destination in Victoria. At Puffing Billy Railway, we are always introducing new products, spaces, and opportunities to create an economically, environmental, social and cultural sustainable business.

Students will be given a research question at school and will collect data on their visit to the railway to support and answer this question. Students will use this data to create a report. This report can include both the primary data collected on the day and secondary data investigated back at school. The report must also include detailed analysis of this data.

### **THEME**

Area of Study 1 – Characteristics of Tourism

Area of Study 2 – Impact or tourism: issues and challenges

### **MATERIALS REQUIRED**

- “Socio-cultural signals” worksheet
- Access to a computer and the internet

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

#### **PRE-VISIT**

1. Teacher to introduce Puffing Billy Railway (PBR) as a tourism destination. Who is Puffing Billy Railway? Where is Puffing Billy Railway? Visit the PBR website ([www.puffingbilly.com.au](http://www.puffingbilly.com.au)) as a whole class activity and learn about the experiences on offer. Have a class discussion about PBR visitation:
  - When would it be busiest?
  - Domestic vs international visitors?
  - What do we think the capacity is?
2. What is socio-cultural value? Discuss as a whole class.
3. Teacher to decide If students are to work on individual projects or a whole group task. Teacher will assign students the below task to complete:
  - a. Determining the socio-cultural value of Puffing Billy Railway experiences.
4. Students to be given worksheet to use throughout their visit to PBR. Teacher to decide if students are to work individually or in groups.

## POST VISIT

If pre visit activities have not yet been completed, please refer to the above first.

1. On return from Puffing Billy Railway any data collected needs to be uploaded and collated in the appropriate way. If doing a whole class question, then this can be organised appropriately for everyone's use.
2. Students to be assigned an appropriate amount of time to work on the report. Teacher is to outline this timeline and expectations.
3. Students to work on report and hand it in via the assigned application by the due date.
4. To complete the subject the whole class should have an opportunity to view the findings and results to the research question and discuss any ideas for the future for PBR.

## ✔ SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

This is an individual or group task where student will present the information and data they have collected from their field-based investigations as a written report, annotated map, or professional graph.

Students will be assigned the following task to complete:

- Determining the Socio-Cultural Value of Puffing Billy Railway Experiences

Students will show their level of understanding through their written task and the collection of appropriate data during their excursion.

## 🔍 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**Puffing Billy Railways' Vision:** To excel in presentation of a heritage rail experience, which captures both the natural beauty and rich social history of Victoria's Dandenong Ranges.

**Puffing Billy Railways' Mission:** To restore and operate the Puffing Billy Railway as Australia's premier heritage steam railway, in a safe, efficient, and economically sustainable manner for the ongoing education, benefit and satisfaction of the community, customers and railway stakeholders, including staff and volunteers.

### TOURISM

Tourism is defined as the movement of people travelling away from and staying outside of their usual environment for more than 24 hours but not more than one consecutive year (United Nations World Tourism Organisation definition). Participation in tourism is affected by a number of demographic and social factors, such as age distribution, family lifecycle, level of education, occupation structure and population concentration. Tourists are often attracted by features of historical or cultural interest. These may include buildings and monuments, cultural festivals or re-enactments of historical events, or observations of a foreign culture in their usual social, economic and leisure activities.

### SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IMPACT

The development of tourism induces changes in the social character of a destination. Tourism is a globalized business activity and thus presents growing challenges in terms of traditional social culture. With the continuous development of the tourism industry, traditional social culture has changed dramatically at many World Heritage sites (WHSs). Additionally, the growing dependence of many regions' economies on the tourism industry has brought about an inexorable shift in the perception of many rural residents. These transformations include the impact of tourism development and its economic efficiency on inhabitants' traditional values, lifestyles, and interpersonal relationship in ancient villages serving as WHSs.

'Social impacts' is the term which describes the changes in the quality of life of the local residents of tourism destinations with interactions between tourists and the local residents lying at its heart. Changes that affect individuals' surroundings (architecture, arts, customs, rituals etc.) owing to influxes of tourists constitute cultural impacts. The enormous range of impacts include arts and crafts through to the fundamental behaviour and beliefs of individuals and collective groups (Sharpley, 2008; Sharpley & Telfer, 2014).

## **CURRICULUM LINKS**

### **Geography Skills – Fieldwork report**

(See Guidelines <https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/geography/Pages/Index.aspx>)

## **WORKSHEET – SOCIO-CULTURAL SIGNALS**

### **DETERMINING THE SOCIO-CULTURAL VALUE OF PUFFING BILLY RAILWAY EXPERIENCES**

What are the best / most valuable socio-cultural exhibits at Puffing Billy Railway?

#### **PRIMARY SOURCE DATA**

This Google form Socio-cultural signals at Puffing Billy Railway (google.com) is set up to show you how you might create a form that is like TripAdvisor. It will allow you to rate and comment on the socio-cultural value of some of Puffing Billy Railway's exhibits / experiences and interactions. It assumes you have a solid understanding of the concept of socio-cultural value.

Before you visit Puffing Billy Railway create your own form, perhaps using Google Forms, or even a hard copy similar to the one on the next page. When you visit, you and your fellow students should fill in the form after attending as many of the exhibits and experiences as possible. The more forms you jointly fill out, the better your data!

#### **PRESENTATION OF DATA**

##### **Back at school**

- Collate the data according to exhibits and values. You may wish to average the scores. Design appropriate graphs / maps to best explain this data.
- Look at the comments of all students. Use Wordle (<http://www.wordle.net/>) or a similar program to work out which words are most used for each exhibit. (You can run a word count from the language tab in Wordle).

##### **Conclusions**

Based on this data:

- What are the best / most valuable socio-cultural exhibits and experiences at Puffing Billy Railway?
- What sort of new exhibits would enhance Puffing Billy Railway's socio-cultural value? Remember many of the visitors are international!

##### **Evaluation**

- Given that these assessments have been made by year 11 students studying Tourism, how reliable do you think this data is?
- What should Puffing Billy Railway do to get better data?

## EXAMPLE SURVEY

1. Name of the exhibit/demonstration/interaction

Please Circle



|                      |                         |                             |   |                          |                                 |                           |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>TRAIN JOURNEY</b> | <b>BELGRAVE STATION</b> | <b>MENZIES CREEK MUSEUM</b> | <b>GREAT HALL AT LAKESIDE VISITORS CENTRE</b> | <b>EMERALD LAKE PARK</b> | <b>LAKESIDE VISITORS CENTRE</b> | <b>EDUCATION WORKSHOP</b> |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|

2. What value would you place on this as a learning experience

|                      |          |          |          |          |          |                           |
|----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------------------|
| <b>NOT VERY GOOD</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>EXCELLENT LEARNING</b> |
|----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------------------|

3. To what extent does this experience or space promote social interaction?

|                   |          |          |          |          |          |                          |
|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------|
| <b>NOT AT ALL</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>TO A LARGE EXTENT</b> |
|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------|

4. How well did the activity promote an understanding of culture and history?

|                          |          |          |          |          |          |                                   |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>NO CULTURAL VALUE</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>EXCEPTIONAL CULTURAL VALUE</b> |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------------------|

## REVIEW