

## Horrorific Accident!

Bullies blamed for railway death.  
Emergency services praised for prompt action.



Today in court a jury heard how an act of vandalism carried out under pressure from a bully went terribly wrong and led to the death of a young boy.

Last month John Smith, a lively 12 year-old, was killed when he fell from a railway bridge and landed in front of an oncoming Metro train. The court was told how John had been forced to help Matt Brown (15) to throw a concrete block onto a train travelling on the line between Newcastle and Sunderland. Tragically John had slipped off the bridge, while still holding the block, just as the train was passing.

Paul Jones (14), said that Matt and he were on their way home from school at about 3.45pm.



Before they got to the bridge over the Metro line Paul had suggested finding something to throw at the passing trains for a bit of fun. When they got to the bridge they saw John who they had never met before.

**"When the train came John just seemed to fall"**

They went up to John and bullied him until he was made to help them collect the concrete block from a nearby construction site. Paul said, "John did not want to help but Matt had hit and kicked him. When the train came John just seemed to fall. I don't know how it happened". It took several

hours to clear the track leaving commuters stranded and many services cancelled.

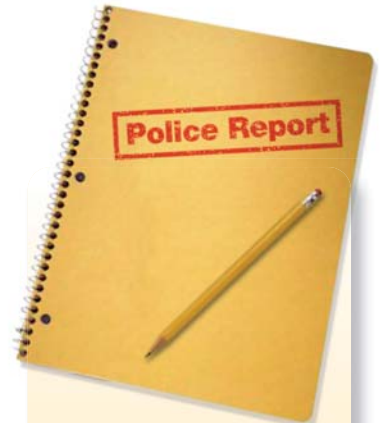
Mrs Smith, John's mother, left the court in tears with her husband and close relatives.

**"Both boys will have to live with what they have done to an innocent young life."**

An uncle from the family said, "This has been a most terrible time for us all, if there was any way we could get John back we would do it".

Matt Brown has been sent to a secure unit for twelve months while Paul Jones is on six months community punishment order. In summing up the judge said, "Both boys will have to live with what they have done to an innocent young life. With the Metro train carrying passengers, who knows what might have happened if the concrete block had been thrown."

The driver of the train involved in the horrific accident was named in court as Peter Jones (age 46) a married man with two teenage children.



Two of the British Transport Police officers involved with the accident, PC Lenny Bird and PC Steve Wareing, were responsible for breaking the news of the 12 year-old's death to his parents.



PC Bird, a railway policeman for over 20 years, said: "No matter how long you are in the job, you never get used to telling parents that their child has been involved in an accident. One of the worst aspects of the job is having to return the person's personal belongings, things like cinema tickets, sweets, pocket money... even photos of their little sister or brother".

PC Wareing commented: "This case highlights the stupidity of playing near the Metro or any railway system. Children have got to understand that all railways are dangerous. They may seem exciting places but they are not playgrounds."

For information on railway crime, see over >>>

# KEEP CRIME off the line



## Some of the facts about rail crime...



### Trespass

- Every year people, including children, are injured trespassing on the Metro.
- All trespass on the Metro is a crime which can be punished in court with a fine of upto £1,000.
- Death and injury caused by trespass results in trauma for the families involved and the drivers of the trains.
- Points, where tracks move to switch the direction of trains, can trap feet causing serious injury.

