

A CLEAN AIR CYCLE TO SCHOOL





A Clean Air Cycle to School

By Southampton City Council

Written by Emily Jordan

Illustrated by Katt Grover



A Clean Air Cycle to School

By Southampton City Council

Written by Emily Jordan

Illustrated by Katt Grover

Published 2023

Story: Copyright © Emily Jordan, 2023

Illustration: Copyright © Katt Grover, 2023

The right of Emily Jordan (author) and Katt Grover (illustrator) of this work
has been asserted in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or distributed in any
form without prior written permission from the author, with the exception of
non-commercial uses permitted by copyright law.

A Clean Air Cycle to School

This book takes you through an educational story about two children (Maggie and Ned) who travel to school by bike. When Ned becomes unwell from air pollution, they have to think of a better route to take to school. Maggie becomes an eco-warrior to learn how she can help Ned travel to school whilst also keeping him healthy by breathing clean air.

The Clean Air Cycle to School book aims to educate children and parents as to what air pollution is, where it comes from and how children and parents can travel to school sustainably and actively whilst avoiding exposure to air pollution.

“Hurry up Maggie! We’re going to be late!” shouted Ned up the stairs to his best friend, who was still probably brushing her hair or teeth. He slumped against the wall in a huff and patted his pocket to check his inhaler was there. Ned struggled with his breathing and sometimes needed a little help to breathe clearly again. Moments later, Maggie’s footsteps plodded heavily down the stairs.

“Goodbye Mum!” she called and picked up her school bag and cycling helmet.



Maggie and Ned took the shortcut to school, along the bustling high streets and main roads full of people ready to start their day. The traffic was bad, cars weren't moving but their engines continued to pump dusty fumes into the air.

“Mum is going to be cross if she is late to work,” sighed Maggie as she cycled along the grey, concrete path.

“It's not very nice, is it?” replied Ned spluttering and coughing. He wiped his eyes and took a deep breath. The fumes were causing a tickle in his throat. Maggie and Ned arrived at school just in time but Ned didn't feel well at all.



The next morning, Maggie perched on the bottom of the stairs. Her mum's phone began to ring. "Hello, Mrs May... Oh no, I'm sorry to hear Ned is feeling poorly.... I hope he feels better soon. Goodbye!" Maggie's mum placed her phone back into her pocket and walked over to the stairs. She gently patted Maggie on the arm. "It's nothing to worry about Maggie. He just has a bit of a tight feeling in his chest and needs some time to rest. You head off to school." Maggie nodded her head glumly.

