

Elim Christian College Year 4  
Daily 5 and Literacy Circles  
Term 2 Week 3



# Travelwise

# CHOICE 1: Listen to Reading

Listen to one of these stories and learn more about Transport:

- [The History of Space Travel](#)
- [Invention of the Wheel](#)



# CHOICE 1: Read to Self or with a Buddy

Read one of the following stories by yourself or with a buddy.

(These stories are available on the shelves in Room 1 in the Journals Box or you can find them on the slides at the end.)

Who killed Cock Robin? School Journal Part 3 Nr 2 1992

Don't Miss the Bus School Journal Part 1 Nr 1 2006

Cross Now School Journal Part 3 Nr 2 2002

Making a Road Junior Journal 50



## CHOICE 2: Word Work

1. Look at all the different Travel posters around the room.
2. Make a list of 'Travelwise' words.
3. Use 'Puzzlemaker.com' to create a crossword for at least 10 new words
4. Ask a buddy to complete the crossword.



## CHOICE 2: Work on Writing



Write instructions for how to catch a bus, train or ferry. (You can do this on your iPad or in your writing book.)

Include the following:

- location
- cost
- duration
- potential hazards to avoid



## CHOICE 2: Work on Writing

What types of transport will exist in 50 years from now and how will it change the way we travel?

Research the question stated above. Present your finding in an interesting way on your iPad. (Popplet, Slides, iMovie, PicCollage)



# Following instructions

Learn how to draw and old car:

[Click here to find the instructions.](#)

(There is also a paper with instructions on the shelf in Room 1.)



# Following instructions

## How to Draw an Old Time Car

this drawing is in 3/4 view

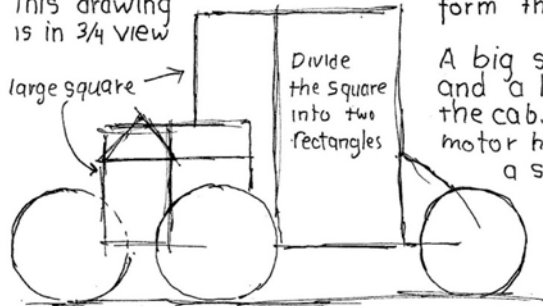
large square

Divide the square into two rectangles

Use basic shapes to form the outline!

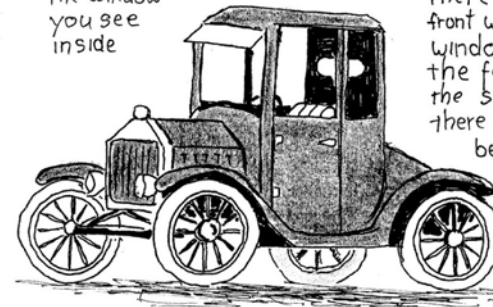
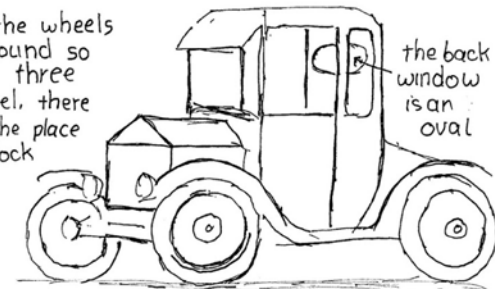
A big square for the front and a larger square for the cab. The front of the motor has a triangle top and a square below.

Draw squares for the front window and door window.



Add three circles for the wheels. Draw a line for the ground so the wheels are level. three circles make each wheel, there are 12 Spokes- mark the place for each spoke like a clock then draw the spokes from the center to the mark.

Add details, through the window you see inside



© Adron





# Reading Response

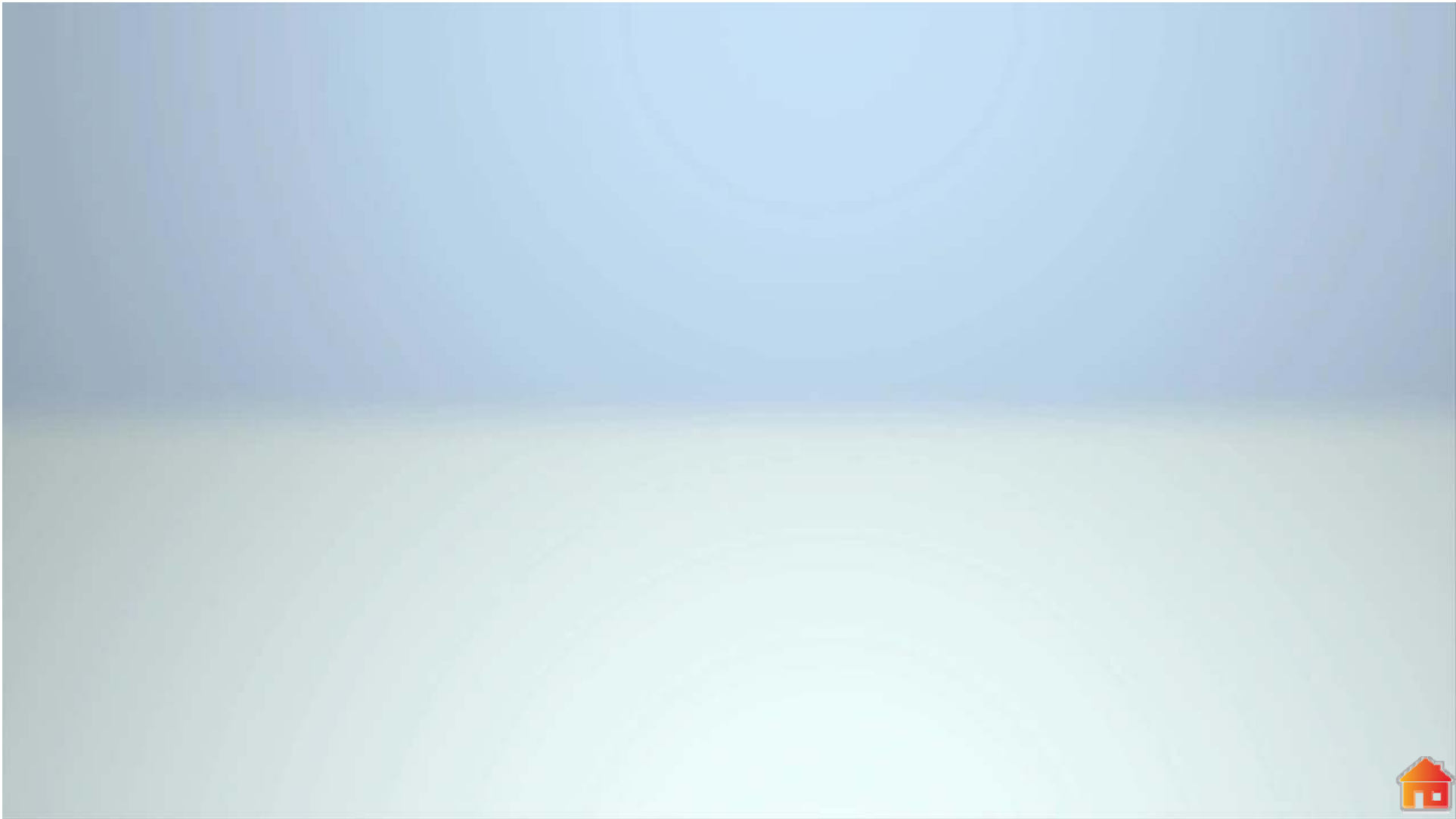
Read the text: *111 Emergency* (School Journal Part 3 Nr 2 1992 p8)

