

# Vintage Carriages Trust

## Museum of Rail Travel

Topic: **Wartime Evacuation of Children**

School-based activities: **"The Journey"** - discussion suggestions

The train is divided into carriages. The passengers sit in separate compartments in each carriage. The compartments have long bench seats on each side so that the passengers face each other. The evacuees sit on these bench seats. It would be very squashed. There are windows in the doors which can be opened. The suitcases are put on the luggage rack which is above their heads.

Above the doorway is a long tube painted white and red with a chain running through it. This is called a "Communication Cord". In a real emergency, the chain is pulled downwards to stop the train. The cord attached to the chain runs the full length of the train and is attached to the braking system of the train. If someone pulls this chain when it is not an emergency they would be fined £5, which was a great deal of money in those days.



On the walls behind the seats are pictures in frames. These were usually country or seaside scenes, but in wartime they are instructions - for example, "What to do in Air Raids" and "What to do in the Blackout".

Which thing that you can see in the compartment do you think is the most important? Why do you think so?

Do you think it would be a comfortable journey? What sort of games could the children play to pass the time on the journey? Think of the ways you would pass the time on a long journey today - are they the same?

What is "Blackout"? Why do you think it was needed?

As the train leaves the city and goes out into the country, how do you think the view from the window would change?