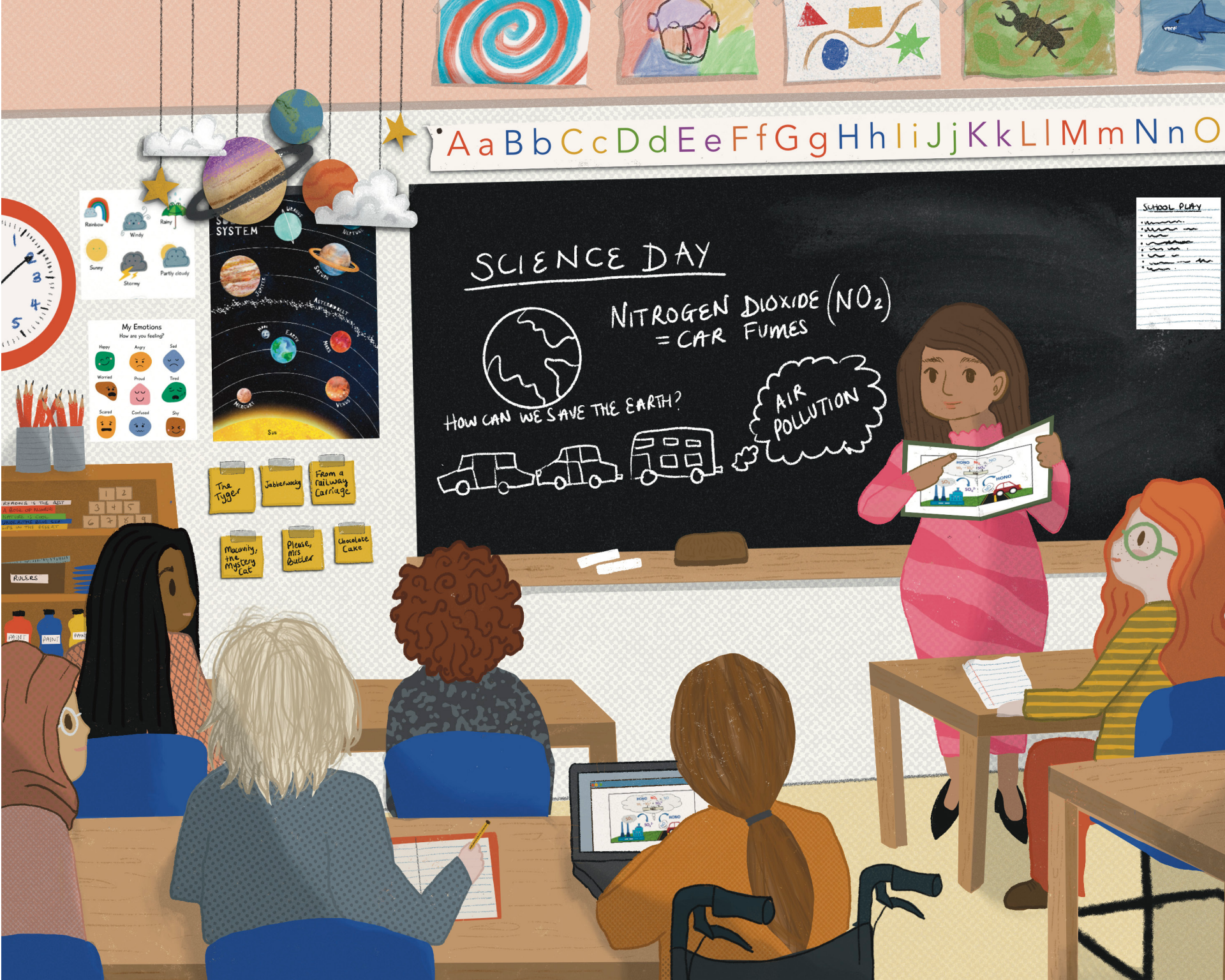


Riding to school without her friend was boring and as she looked around, she began to take note of how grey her ride to school was, there were no trees and very little of the wildlife that she loved to read about in books. They're probably scared by all the noisy traffic, she thought to herself. She saw the cars sat still in a row and rolled her eyes thinking about how this would make air pollution worse. Without Ned, this ride to school felt very lonely.



When she arrived at school Mrs Green, her teacher, told the class that it was Science Day. Maggie grinned for the first time that day. Science was her favourite subject. Their learning for the day was about the environment and how we can look after it. Mrs Green taught the class about a gas called nitrogen dioxide and explained that it can be found in car fumes.

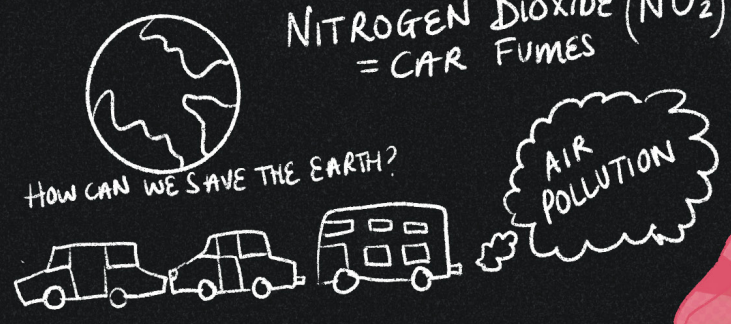
“Nitrogen dioxide can make people feel a little poorly if they are around it too much and can make it tricky for some people to breathe,” she said while holding up a book and pointing to pictures of busy streets full of traffic. It looked like the route that Maggie and Ned ride along to get to school.