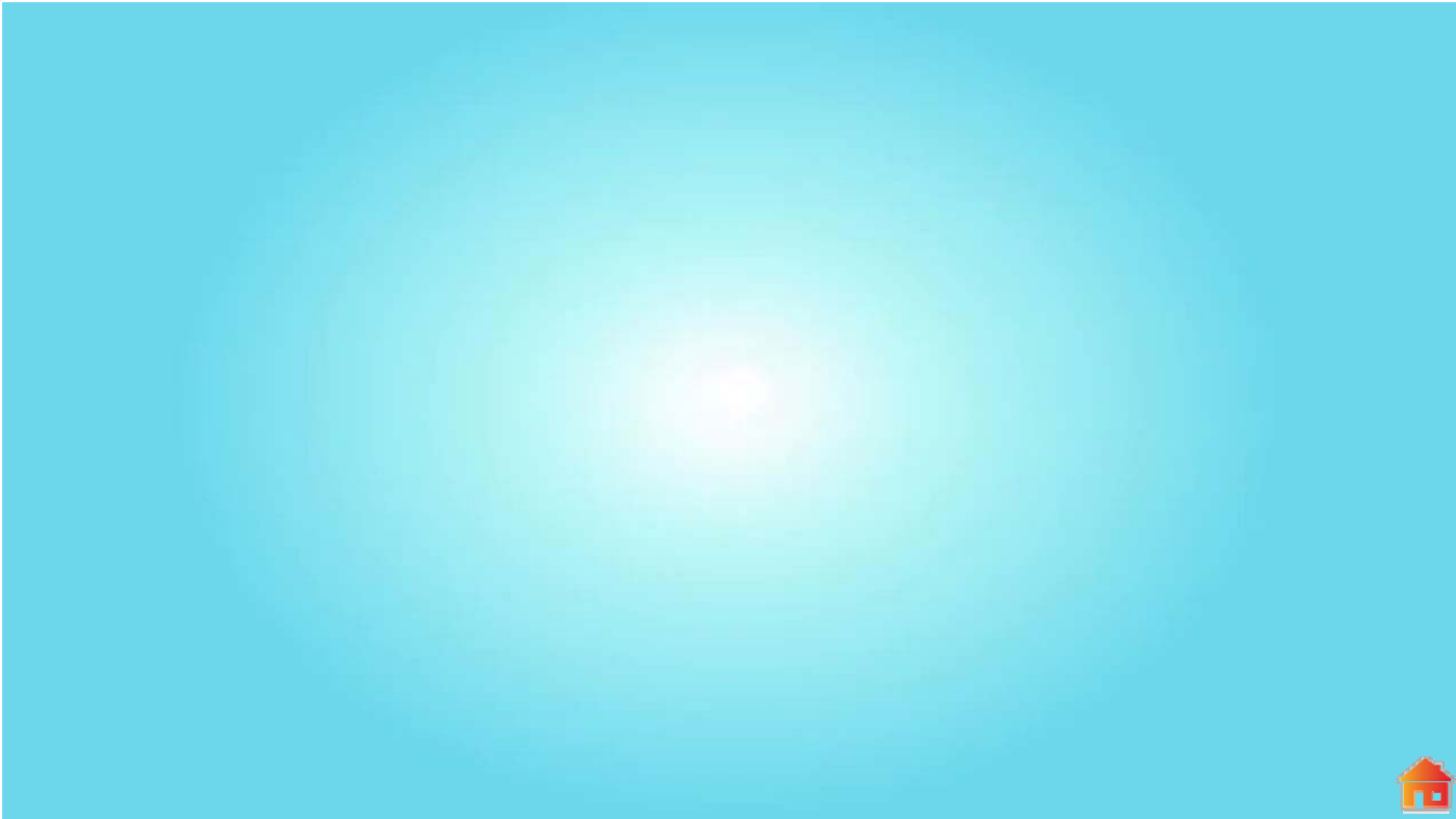
[111 Emergency](#)

Check your understanding by answering these questions.

[Reading Response](#)







# 111 Emergency

## Remember

1. How can emergency services get an address from a victim if they hang up before getting all their details?
2. What are the places that the author visited to write this article on emergency services?
3. What were some of the mistakes the person writing the article (Pat) made when she called the emergency services?

## Understand

4. How can hoax (prank) calls become a serious problem to emergency services?
5. What could be some of the issues of a person making an emergency call from a cell phone?
6. Why do operators ask lots of questions to the person on the other end? What could happen if they didn't ask certain questions?

## Apply

7. What might happen to a call centre if a natural disaster strikes?
8. What are some of the things you will need to remember if you want to make an effective emergency call?



111 Emergency!



## Analyse

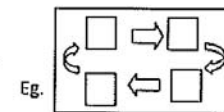
9. What might be the main point of this article?
10. Why might the author have written this? (Purpose) and who might the author be writing to? (audience)

## Create

11. Draw your own control panel that an emergency services operator could use to take an emergency call. Label what each button/light does.
12. Write a script for an emergency services operator and a victim using a phone

## Evaluate

13. Make a flow chart on the processes (blue hat) involved in following up an emergency call (white hat).





# Making a Road

by Andrew Gunn

There are over ninety thousand kilometres of roads in New Zealand. Have you ever wondered how they are made?



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## Planning

There are many reasons for building a road. Maybe the nearby roads are overcrowded and unsafe with too many vehicles on them. Maybe a new area of housing is being developed.

People will need a road to get to and from the new houses. Before any new road is made, planners investigate to see if the road is needed.

