

# Track Talk

## Notes for Teachers

Track Talk is a creative classroom - based activity to support a class lesson or talk by a British Transport Policeman.

### Activity

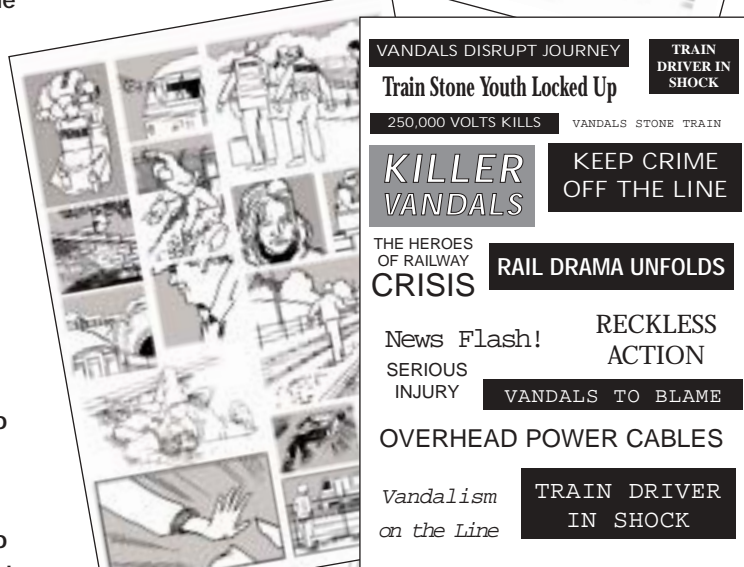
The activity is aimed at children working in groups to produce their own newsheet reporting on an incident of railway crime and its consequences. The incident could be one they have made up, one based on a real life story they have heard about or one they have discussed in a class lesson or police talk.

### 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 newsheet showing how a typical story about an incident of railway crime would be reported by the news media. It also gives some facts and figures about railway crime.
- Sheets 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). It is suggested the story, pictures and headlines are laid out on an A3 sheet of paper
- Full colour photographs with storyline



VANDALS DISRUPT JOURNEY

TRAIN  
DRIVER IN  
SHOCK

# Train Stone Youth Locked Up

250,000 VOLTS KILLS

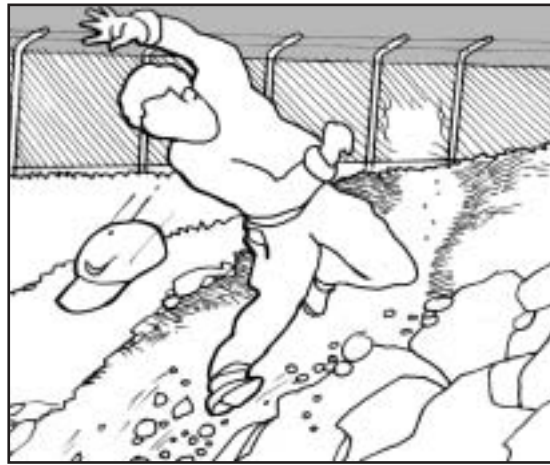
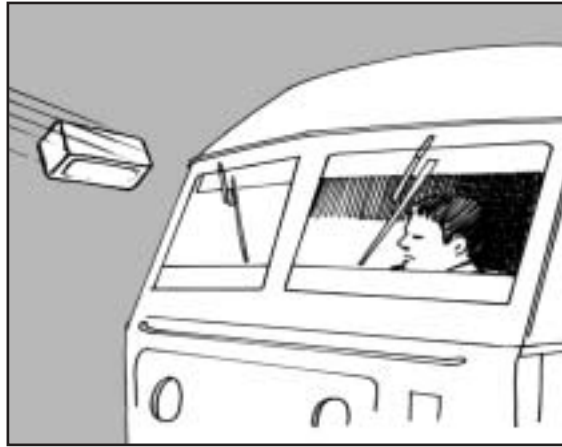
VANDALS STONE TRAIN

*KILLER  
VANDALS*

KEEP CRIME  
OFF THE LINE

THE HEROES  
OF RAILWAY  
**CRISIS**

**RAIL DRAMA UNFOLDS**



# TRACK TALK



## POLICE REPORT

Two of the policemen involved with the accident, PC Lenny Bird and PC Steve Waring, 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. The shock, tears and panic that comes with the news that their son or daughter has been fatally injured in this kind of tragedy lives with you for the rest of your life. It can ruin a family - even years after the accident parents still never get over the shock of losing a loved one. 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".