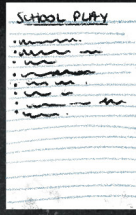
Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo

SCIENCE DAY

NITROGEN DIOXIDE (NO₂)
= CAR FUMES



- The Tiger
- Jabberwocky
- From a Railway Carriage
- Moonlight, the Mystery Cat
- Please, Miss Butler
- Chocolate Cake



“Can you think of ways we can improve air quality, look after our health and help the environment?” Mrs Green asked the class.

“Yes!” Maggie yelled as her hand shot up. “What about walking or cycling to school instead of taking the car? This means we could take cleaner, quieter and more green routes to school?”

“Great idea Maggie!”

Maggie’s class began to buzz with noise as children came up with super ways to save the planet. Maggie grinned; she knew exactly what to do...



Emissions

Environment

Part through the common

The next morning, she cycled to Ned's house and knocked on the door. A sleepy Ned slowly answered.

“Wake up sleepyhead, it's time for school!” Maggie smiled.

“I thought Mum told you, I can't cycle anymore, it makes me feel too tight in my chest because of all the fumes,” replied Ned.

“Cycling is good for us, what if I told you I had a plan,” Maggie said. Ned smiled, grabbed his cycle helmet and bag then zoomed out the door.



The route they cycled did not take them any longer but it was much nicer. They rode through a large, peaceful park called the Common. The paths were clear and the wind whistled through green leaves on the trees. It was quieter so Ned and Maggie were able to laugh and chat without having to shout over the noise of the traffic. The route through the common was much safer than their normal journey along the main road with all the busy traffic. They counted five squirrels, four birds and three butterflies on their journey to school that morning. When they arrived at school Mrs Green's class were out on the playground finishing their projects from Science Day.



“Welcome back Ned!” called Mrs Green. “Would you like to become one of my eco-warriors?” She pointed to his friends who were busy picking up litter, planting trees and planning clean air routes to school. Ned looked around and smiled. He couldn’t believe all of their hard work.

“Yesterday was Science Day,” said Maggie. “We talked about a gas called nitrogen dioxide that comes from cars and can make some people feel quite poorly.”

“All of this was Maggie’s idea,” explained Mrs Green. “She wanted to save the environment and find a safer way to cycle to school with you again. She is the best eco-warrior ever!”

Ned and Maggie smiled at each other, knowing they would be best friends forever and work together to keep the air clean.



QUESTIONS

1. What is it called when cars pump out dusty fumes into the air?
2. Why did Ned feel unwell after cycling to school next to cars?
3. What was the gas called that comes out of cars?
4. Can you think of any other ways we can improve air quality, look after our health and help the environment?
5. What animals did they count on their way to school through the common?
6. Why did Ned feel better after taking the route to school through the common?

This book is provided to the target schools in Southampton that have been engaged with the Clean Air Project in the year 23/24 (soton.cc/schoolscleanair). These schools have taught air pollution lessons, monitored their air quality and used an eco-club to encourage and make changes, to improve the schools air quality and reduce children's exposure to air pollution.

This book was funded by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) as part of the air quality grant. This project is a key part of The SCC's newly adopted Air Quality Action Plan in helping reduce the impact on vulnerable residents in the city.

This book was written and illustrated by the University of Winchester and many thanks goes to them for the great work in producing this book for schools in Southampton.

To find out more about Southampton Schools Clean Air Project please visit soton.cc/schoolscleanair

This book takes you through an educational story about two children (Maggie and Ned) who travel to school by bike. When Ned becomes unwell from air pollution, they have to think of a better route to take to school.

Maggie becomes an eco-warrior to learn how she can help Ned travel to school whilst also keeping him healthy by breathing clean air.

The Clean Air Cycle to School book aims to educate children and parents as to what air pollution is, where it comes from and how children and parents can travel to school sustainably and actively whilst avoiding exposure to air pollution.