The planners also think about the type of road that should be built. Who is likely to use the road? How many lanes will it need? Where will it join with other roads? Will it have to cross any rivers? Will it have to go over hills?

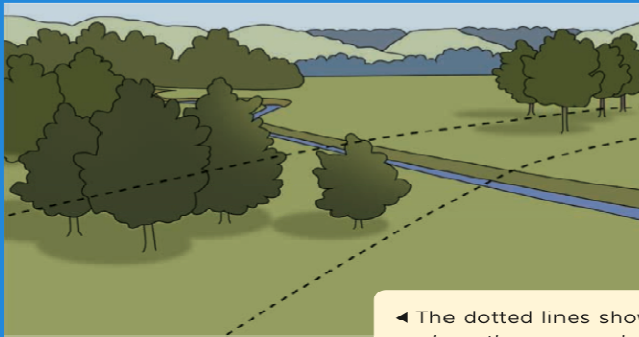


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## Checking the plan

The planners draw a map showing where the road could go. Then they use newspapers, brochures, and the Internet to let people know that a new road is planned. Sometimes the planners and the **engineers** (who will design the road) hold public meetings to explain their ideas. People who live nearby and who might use the new road have a chance to look at the map of the road and say what they think about it. Sometimes the people notice problems that the planners and engineers haven't thought about. After the planners and engineers have listened to what people say, they sometimes make changes to the design of the road. Then it's time to start road building.



◀ The dotted lines show where the new road will go.

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## Clearing a route

The first step is to **clear a route** (make a space where the road can be built). To make sure that people can drive safely and at a good speed, the road must not be too steep or too bumpy or have any sharp corners. Sometimes this means that a road might need to be a bit longer than expected, for example, it might need to zigzag up a hill rather than go straight up.

Bulldozers and excavators clear away trees, rocks, and soil. Motor scrapers take off a layer of earth from where there is too much and move it to where more is needed. Heavy rollers pack down the earth.



▲ Bulldozers and excavators clear the route.

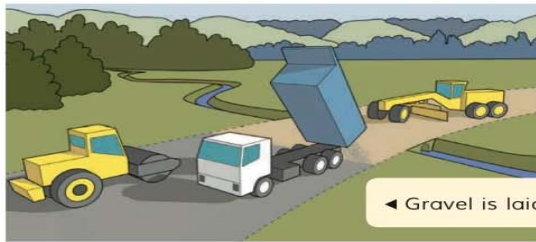


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## Laying down the road

When the route has been cleared, the road can be laid down. A road is made of several layers. The first is **gravel**.



◀ Gravel is laid down.

Dump trucks bring gravel and tip it out. Graders smooth the gravel, and then rollers go back and forth to pack it down so that the surface will be hard. The gravel helps to make the road strong so that when cars and trucks travel over the finished road, the road surface is not damaged.

▼ A grader and a roller smooth and pack down gravel.



▲ A roller works on the new road while vehicles drive on a temporary road.

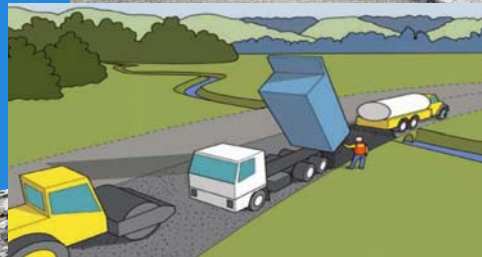
When all the gravel has been laid, a layer of **crushed stone** is spread on top of it, and again, graders and rollers smooth and pack down the stone. The pieces of crushed stone are smaller than the pieces of gravel, so the surface of this layer is much smoother.

The surface of the road is shaped so that it is higher in the middle than at the edges. This lets rainwater drain away to the sides so no puddles are left on the road.



Finally the top surface of the road is laid down. Most New Zealand roads are covered in **chip seal**. To make chip seal, **bitumen** (a black, sticky mixture) is sprayed on the road. Then crushed stones called **chips** are spread over the bitumen. Rollers push the chips into the bitumen, which acts like a glue to keep the chips in place.

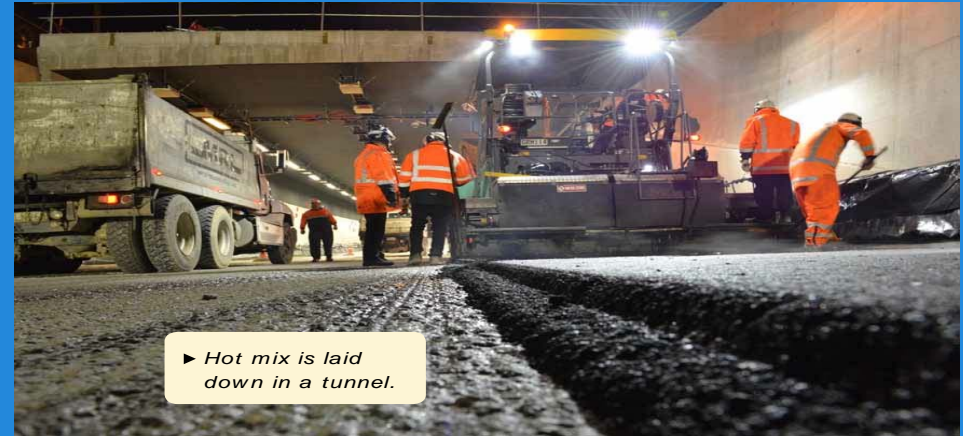
▼ Bitumen is sprayed on the road.



◀ A layer of chip seal is laid down.

Chip seal

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▶ Hot mix is laid down in a tunnel.

Some very busy roads are covered in **hot mix**. Like chipseal, hot mix is made from stones and bitumen. However, the stones are smaller, and they are mixed together with the bitumen before being spread out on the road. Roads with hot mix surfaces are smoother and more hard-wearing than roads with chip seal surfaces, but they cost more money to make.

Hot mix

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## Finishing the road

When the road surface is completed, it still needs to be made safe and easy to drive on. Traffic lights, signs, lane markings, and arrows all help to control traffic and show drivers where to go. A **rumble strip** makes a sound when wheels roll over it to alert drivers that they are straying off the road. At night, studs in the road reflect car headlights to help drivers see the road lanes.



◀ Road markings and other safety features are added.



A traffic sign



A rumble strip



A road stud



▶ Lane markings are added.



