

## Across Turkey by train: riding the Mesopotamia Express

### Level 3: Advanced – Teacher’s notes

**Article summary:** The article describes a journey on one of the new tourist trains linking the Turkish capital, Ankara, with the east of the country.

**Time:** 45–60 minutes

**Skills:** Reading, Speaking

**Language focus:** Vocabulary

**Materials needed:** One copy of the worksheet per student

- |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 9. <i>seemingly</i>   | 12. <i>pressed</i> |
| 10. <i>mercifully</i> | 13. <i>trundle</i> |
| 11. <i>primarily</i>  |                    |

- b. Give students time to complete the sentences using the words from task A. Check answers as a class.

**Key:**

- |                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <i>berth</i>   | 5. <i>derelict</i>   |
| 2. <i>shrill</i>  | 6. <i>seemingly</i>  |
| 3. <i>crooked</i> | 7. <i>hotspot</i>    |
| 4. <i>perk</i>    | 8. <i>mercifully</i> |

### 3. Comprehension check

- a. The answers given are only suggested answers. Students may correctly answer the questions in different ways, e.g., in item 7, they may say ‘to organise a visit to the Harput Great Mosque,’ or similar.

**Key:**

1. *The Mesopotamia Express is more comfortable, stops less frequently, is better for sightseeing and is more expensive.*
2. *to persuade tourists to visit parts of Turkey away from the hotspots*
3. *the Doğu Express*
4. *near the borders with Armenia and Georgia*
5. *to see if it was worth the expense*
6. *air-conditioning*
7. *to enable the passengers to go on an excursion*
8. *because he found out that he was a journalist*
9. *because the train was late*
10. *the music in the dining carriage*

### 1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to introduce the topic of railway travel. Have students work in pairs or small groups to answer.

**Key:**

1. *the UK (from Stockton to Darlington in the north-east of England)*
2. *China (to the capital of Tibet, Lhasa)*
3. *Russia (the Trans-Siberian railway from Moscow to the Pacific)*
4. *China (the train from Shanghai Airport to the city)*
5. *the USA (many of the lines are freight only)*
6. *the USA (Grand Central Station in New York)*

### 2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. The word *perk* is often associated with particular jobs, which may include free travel and free meals. In the context of the article, *crooked* is applied to the tower of a building, but it may also be used with other items that one would normally expect to be straight. Note that it is pronounced as two syllables.

**Key:**

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. <i>bunting</i> | 5. <i>perk</i>      |
| 2. <i>shrill</i>  | 6. <i>rendition</i> |
| 3. <i>berth</i>   | 7. <i>derelict</i>  |
| 4. <i>hotspot</i> | 8. <i>crooked</i>   |

### 4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs. The phrasal verb ‘eye up’ often collocates with ‘chance’ or ‘opportunity’.

**Key:**

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. <i>c</i> | 4. <i>d</i> |
| 2. <i>f</i> | 5. <i>b</i> |
| 3. <i>a</i> | 6. <i>e</i> |

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- b. Students complete the sentences using the correct form of two of the verbs above.

**Key:**

- |                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. <i>pulled into</i> | 4. <i>eye up</i>  |
| 2. <i>rolled out</i>  | 5. <i>tune up</i> |
| 3. <i>pull up</i>     | 6. <i>join in</i> |

### 5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas about each statement and encourage them to say why they agree or disagree with each one.

### 6. In your own words

- a-b. Students will use internet search engines to gather information about the Trans-Siberian Railway and present their findings to the class. Encourage them to write down key facts, interesting details, and any questions.

The task could also be done as homework, and students could present their reports to the class. Summarise the key points discussed during the presentations and allow time for questions and discussions after.