



MAKING CONTENT SUBJECTS EXCITING IN GRADES 4–6

CAPS-Aligned Strategies for NST, Geography, and
History

Formulated by Aashika Matthews and Casey Payne

WHY MAKE CONTENT SUBJECTS EXCITING?

Enhances learner engagement and participation

Improves retention and understanding of key concepts

Encourages exploration and curiosity

Supports different learning styles, especially for LSEN learners

NATURAL SCIENCES & TECHNOLOGY (NST)



Encourage hands-on experiments (e.g., making a simple circuit or making solutions)



Use recycled materials for building models (e.g., bridges, lungs)



Supplement videos with actual experiments learners can do



Create investigation stations to promote inquiry-based learning



Link lessons to real-world issues (e.g., energy saving at home)

GEOGRAPHY

1

Use laminated maps for interactive activities (e.g., draw latitude and longitude)

2

Create mini weather stations in class to track temperature/wind

3

Model landforms with clay or sand trays

4

Walks around school to observe features (natural vs manmade)

5

Use mapping games and puzzles to reinforce concepts

HISTORY



Recreate historical scenes using role-play and drama



Use timelines learners can build and interact with



Create 'museum boxes' with items/pictures from a specific period



Incorporate songs, stories, and local heritage



Encourage project-based learning with group presentations



CAPS ALIGNMENT & ASSESSMENT

- Ensure activities align with CAPS skills: investigation, mapwork, data handling, etc.
- Balance content knowledge with practical application
- Use formative assessments like exit tickets, mini presentations, and experiments
- Use rubrics for practical work that reflect CAPS requirements

USEFUL RESOURCES

- NASA kids club – interactive resource

<https://www.nasa.gov/learning-resources/nasa-kids-club/>

- PhET – used to build circuits in grade 6 NST

<https://phet.colorado.edu/en/simulations/circuit-construction-kit-dc>

- Brain breaks – good for kids not to become overstimulated/ bored

<https://neal.fun> (many different brain break resources)

- Goble – used for countries in geography

<https://goble-game.com/>

- Brain pop

<https://www.brainpop.com/subject/science/>

ACTIVITY EXAMPLE

Objective:

Learners will go on a clue-based adventure to discover the history of land, water, and air transport by solving riddles, decoding messages, and performing fun challenges. Each clue leads to the next transport type and includes a Time Portal Fact Card with key info.

Setup (Prep for teacher):

1. Create 3 stations – one for Land, one for Water, and one for Air transport.
2. At each station:
 - Hide a clue leading to the next station.
 - Include a Time Portal Fact Card (mini-poster or printed page with short history facts pictures).
 - Include a Mini Task or Puzzle

Station I: Land Transport

Clue Riddle (starting clue):

I have wheels and I love the road,
I carried goods and people load.
I came before planes and trains that zoom —
Find me parked inside a room!

Hiding spot: Near a toy car/bicycle or under a chair (depends on your setup).

Time Portal Fact Card:

- Ancient people used animals like donkeys and horses.
- The first car was made in the late 1800s.
- Trains changed how people traveled long distances.

Mini Task – Timeline Match-Up:

Give 4–5 images (e.g., horse cart, old train, bicycle, car, scooter) and have them order them from oldest to newest.

Once done correctly, they receive the next clue.

Station 2: Water Transport

Clue Riddle:

I float and sail across the blue,
From wooden boats to ships so new.
If you're thirsty, take a dip,
But I'm not a place to slip!

Hiding spot: Near a water bottle, fish tank, or water fountain.

Time Portal Fact Card:

- Early humans made rafts from logs.
- Egyptians used sailboats on the Nile.
- Modern ships can carry thousands of people!

Mini Task – Boat Builders:

Using foil or paper, build a mini boat and see if it floats in a basin. If it floats with 3 coins inside, they pass!

Next clue is revealed.

Station 3: Air Transport

Clue Riddle:

Up I go into the sky,
Birds and I both love to fly.
From hot air balloons to jets so fast,
I carry people really fast!

Hiding spot: Hanging paper plane, high shelf, or near a fan.

Time Portal Fact Card:

- The first flying machine was a hot air balloon in 1783.
- The Wright brothers made the first airplane in 1903.
- Today, jets fly across the world in hours.

Mini Task – Paper Plane Race:

Each team makes a paper plane. The one that flies the farthest wins the Golden Wings Clue.

- **Final Clue: The Treasure!**
- **Clue Riddle:**
- You've traveled by land, water, air,
Time traveled here and everywhere.
Now find the X that marks the spot,
Where time and treasure are in one lot!
- **Treasure Location:** Use an X mark, under a treasure chest box or books with "History" written on them.
- **Treasure Reward Ideas:**
- - Stickers, bookmarks, transport-themed pencils
- - A mini certificate: "Official Transport Time Traveler!"
- - Fun fact booklet they can take home
- **Learning Outcomes:**
- - Understand the evolution of land, water, and air transport.
- - Improve problem-solving and teamwork.
- - Practice reading clues and following instructions.

CONCLUSION: BRINGING SUBJECTS TO LIFE

- Learners remember what they do more than what they hear or see
- Hands-on, concrete experiences increase excitement and learning
- Helps all learners, especially those with learning barriers
- A CAPS classroom can be both structured and fun!