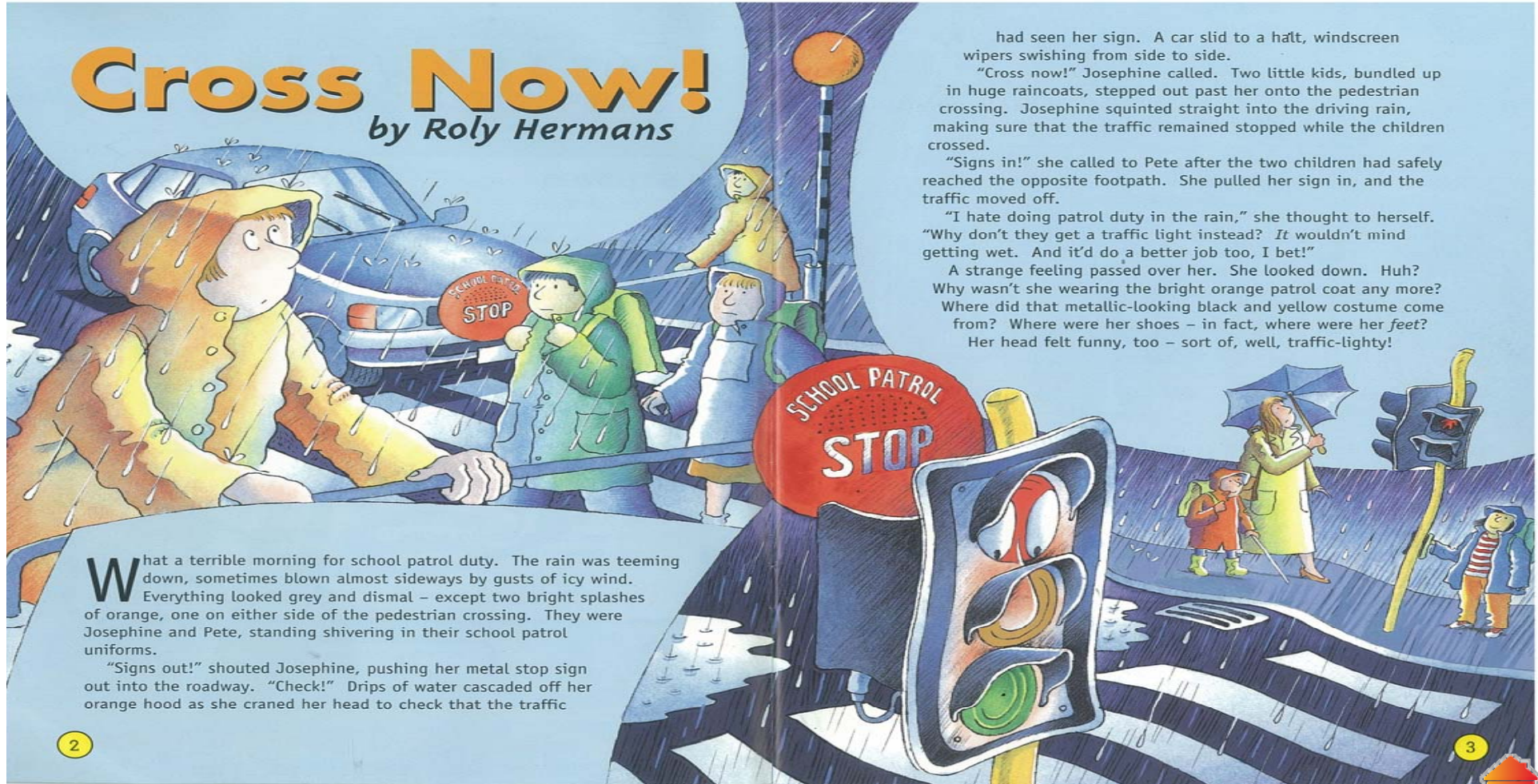
▲ A close-up photo of the truck spraying the lane markings

Once these have been added, the new road is ready to be used. Soon cars, buses, vans, and trucks will be driving over it – and most of the people in them will never think about how the road was made.



# Cross Now!

by Roly Hermans



**W**hat a terrible morning for school patrol duty. The rain was teeming down, sometimes blown almost sideways by gusts of icy wind. Everything looked grey and dismal – except two bright splashes of orange, one on either side of the pedestrian crossing. They were Josephine and Pete, standing shivering in their school patrol uniforms.

“Signs out!” shouted Josephine, pushing her metal stop sign out into the roadway. “Check!” Drips of water cascaded off her orange hood as she craned her head to check that the traffic

had seen her sign. A car slid to a halt, windscreen wipers swishing from side to side.

“Cross now!” Josephine called. Two little kids, bundled up in huge raincoats, stepped out past her onto the pedestrian crossing. Josephine squinted straight into the driving rain, making sure that the traffic remained stopped while the children crossed.

“Signs in!” she called to Pete after the two children had safely reached the opposite footpath. She pulled her sign in, and the traffic moved off.

“I hate doing patrol duty in the rain,” she thought to herself. “Why don’t they get a traffic light instead? It wouldn’t mind getting wet. And it’d do a better job too, I bet!”

A strange feeling passed over her. She looked down. Huh? Why wasn’t she wearing the bright orange patrol coat any more? Where did that metallic-looking black and yellow costume come from? Where were her shoes – in fact, where were her feet?

Her head felt funny, too – sort of, well, traffic-lighty!



"I've turned into a traffic light!" Josephine gasped. Sure enough, there she was, a typical, ordinary traffic light, guarding her side of the crossing. And she wasn't the only one – Pete was also standing there in his black and yellow paintwork, rain dripping from the shades over his coloured lamps.

Josephine suddenly felt a small finger pushing the pedestrian button on her post. A rain-soaked junior from her school stood on the kerb, wrapped in a jacket at least two sizes too big for him. Josephine's microcomputer clicked and whirred, and then her traffic lights turned from green to amber to red. At the same time, Pete's pedestrian lights (and her own, she supposed) changed from a little red standing person to a little green walking one.

Suddenly, there was a swishing noise to Josephine's right. A car was speeding towards the crossing, curtains of spray streaming out from each side.

"Oh-oh, that car's not going to stop in time! It's going far too fast!" she thought. "I must warn that junior not to cross yet."

