

TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR

DANGER ON THE TRACKS

In the 1870s railroads had a huge impact on Canada because they provided an efficient transport system for moving passengers and goods. *Danger on the Tracks* is set at the time when railways were being constructed in Southern Ontario. People welcomed the arrival of the railroads, but trains displaced another transportation system, stagecoaches. Meg and Jamie are caught up in the conflict between stagecoach drivers and the railroaders.

These are some ideas for stimulating classroom discussion and student projects based on the novel.

THE NOVEL

- Why are Meg and Jamie so relieved to get work on the railroad?
- Describe why Jamie is unhappy with his job as cook's help.
- Jamie is caught between the railroaders and the stagecoach men. This is a problem for him but it turns out to be an advantage. Why?
- What advantages does the train have over the horses in the race?

CANADIAN HISTORY

- Why were stage coaches used in Ontario before and after the building of rail roads?
- Sam Bolt, the engineer of the train in *Danger on the Tracks*, comments, "The railways are bringin' a revolution to this country." What does he mean?
- The London, Huron and Bruce Railway was constructed between London and Wingham in 1875. Draw a map showing the route of the railroad.
- The story of the Black Donnellys of Lucan closely parallels the story of the Ryans in *Danger on the Tracks*. What is the Donnellys' story?

GEOGRAPHY

- The early pioneers of south western Ontario found it easier to travel during the winter than the summer. Why?
- Why is south western Ontario a rich farming area?
- Draw a map showing the major rivers of south western Ontario. Show all of the major railroads built by 1880 and locate London, Exeter, Clinton, Goodrich and Wingham on the map.
- Roads were very important in the development of south western Ontario. Locate all of the major roads in the London area in the 1870s. Are they still used today?

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Lieutenant Governor Simcoe wanted to make London the capital of Upper Canada. What were the advantages of London's location?
- Research why railroads are still a vital transportation link for Canada?
- Today buses are sometimes called "coaches." Is there any link between the stage coaches of the nineteenth century and the buses we know today?
- Gas engines get their power from the explosion of gas in the cylinder of the engine. How do steam engines capture power?