

A world without transportation essay sample



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Our world today depends heavily on means of transportation. Whether it be automobiles, trains, airplanes, boats, or even bicycles, we have come to depend on these forms of transportation to do the things we want to do and go the places we want to go. To go to school, work, shopping malls, movies, and even the grocery store we just hop in our cars and away we go. To go to business meetings in Los Angeles, basketball games in Wisconsin, or vacations in Hawaii, we just book the next flight and we're there. To import and export goods, businesses and corporations just load them up on a truck, plane, or ship, and off they go. On the topic of transportation, U. S. Secretary of Transportation, Mary Peters, says: Each year, America's transportation system - from the roads to the skies, rails and ports - helps travelers reach their destinations and carries billion of tons of freight worth trillions of dollars in economic stimulus.

Transportation is synonymous with opportunity in America - connecting workers with jobs, products with markets, and families with each other. (Peters) Over the years, we have become so dependent on these forms of transportation to help us get the job done to the point of imagining a world without it would seem crazy, almost impossible. But what if? Suppose, due to our limited amount of resources, we could no longer use these forms of transportation. In a desperate act to conserve these resources, the law banned the use of cars, planes, boats, trains, and any other form of transportation that uses such resources.

What if, suddenly, we had to live without means of transportation such as automobiles, airplanes, and ships? What would we do if we no longer had those airplanes to fly us across the country? What would businesses do if the

trucks, planes, and ships they use to transfer their goods could no longer be used? Would we revert back to the days of horse and buggy? How would we live? How would we get around from place to place? To what extent would this change the world? With all of our other technology that we have today, it would seem likely that there could be some possible solution to this loss, right? This would, without a doubt, change our lifestyles drastically; it would be a totally different world. It would definitely be a crazy thought to think about, but to go as far as saying that it's impossible? I think not.

We wouldn't have to go back that far in our world's history to see what it was like without these kinds of things. Henry Ford, who is credited for creating modern automobile mass production, didn't build his first car until 1896 (Safra). It wasn't until 1908 when Ford began mass producing his Model T (Safra). It was in the year 1903 when the Wright brothers showed the world that man could fly (Scholastic). As you can see, it wasn't too long ago when we actually didn't have cars to drive and planes to fly; it was only a little over one hundred years ago. So what would it be like, in our advanced world today, to no longer have these forms of transportation? We would, in fact, have to revert back to the days of horse and buggy because really, how else could we get around? A good way to start searching for some of these answers would be to look at the lifestyles of the Amish.

The Amish separate themselves from mainstream society for religious reasons and are known for their plain style of dress and limited use of modern conveniences. One of these modern conveniences is the automobile. Because of this, their world is very domesticated. They are extremely limited to where they can go and what they can do. But that's how they live; that's

their lifestyle. They have come to show us that you can live a normal life without things such as an automobile. Now imagine this lifestyle that the Amish have grown to live with, living without automobiles. Take away not only automobiles but also planes, buses, trains, and ships and relate this to our everyday lives; a lifestyle that people used to live with before the invention of the first car or airplane. This is a technologically advanced world without transportation.

The roads of New York City would no longer be congested with cars, buses and taxis. It would now be streets filled of horse and buggy. The horse and buggy would now take the place of a car. People would soup up their buggies and horses. The buggies would come in all sorts of sizes to suit your needs. They would have sweet pain jobs, 24" rims, banging loud stereo systems, tinted windows, heated seats, climate control, navigation systems, alarm systems, sunroofs, and any other unique feature you can think of. Like the car does in our world today, your buggy would reflect your social status; the better or more expensive your horse and buggy are, the richer and wealthier you are thought to be. Imagine how much longer it would take to travel from place to place if the horse and buggy were your only way of getting around.

Think about all of the opportunity that would be lost because of this. We would be limited to not only how far we travel, but how long it will take to travel. A twenty minute car ride to the movies would now take hours. A trip to Florida for vacation would now take days, maybe even weeks. Our daily commute to school or work would now become a journey. If you wanted or needed something, it wouldn't be so easy now to just go and get it; you would have to plan your day around your traveling. This would make

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everything extremely inefficient because of the large consumption of time it would now take to accomplish tasks. The world would now operate much slower. This would have a huge affect on businesses. In some cases, the process of importing and exporting goods would slow dramatically, but for many, this process would diminish completely. Trade with other countries would no longer exist. Our opportunity of achieving more and making the most of our time would now be considerably reduced.

This would now lead us to live, like the Amish, a very domestic lifestyle. We would now become extremely self-dependent, relying either on ourselves or others close by to produce what it is that is needed to survive. To stay efficient by not wasting time on travel, we would have to live reasonably close to a town or city. This is the city were we would shop, hang out, go to the movies, go to school, and work. Everything in our world as we know it today would be split into millions of small civilizations.

This would also cause a problem in unemployment. Everyone who works in the automobile or airlines industry from the manufacturers, pilots, racecar drivers, taxi drivers, and mechanics would no longer have jobs. Those people would be forced to find work in another field. There would now be an extremely high demand for horses and buggies which would raise a whole new field of business. Although we may struggle industrially, there are a few aspects in which this loss of transportation would benefit our world.

One of the largest benefits would be in our environment. Sixty-five percent of all carbon monoxide emitted into the environment is from road vehicles, which contributes to global warming (Kluger). Cars are also one of

the leading causes for water pollution. It affects water quality because oil and particles get washed into creeks and rivers. In urban environments, runoff from roads goes into water drains which then feeds into creeks, rivers, and eventually the sea. In addition to polluting the air, the loss of transportation (particularly cars) would decrease both human and animal fatalities. Besides the deaths caused by pollution, events such as accident deaths would no longer occur. Approximately one million animals are killed on U. S. roads every day (Knowlton). Additionally, over 44, 000 Americans die each year in transportation accidents (Knowlton). Without transportation, these lives would be saved and we would have an environment with much less pollution.

The world would, without a doubt, be a totally different place. The loss of opportunity and employment that transportation brings would lead us to think that this type of scenario without transportation would be devastating. For environmentalists, however, this world would almost be ideal. We would have a much cleaner environment, less deaths, and conserve a lot of our world's resources. So would this be a world disaster or could we possibly, just maybe be better off? In a way, a world without transportation resembles what we strive for in our world today. Traveling less, conserving resources, better environment, safer roads, the simpler lifestyle are all things that the technology we come up with is designed to do. We come up with inventions to try and make these things possible.

We have the internet to save us trips to the library, shopping mall, and even Blockbuster. We are always looking for ways to improve gas mileage and efficiency. All of the things that we strive for, not having to travel as much,

conserving resources and so on, are all compiled in a world without transportation. So maybe, to achieve this much simpler lifestyle that we strive for, it wont be what we bring into the world, but what we take away.

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