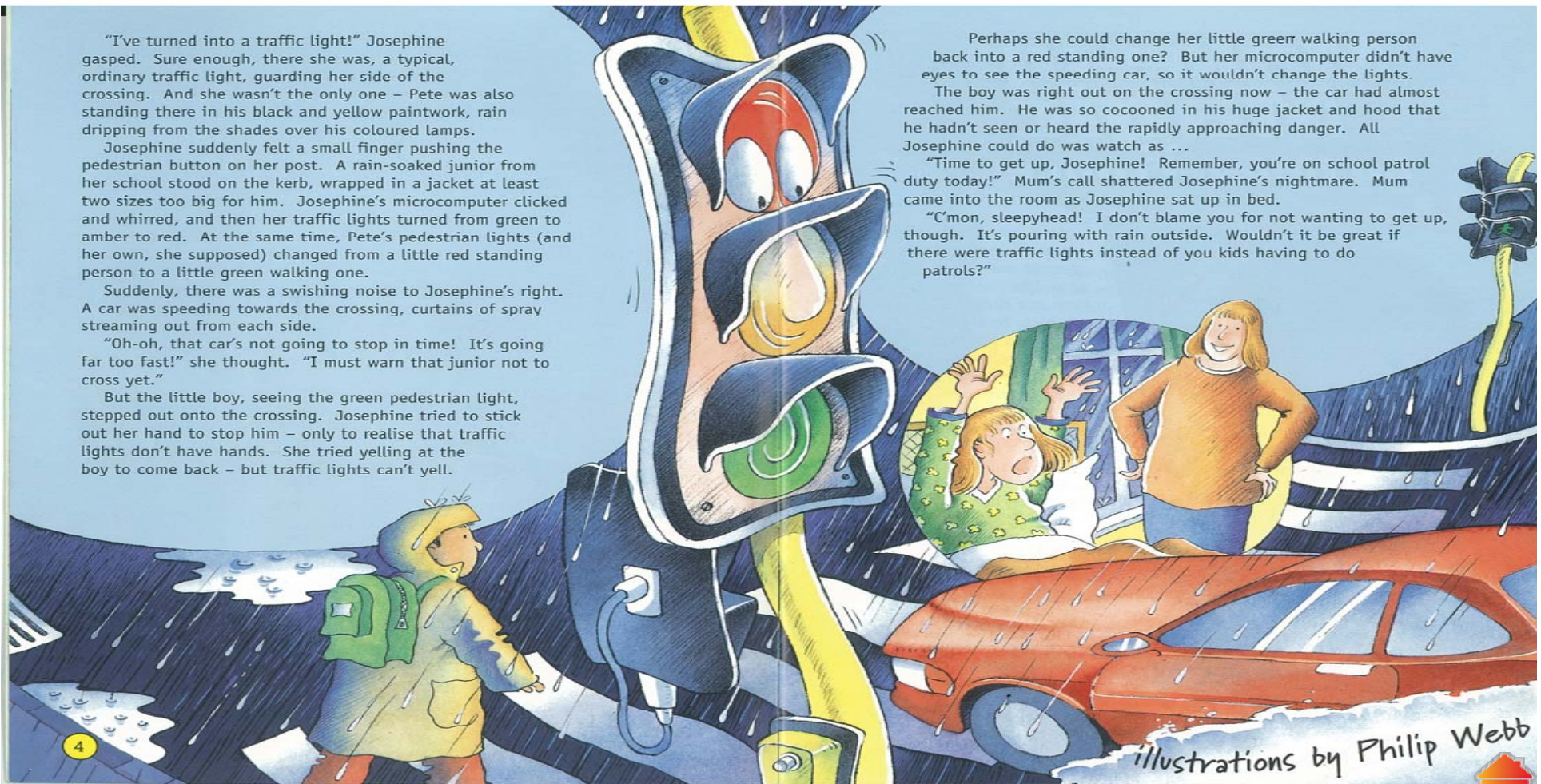
But the little boy, seeing the green pedestrian light, stepped out onto the crossing. Josephine tried to stick out her hand to stop him – only to realise that traffic lights don't have hands. She tried yelling at the boy to come back – but traffic lights can't yell.

Perhaps she could change her little greerr walking person back into a red standing one? But her microcomputer didn't have eyes to see the speeding car, so it wouldn't change the lights.

The boy was right out on the crossing now – the car had almost reached him. He was so cocooned in his huge jacket and hood that he hadn't seen or heard the rapidly approaching danger. All Josephine could do was watch as ...

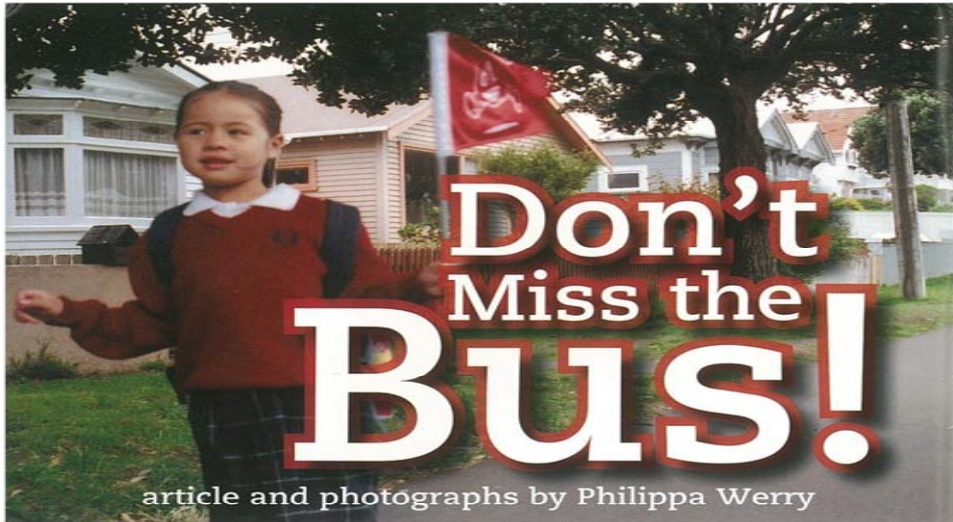
"Time to get up, Josephine! Remember, you're on school patrol duty today!" Mum's call shattered Josephine's nightmare. Mum came into the room as Josephine sat up in bed.

"C'mon, sleepyhead! I don't blame you for not wanting to get up, though. It's pouring with rain outside. Wouldn't it be great if there were traffic lights instead of you kids having to do patrols?"



illustrations by Philip Webb





It's 8 o'clock in the morning. Te Aro Rangi and her little brother, Jacob, pile out of their Island Bay house. A few doors away, Baylee is getting ready for school, too, and Fiu is waiting across the road. They're all heading off to St Anne's School in Newtown, nearly three kilometres away, and they're going to catch a walking school bus to get there.

Lagi is the "driver" of this bus. She walks at the front with Jacob and Baylee. Baylee carries a special flag so that people in cars will know they are a walking school bus and take extra care as they drive past.