### Vandalism

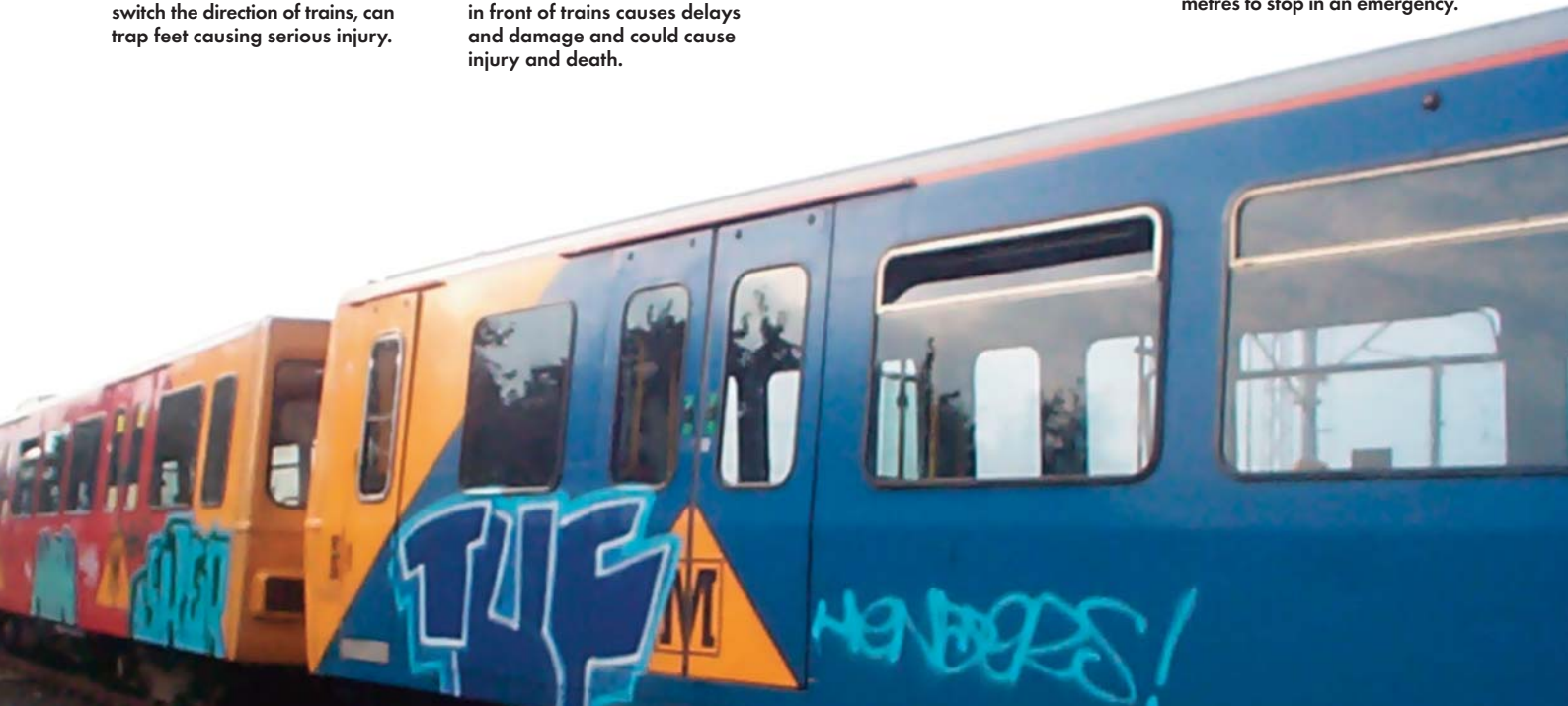
- Vandalism on the Metro takes many forms. All types of vandalism are crimes, some of which can carry a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.
- Graffiti looks unsightly and costs millions of pounds to clean off.
- The throwing of stones and other objects at trains causes injury to drivers and passengers.
- The placing of objects on the line in front of trains causes delays and damage and could cause injury and death.

### Dangers

- Metro trains receive their power from overhead lines.
- Electricity flows through the systems all of the time.
- High voltage electricity can jump across gaps, or pass through an object touching a conductor rail or hanging from the overhead cables.

### Facts

- Each year there are some 300 reported trespass incidents on the Metro.
- Each year there are some 500 vandalism incidents on the Metro.
- Metro system crime is estimated to cost £750,000 a year.
- Metro trains travel at speeds of up to 50 mph (80 km per hour).
- Metro trains can take up to 150 metres to stop in an emergency.



# Track Talk



## Notes for teachers

Track Talk is a creative classroom based activity to support a class lesson or talk.



### Activity

The activity is aimed at children working in groups to produce their own news sheet reporting on an incident of railway crime on the Metro or national railway network and its consequences.