PC Waring commented: "This case highlights the stupidity of playing near the railway system. Children have got to understand that the railway is dangerous. It may seem an exciting place but it is not a playground. People are killed every year, bringing grief to their family and friends. Just please stay away from railway land!"

### EVIDENCE FOUND AT TRACKSIDE

During the investigation police at the scene found footprints and a shoe worn by the victim. 30 metres from the accident the remains of the concrete block were found, which had broken into several pieces as it smashed into the train driver's windscreen. Glass which had cut the driver's face and hands was found on the line along with the victim's watch. Two of the eye-witnesses, who were close by when the 12 year-old fell, were being treated

### EMERGENCY SERVICES PRAISED FOR PROMPT ACTION

## Horrific Accident

### BULLIES BLAMED FOR RAILWAY DEATH

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 freight train. The court was told how John had been forced to help Matt Brown (15), from Denby Drive, to throw a concrete block onto a train travelling on the Main Line. Tragically John had slipped off the bridge, while still holding the block, just as the train was passing.

### GOING HOME

Rod Jones (14), a friend of Matt's who had been with him at the time of the accident, stood up in front of the court and relived the terrible events that lead up to John's death. He said that Matt and he were on their way home from school at about 3.45pm. Before they got to the railway bridge 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 but was wearing a school uniform from another school. They went up to John and pushed him around and bullied him until he was made to help them collect the concrete



block from a nearby building 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." The train was so severely damaged in the accident that it took several hours to clear the track leaving commuters stranded and many services had to be cancelled.

Mrs Smith, John's mother, left the court in tears with her husband and close relatives. 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 probation. In summing up the judge said, "Both boys will have to live with what they have done to an innocent young life. It is only by luck that the train was not carrying passengers. Who knows what might have happened if that had been the case."

### TRAIN DRIVER "MAY NEVER WORK AGAIN"

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.

As a result of his experience Mr Jones is still undergoing specialist psychological treatment and was unable to appear in court. Counsel for the prosecution, Mr Michael White QC, said: "Railway vandals do not appreciate all the consequences of their actions. Apart from the

tragedy for the victim's parents and family, Mr Jones is in such a state of shock he may never work again."



Get a life - don't lose it

Get a life **TRACKOFF** don't lose it!



THESE ARE SOME OF THE FACTS ABOUT RAILWAY CRIME

# Trespass

- Every year many people die while trespassing on the country's railways - some of these are children under 16.
- Every year many people, including children, are injured trespassing on the railway tracks.
- Nationally there are thousands of cases of trespass each year.
- All trespass on the railways 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.



# Damage

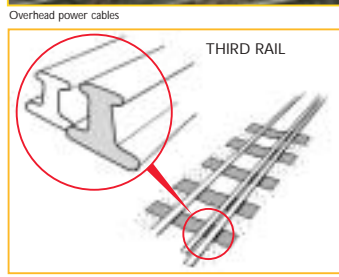
- Vandalism on the railways takes many forms. All types of vandalism are crimes, some of which can carry a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.
- Nationally there are thousands of cases of vandalism each year
- Graffiti painted on railway property and rolling stock looks unsightly and costs millions of pounds to clean off.
- The throwing of stones and other objects at trains causes injury to drivers and passengers.
- Damage to lineside fencing has been estimated at over £13 million. This can allow young children to wander onto railway lines.
- The placing of objects on the line in front of trains causes delays, damage and in extreme cases injury and death.