Lagi sets a smart pace and doesn't stop between pickup points. This walking school bus doesn't dawdle!

There's lots of traffic on the roads this morning. The walking school bus picks up its next passengers, Petala and Malia, and crosses two sets of traffic lights. More and more passengers join the bus until there are twelve altogether.

The children walk in pairs, talking and laughing but keeping close together. When they reach a road crossing, Lagi makes sure everyone is watching out for cars, and they all cross together. If there are no pedestrian crossings, Lagi has to choose a place where there are no blind spots or parked cars in the way.





At last, they can see their school at the end of the street. By 8.30 a.m., they're in the playground. The walking school bus has arrived.

### What Is a Walking School Bus?

A walking school bus is a safe, fun, and active way for children to get to and from school.

Each "bus" has at least one adult volunteer "driver", usually a parent. The bus follows a set route and stops at "bus stops", where more "passengers" wait. Some walking school buses even have special "tickets" and bus stop signs.

Some buses run every day and others only a few times a week. Children can catch the bus every day or only on the days they choose to.

### What's Great about the Walking School Bus?

- We like walking to school with our friends.
- We keep fit and get more fresh air – and so do our parents.
- We learn how to keep safe on the road.
- Fewer parents drive their kids to school, so there aren't so many cars on the road.
- It saves petrol and money.
- It helps to keep the air cleaner.



# Who killed COCK ROBIN?

by Pat Quinn

## CHARACTERS

NARRATOR	ROAD GANG LEADER
ROBIN	ROAD GANG MEMBER 1
FRIEND	ROAD GANG MEMBER 2
BUS DRIVER	ROAD GANG MEMBER 3
CAR DRIVER	MECHANIC

*The stage is set out like this. The "wall" is a chalk line or string on the floor.*



*The NARRATOR enters at 1, moves to 3, and reads from the script. FRIEND enters from 2, sits at table and looks gloomy.*

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**NARRATOR** Who killed Cock Robin?  
He isn't dead yet  
But conditions are ripe  
And the stage has been set.  
All the factors involved  
Will be known by the end...

*ROBIN enters from 1.*  
Here's Robin now  
Calling in for his friend.

**ROBIN** (knocking on "wall"). Are you ready yet? We'd better get going.

**FRIEND** Oh, hi Robin. I'm not going to school today.

**ROBIN** Why not?

**FRIEND** I don't feel well.

**ROBIN** Come on, you'll be OK.

**FRIEND** I've got a sore throat. (Coughs.) I think I'm getting the 'flu.

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**ROBIN** I think you're trying to get off school.

**FRIEND** I am not!

**ROBIN** It's no fun, walking to school on my own.

**FRIEND** Catch a bus, then.

**ROBIN** All right, I will. Spoil sport.

*ROBIN goes and stands waiting at 6.*

**FRIEND** (shouting). You might have a bit of sympathy!

**ROBIN** (calling back). Ooooh, poor diddums. 'Bye!

**FRIEND** Good riddance. (Slumps at table and falls asleep.)

*BUS DRIVER enters at 1, driving an imaginary bus to 6.*

**BUS DRIVER** It's a good morning to be on the roads. Driving a bus on a day like today makes me feel good.

*BUS DRIVER stops by ROBIN, who gets on and stands behind the DRIVER. The bus starts up again and they bounce up and down moving slowly forward to 4. Bus does a U-turn, to face 6.*

**BUS DRIVER** Mind you, driving a bus load of kids to school (He nods at imaginary passengers.) is something I don't enjoy. Noisy little so-and-sos.

*CAR DRIVER and MECHANIC enter at 1 and move to 3.*

**MECHANIC** Mid-town Garage at your service! (Indicates imaginary car.) There you are! Your car's all ready to go.

**CAR DRIVER** (mimes climbing into car). About time, too. I'm running late.

**MECHANIC** I had to tighten the hand brake and fit a new tyre....

**CAR DRIVER** Yes, yes, just send me the bill. (Impatiently.) Give me the keys!

**MECHANIC** (giving car keys to driver). Here you are. Have a nice day!

*MECHANIC exits at 1.*

**CAR DRIVER** (muttering). A nice day! (Starts car, "drives" to 6 and stays there, bouncing gently.) I'm late already. (Checks watch.) Come on! Slow drivers...!

*ROAD GANG enters at 1, carrying shovels and road signs.*



**ROAD GANG LEADER** Everyone here? Good. We'll get this section finished today. Put the signs up.

**ROAD GANG MEMBER 1** OK, boss. (*Sets signs up at 5 and calls them out.*) "Road Works", "Caution", "Slow, Men Working".

**ROAD GANG MEMBER 2** Is that "Slow Men Working"?

**ROAD GANG MEMBER 3** What about women working?

**ROAD GANG LEADER** The sooner we *all* start working, the better.

*They get to work miming shovelling, or working with pneumatic drills.*

**ROBIN** This is my stop. I'd better get off.

**BUS DRIVER** Bus stopping!

*ROBIN gets off and waits behind the bus, facing ROAD GANG.*

**CAR DRIVER** (*muttering impatiently*). Come on, what's the hold up? I'm running very late.



**BUS DRIVER** (*leaning out the window, talking to himself*). I see they're digging up the roads again.

**ROBIN** (*to himself*). There's a road gang outside the school.

**CAR DRIVER** (*muttering*). I'm late, I'm late, and now there's a road gang in the way.

**BUS DRIVER** I'd better get this bus going again.

**ROBIN** I've got to get to school.

**CAR DRIVER** I've got to get to work.

*BUS DRIVER revs bus and starts to move. ROBIN steps out from behind bus. CAR DRIVER zooms forward and knocks ROBIN down. There's a loud scream, then the action freezes and the scream is abruptly cut off. FRIEND wakes, leaps up, and runs over to ROBIN.*

**FRIEND** Who killed Robin?

*BUS DRIVER unfreezes and turns to FRIEND.*





**BUS DRIVER** He'd got off my bus. It wasn't my fault.

**FRIEND** You should have driven away, and not stayed to block his view!

**BUS DRIVER** I was going to. I was just watching the road gang....

*ROAD GANG unfreezes.*

**ROAD GANG LEADER** You can't blame us, we're just doing our job.

**ROAD GANG MEMBER 1** We put all the signs up.

**ROAD GANG MEMBER 2** We've got written authorisation.

**ROAD GANG MEMBER 3** It was the car that hit him.

*CAR DRIVER unfreezes.*

**CAR DRIVER** It's not my fault. He stepped right into me.

**FRIEND** You could have stopped quicker!

**CAR DRIVER** My reactions are good. There just wasn't time. I was held up getting the car serviced this morning....

*MECHANIC enters from 1.*

**MECHANIC** Don't blame it on me. I checked out that car. Its brakes were A1 and the tyres were good. It's not my fault the boy got killed.

