

TEXT A

THE HUMAN WORLD



Early Trains

- The world's first railway, called the Diolkos, was built in 550 BC in Greece. Carriages were pulled by slaves!
- The first successful railway engine was the steam engine built by Cornish engineer Richard Trevithick in 1804.
- The first railway death was that of William Huskisson, on the day the first passenger railway opened in 1830.

Railway Roundup

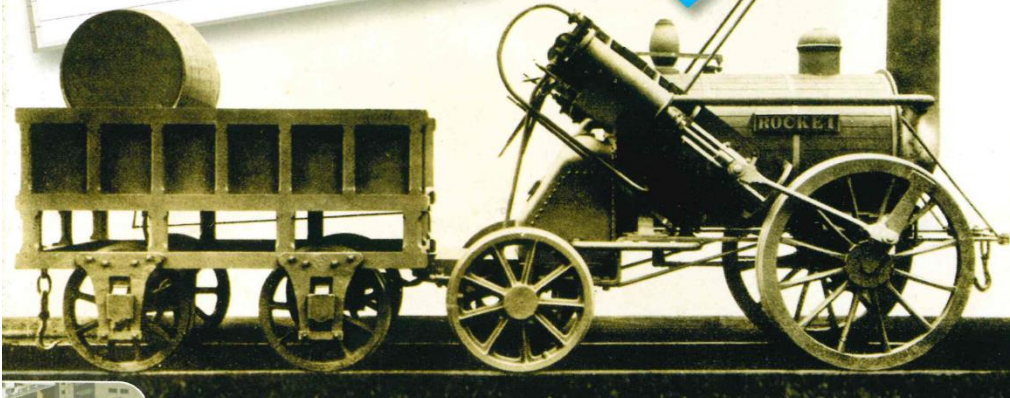
When carriages were pulled by horses, journeys were slow and bumpy. Trains brought new levels of speed and comfort.



George Stephenson's *Rocket*, below, won the first locomotive trials in England in 1829, averaging 50 kph over 80 kilometres.

By the 1840s, trains could complete the 300-kilometre journey from London to Exeter in well under four hours.

On 10 May 1869, railways from either side of the country met at Promontory, Utah in the USA. This completed the first railway ever to cross a continent.

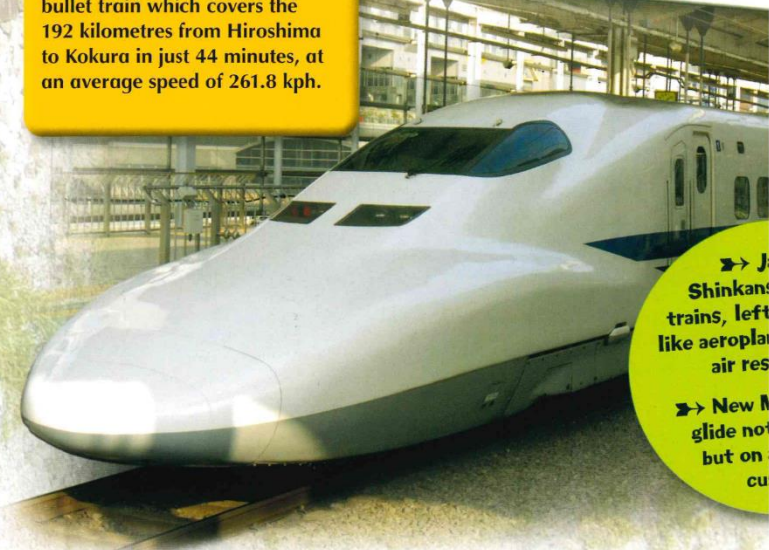


Railway Records

- ☛ The world speed record for a steam train was set by the *Mallard*, which pulled seven coaches at 201 kph on 3 July 1938.
- ☛ The longest train ever was over 7.3 kilometres long and contained 660 trucks. It travelled from Saldanha to Sishen in South Africa on 26 August 1989.
- ☛ The fastest train ever was the French TGV, which whizzed between Courtalain and Tours at 515.3 kph on 18 May 1990.
- ☛ The Trans-Siberian Express takes about seven days to cover 9288 kilometres from Moscow to Vladivostok in eastern Siberia.
- ☛ The world's fastest regular train service is Japan's Shinkansen bullet train which covers the 192 kilometres from Hiroshima to Kokura in just 44 minutes, at an average speed of 261.8 kph.



London's underground railway system is the oldest and largest in the world. It was built with the Metropolitan Railway (pictured here) on 10 January 1863.



- Japan's Shinkansen bullet trains, left, glide smoothly on air resistance.
- New Maglev trains glide smoothly on air resistance.