# The Dangers of Electrified Railways

Over 7,000 miles of railways in Britain are electrified - a third the total network

- Trains running over these lines receive their power from either overhead power cables or a conductor rail, sometimes called a third rail.
- Both systems have electricity flowing through them at all times, they are never switched off - even on Christmas Day.
- Conductor rails have 750 volts passing through them, whilst overhead power cables at 25,000 volts, are 100 times more powerful than electricity supplies in the home.
- Both can kill someone without being touched. High voltage electricity can jump upto 3 metres, or pass through an object touching a conductor rail or hanging from the overhead cables.
- Young people have been electrocuted or seriously burnt by climbing on trains which has brought them close to the cables.
- Others have been hurt by touching objects in contact with overhead power cables or conductor rails.



# National Facts & Figures

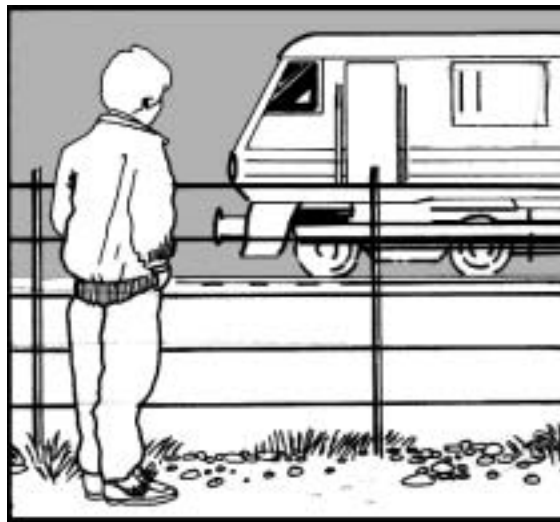
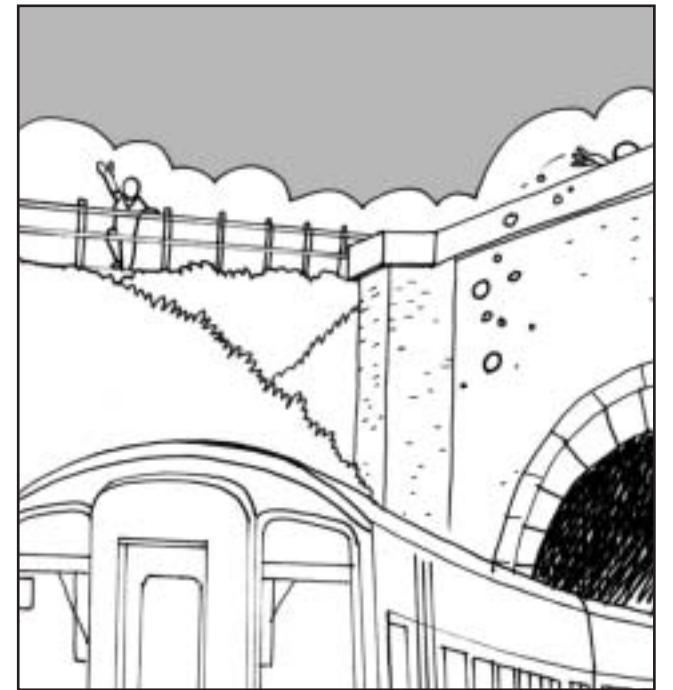
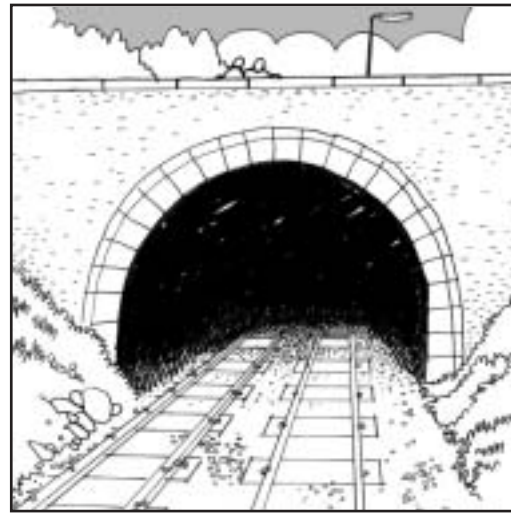
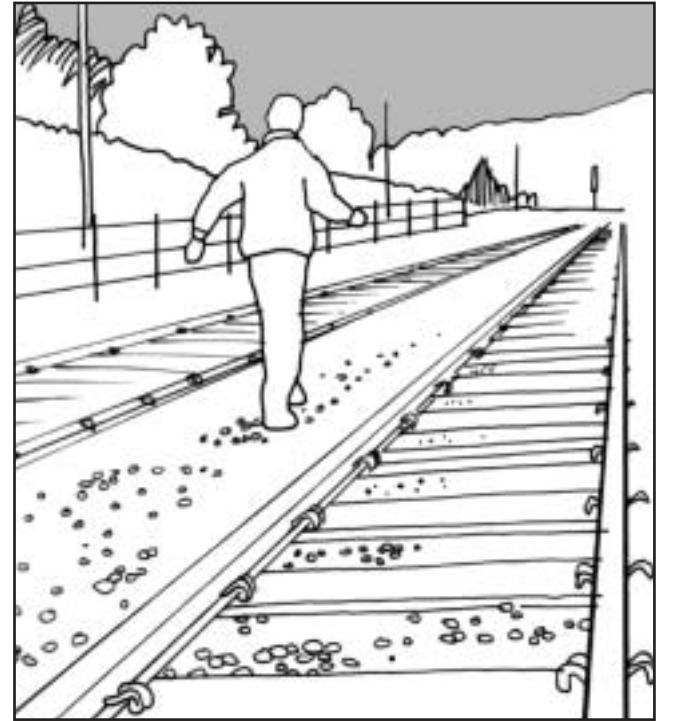
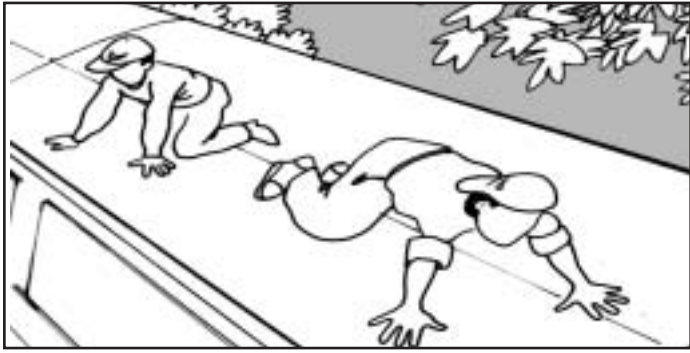
- 90% of Railway Crime is committed by young people under the age of 17.
- Over 350 cases of railway crime reported each day in Britain.
- Railway crime is estimated to cost over £250 million a year and around 56% of all train damage.
- Trains travel at up to 125mph.
- Trains can take up to 2000 metres to stop.
- Children as young as 5 have been caught putting objects on the track.
- Children as young as 8 have been seen playing "chicken" in front of high-speed trains.

NATIONAL FACTS AND FIGURES

Track miles	20,000
Stations	25,000
Bridges and tunnels	Over 40,000
Level crossings	Over 9,000
Signal boxes	Over 1,000
Colour light signals	23,000
Passenger trains	18,200 per day
All train movement	30,000 per day

CRIME FIGURES - in a typical year

Reported instances of:	
Railway trespass	13,896
Obstacles on tracks	1,829
Stonethrowing	3,543



News Flash!

RECKLESS  
ACTION

SERIOUS  
INJURY

VANDALS TO BLAME

OVERHEAD POWER CABLES

*Vandalism  
on the Line*

TRAIN DRIVER  
IN SHOCK





Brick thrown by vandal





Police investigate incident





Police question witnesses



Train driver in his cab





Vandal crossing line





Vandal's body removed from track