*They all look at FRIEND.*

**FRIEND** If I'd walked to school with him, he wouldn't have gone on the bus. Maybe it's my fault Robin's dead.

**ROBIN** (*sitting up*). Wait a minute. If I'm dead, why argue over whose fault it was?

**CAR DRIVER** If it's anyone's fault, it's yours.



**ROAD GANG LEADER** Yeah, you didn't look when you stepped out from behind the bus.

**BUS DRIVER** You didn't wait for the bus to pull out.

**MECHANIC** You were in too much of a hurry.

**FRIEND** I feel a bit better, then. At least I'm not to blame.

**ROBIN** I don't feel better. Couldn't we change the ending?

**FRIEND** OK. (*Calls.*) Narrator!

*NARRATOR enters.*

**NARRATOR** What d'you want? I'm not meant to come on yet.

**FRIEND** We'd like to change the play.

**CAR DRIVER** Do it from a more positive point of view.

**BUS DRIVER** For instance, I could drive the bus, and then become an ambulance driver and race to rescue the victim.



**ROAD GANG LEADER** We could swap our overalls and shovels for white coats and stethoscopes. We'd be paramedics and save his life.

**CAR DRIVER** If I knock him down, I could also build him up. I'd be a physiotherapist, working with his shattered limbs to help him walk again.

**ROBIN** Can't I just have cuts and bruises?

**CAR DRIVER** Not gory enough.

**ROBIN** Gee, thanks.

**MECHANIC** You've got all the medical jobs, so I'll go into politics. I'll be a powerful politician petitioning Parliament for pedestrian protection.

**FRIEND** Pooh, pooh.

**MECHANIC** That way I get to make a lot of speeches.

**FRIEND** (to NARRATOR). Well? What d' you think?

**NARRATOR** It's not really what we had in mind, is it?

**ROBIN** It's more fun this way.

**FRIEND** And we don't want to do a boring old play about road safety. Put a few laughs into it.

**NARRATOR** It's going to mess up the script. I'll have to rewrite my opening speech. (*Sits at FRIEND'S table and begins working on script.*)

**ROBIN** (*yawning*). I'm going home. We can work on it again tomorrow.

ROAD GANG and MECHANIC *exit at 1.*

**CAR DRIVER** What time is it?

**BUS DRIVER** Five o'clock, right in the middle of the rush hour.

CAR DRIVER and BUS DRIVER *exit at 1.*

**ROBIN** Bother, I've missed my train.

**FRIEND** (*quoting from script*). "Catch a bus, then."

**ROBIN** "All right, I will. Spoil sport."

ROBIN and FRIEND *exit at 1, laughing. There is a pause, then a loud screech of brakes. An ambulance siren sounds. ROAD GANG, MECHANIC, BUS DRIVER, and CAR DRIVER rush on at 1, shouting wildly.*

**MECHANIC** There's been an accident!

**ROAD GANG LEADER** Someone's been hit!

**CAR DRIVER** Did you see what happened?

**BUS DRIVER** (to NARRATOR). Where's Robin?

NARRATOR *has been concentrating on writing. He/she looks up and points towards 1.* MECHANIC, ROAD GANG, CAR DRIVER, and BUS DRIVER *rush off again at 1.*

**NARRATOR** (*stands and begins to read from script*).

"Who killed Cock Robin . . . ." No, they don't want him to die. I could try . . . Who maimed Cock Robin? That doesn't sound right. Injured? Bruised? (*Tries again.*) Who bumped into Cock Robin? No . . . . The trouble is, it's so hard to change these things. (*Sighs and exits at 2.*) ■

*Illustrations by Trevor Pye*





## 111—Emergency! by Pat Quinn

I've dialled 111 once in my life, and I hope I don't have to do it again. I was on my own in a house at night, sleeping, when someone came in and started moving around in the front room. I woke up with a fright, yelled, and ran out into the hall. The burglar ran off.

No one else was home. I couldn't think what to do. Then I remembered the phone. I picked it up and dialled 111 as fast as I could. The line went beep, beep, beep — I hadn't got through! I hung up and tried again.

1...1...1....

This time I got through. Brrr-brrr ... brrr-brrr. It

seemed to ring for ages, then someone answered.

"What?" I whispered.

My voice had disappeared, and my ears didn't seem to be working. I was cold, and shivering all over.

"What service do you require?"

"Oh ... police. Yes, police!"

There was a click, then another voice said, "Police, emergency."

I started to say what had happened, but the words fell over each other and came out in a muddle. The woman at the police station asked me to slow down. It was good to hear her calm, steady voice. I took a deep breath and began again, slower. I had to tell her where I lived — the street, the number, the suburb, and my telephone number.

My telephone number!

I couldn't remember what it was.

"Is it printed on the telephone?" she asked.

I peered at the phone.

"Yes!" I said, and read the number out to her.

"Are you all right?" she asked.

"I think so," I told her. I'd stopped shaking.

"There'll be someone there soon," she said, and there was.

I was lucky. The burglar had been frightened away when I yelled. And although I'd made a lot of mistakes trying to use the 111 system, I'd got through in the end.

\* \* \*



Recently I had a chance to find out how the 111 system works, and to learn what to do if I need to use it again.

When someone dials 111, if they dial properly, the call goes straight to an Operator Services Centre.

Some people dial too fast, like I did, or forget to listen for the dial tone first, and this may mean they don't get connected.

At the Operator Services Centre, telephone operators are busy answering telephone enquiries and toll calls. If a 111 call comes in, a hooter beeps and a red light on the wall starts to flash.

An operator answers: "Operator. What service please?"

When the caller says police, fire, or ambulance, the operator punches in a code number and the call goes through to that emergency service. The operator often stays on the line to monitor the call and write down details: the time the call was made, the telephone number of the person who phoned, and the emergency service they were connected to.

I visited some of the emergency control centres to see what happens when a 111 call comes in.