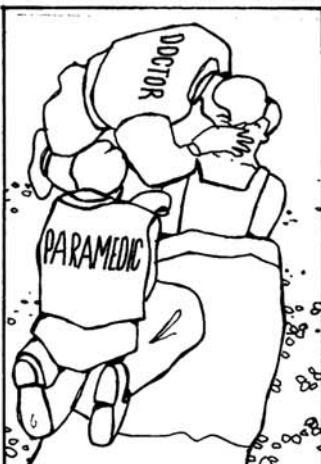
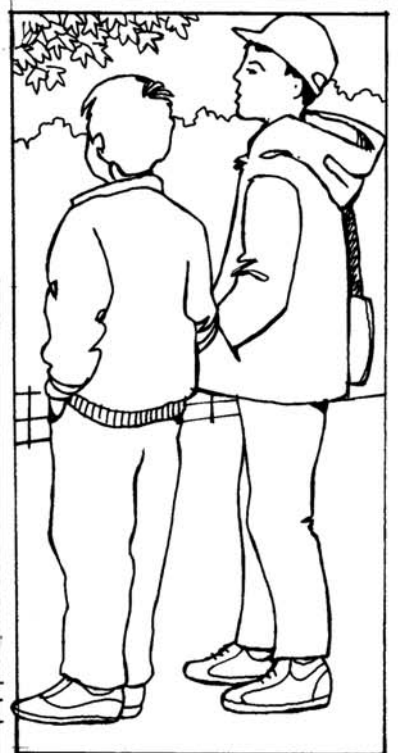
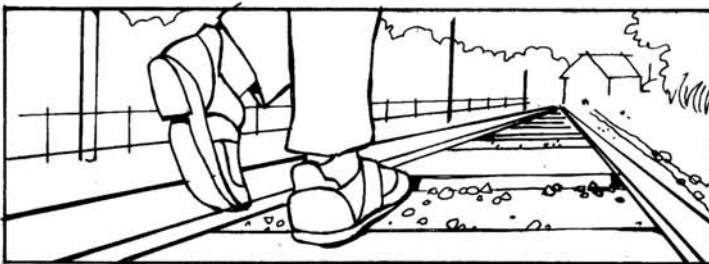
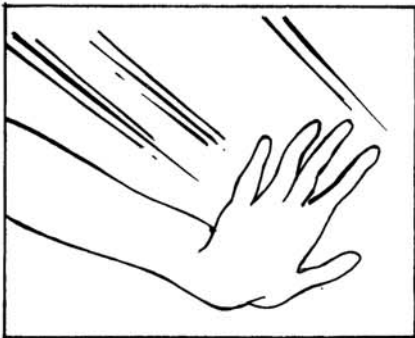
The incident could be one they have made up, one based on a real life story they have heard about, or one they have discussed in a class lesson or talk. Images supplied in the pack can be used to illustrate a typical story.

### Benefits

- Working as a team
- Developing writing and reporting skills
- Considering the consequences of railway crime
- Creative work produced suitable for classroom display or class assembly

### Resources

- A double-sided news sheet showing how a typical story about an incident on the Metro would be reported by the news media. It also gives some facts and figures about crime on the Metro and the national railway network.
- A sheet of typical headlines for photocopying (can be used by pupils or pupils encouraged to make up their own)
- Sheets of typical images for photocopying (can be used by pupils or pupils encouraged to create their own)
- A3 layout sheet for photocopying
- Full colour photographs with storyline



# VANDALS DISRUPT JOURNEY

Train Stone Youth Locked Up

**1500 VOLTS DC KILLS**

VANDALS STONE  
METRO TRAIN

**KILLER  
VANDALS**

**KEEP CRIME  
OFF THE LINE**

ELECTRIC RAIL

THE HEROES  
OF RAILWAY  
**CRISIS**

**RAIL DRAMA UNFOLDS**

**News Flash!**

RECKLESS  
ACTION

SERIOUS  
INJURY

**VANDALS TO BLAME**

OVERHEAD POWER CABLES

*Vandalism on  
the Metro Line*

**METRO TRAIN  
DRIVER IN SHOCK**