

Second Story Press

Teaching Guide

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The Way to School

by Rosemary McCarney with Plan International

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SUMMARY

Around the world, children's experiences of going to school are wide and varied. For some, the journey of getting to school can be long and dangerous. This resource presents striking photographs of children conquering obstacles such as rivers, high cliffs, and bridges in their quest to be educated.

VOCABULARY

tsunami

typhoon

paddle

careful

basin

rugged

PREPARING TO READ *The Way to School*

- 1 Ask the children: How did you get to school today? Who in the class travelled the shortest distance? The longest distance?
- 2 Take a picture-walk through this book to show students some ways that children around the world travel to get to school. Have students identify obstacles that face some children in other countries.
- 3 Ask the children: Who has been to a school in another country? Or: Who knows someone who goes to a school in another country? How might they describe the school?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1 Read the text on the opening page of this book. Have the children answer the question:
“Even if you had a bad day now and then, wouldn’t you miss [school] if you could never go?”
Encourage the children to give reasons for their choices.
- 2 What are some reasons that students around the world might not be able to go to school? Even if students were allowed to go to school, what are some challenges they might face in getting there?
- 3 Read aloud the accompanying text of this book that explains what is happening in each of the photographs. Use one or two examples of photographs to have children determine what new information they can learn by examining the photographs.
- 4 Which of the ways of journeying to school would be the most fun? The scariest?

- 5 After reading *The Way to School*, have students list some problems or challenges that children around the world face in order to get to school. Which of these would be the most dangerous?
- 6 Using information from the photographs, what are some different countries represented in this book?
- 7 Some of the children in this book travel long distances for long times in order to go back and forth to school. Why aren't schools built closer to their homes? Have students offer suggestions about how to make the journey to school easier for the children.
- 8 On the final page of this book, the author writes:
“. . .what matters is that you get there. It's always worth the journey!”
Why are these words a good way to end this non-fiction book?

RESPONDING TO *The Way to School*

THINKING STEMS

Written and Talk Response

After listening to or reading *The Way to School*, the children can complete two or more of the following statements to help them think about the information that they learned from this book. As a follow-up, the children can share their responses in small groups or with the whole class.

I learned. . .

I feel. . .

This book reminded me of. . .

I wonder. . .

I want to know. . .

IDENTIFYING KEY VOCABULARY

Modes of Travel; Places of Travel

Students can work in groups of two or three to complete a T-chart that identifies the different ways children in this book travel to school (column one) and the different places that children need to travel through (column two).

COLUMN ONE	COLUMN TWO
Ways of travelling	Places of travel
paddle	rivers
float	tunnels
fly	high cliffs
climb	bridges
riding a donkey	snow
riding in a cart	
riding a buffalo	
pulled by a dog team	

VISUALIZING

Illustrating the Text

Tell the students to imagine that the pictures in this book were presented as illustrations and not photographs.

Have students create a drawing that might accompany ONE page of text that describes the journey of going to school.

HYPOTHESIZING

Designing the Perfect Classroom/School

Have students work alone or with a partner to design the perfect classroom (or the perfect school).

What might this school look like? What furniture and equipment might be included?

What materials would be needed to help the children learn? Remind them that a dedicated teacher and students who want to learn are often the best resources to include.

PERSUASIVE WRITING

Considering School Improvement

Have students prepare a persuasive letter to a school official in another country. In the letter students can offer two or three suggestions to convince the official to build a better school or create better learning conditions for students in their country.

To prepare for the activity, have students consider:

- a) reasons why the schools should be improved,
- b) consider questions they would ask the officials,
- c) offer suggestions about what might be done better to improve the journey to school.

FURTHER READING

OTHER BOOKS by Rosemary McCarney from *Second Story Press*

AS A BOY Boys advocate for girls and women's rights.

EVERY DAY IS MALALA DAY A glimpse into the life of leader of human rights and champion of education for all, Malala Yousafzai.

BECAUSE I AM A GIRL (with Jen Albaugh) An informative and inspiring book about eight young girls around the world.

WHERE WILL I LIVE? A look at the uncertainties that face children fleeing disaster and conflict as they search for a place they can call home.