\* \* \*

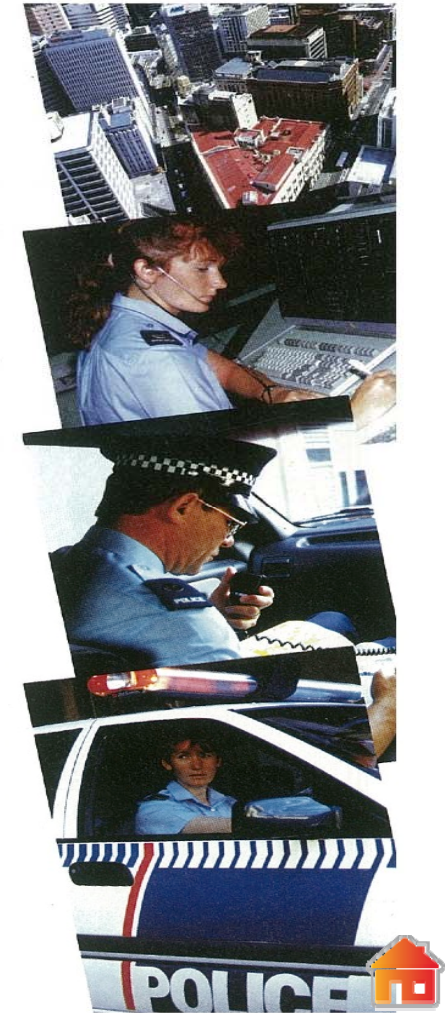
At the Central Police Station, I spoke to the control inspector on duty. Control operators were sitting at their desks, in front of a panel of lights and buttons. Through their headsets, they were keeping in radio contact with police cars.

It was a quiet Monday morning in the city.

The control inspector pointed to the line of red buttons on the dashboard-like panel in front of him. He explained what would happen if a 111 call came through from a tolls operator at the Operator Services Centre.

"One of these will light up and start flashing. It's just a matter of pushing it in and we're immediately connected. We usually get someone who's a bit upset and excited because there's an emergency at their end, so we have to talk to the person to calm them down. We ask them where they're ringing from, their name, the phone number in case we need to get back to them, and then we ask what the problem is.

"Some people who ring up seem to be surprised that we're asking a lot of questions, but we need to know. For instance, if there's a fight, how many people are involved? Have they got weapons? That sort of thing. Callers seem to think that we can see down a big funnel to where they are and work it out for ourselves.





The person might think, 'This officer's talking to me and talking to me and asking a lot of questions and nothing's happening.' In fact, if triple-one goes, someone here will answer it, and anyone else who's available will plug in. We'll listen, get the details, find out roughly what's happening, and have a car on the way while the officer is still talking to you.'

I asked what would happen if the person on the other end dropped the phone, or hung up before they'd given enough information.

The control inspector touched a switch on the panel.

'If we want to, we can flick this switch and hold the call. That means that the phone line is locked open between us and them. If they pick up the phone again, the only person they'll get is us. By holding the line we can get the call traced.'

'When we answer a triple-one call, the tolls operator might say, 'This call comes from a mobile phone,' and then we know we have to be really careful about asking where the caller

is, because we get car-phone calls from all over the country.'

\* \* \*

The Fire Control Centre works in a similar way.

'The sort of information that we need is: the building name if it's got one, the street number and name, and the suburb,' the fire station commander said. 'And if it's a call from a cellphone, it's important that we get the area so that we can pass the information on to the nearest town or city.'

On the wall of the fire station there was a large red light above a map of the city area. The light began to flash. A 111 call was coming through.

A fire control operator answered the call: 'Fire service.'

There was silence while she listened to the person on the other end of the line, then she said, 'Whereabouts are you? ... and what suburb is that in, do you know?'

Other operators had put their headsets on and were monitoring



the call. At the same time they were checking maps and street directories

The station commander let me listen in. A very young boy was talking in a quiet, faraway voice, saying something about getting his friend out. It sounded as though there might be a child trapped in a storm water drain.

“Upper Hutt.”

One of the operators had checked the street name in the directory. She organised a pump truck and rescue team to be sent out from the Upper Hutt Fire Station.

The first operator kept talking.

“Where are you ringing from? Don’t hang up on me, will you. ... You’re by the Four Square. ... Are there any adults with you? Are you ringing from the shop? ... Don’t hang up!”

But the line went dead.

The fire control operator connected back to the tolls operators to ask them to trace the call. Another operator looked up the Upper Hutt Four Square store in the Yellow Pages, and rang the shopkeeper.

It might have been a hoax call, wasting time and effort, or it might have been genuine. The rescue team checked the area, but could find nothing. They believe in this case that the call was genuine, but that the caller’s friend had got himself out. No children were reported missing that day.

\* \* \*

At the ambulance station two ambulance control operators sat at their bank of lights, switches, and computer screens.

A light on the panel suddenly blinked red — a 111 call.

The ambulance officer on the left answered. “Ambulance emergency. . . . What’s happened there? . . . Whereabouts are you? . . . No, just slow down a bit . . .”

He was having difficulty hearing the caller.

“Are you there, tolls?” the ambulance man asked. “Can you understand what she’s saying?”

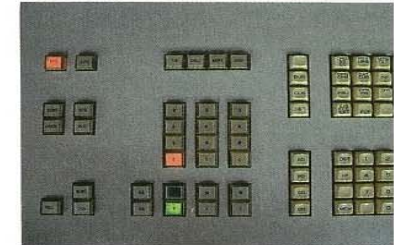
The tolls operator seemed to have a clearer line and told the ambulance man what street name the woman had given.

He spoke to the woman, “Are you there, dear? What is your telephone number there?”

He checked again. “Is that right, tolls? ... OK.”

“We’ll have someone over there shortly,” he told the woman.

The officer punched a button to contact the ambulance station nearest the woman’s house.





“Elderly lady near collapse,” he said, and gave the details: street number, street name, suburb.

If the address was wrong, the woman’s telephone number could be traced to find where she lived. Or the ambulance officer at the control centre could listen again to what the woman said, because the whole conversation was recorded on two tape systems.

The worst that can happen at any of the control centres is that several 111 calls come in at the same time. Even if one of those calls is a false alarm — people being stupid and dialling 111 for no reason — it still has to be checked out. A false or hoax call might keep the police, fire engines, or ambulance from getting to a real emergency in time. Fortunately, this doesn’t often happen because 111 calls can be traced quickly, and hoax callers are usually caught.

\* \* \*

I stepped out of the ambulance station into the busy city street.

People and cars passed by, going to work, to school, shopping, and playing.

It was a warm, sunny morning, a great day to be alive. But I was glad to know that the emergency services were there, twenty-four hours a day, just in case anything went wrong. ■



A copy of a video explaining the 111 system is available free to schools by contacting Telecom Corporate Communications, telephone 0800 650550, or Box 570, Wellington.

