



# Walking Facts from Around the World

## Walking Trivia

- The Nile river is 6,695 kilometres long and flows through 9 countries; Uganda, Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Zaire, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. If you walked 40 kilometres per day, it would take you 167 days to walk the length of the Nile (*Michael Barron*, [http://www.mbarron.net/Nile/fctfl\\_nf.html](http://www.mbarron.net/Nile/fctfl_nf.html)).
- The space shuttle orbits earth approximately 400 km above the Earth's surface. It would take 10 days to walk to the space shuttle's orbit (at 40 kilometres per day), if you could walk straight up into the sky (*Craig Freudenrich*, <http://science.howstuffworks.com/spaceshuttle2.htm>).
- Although it only takes 1.3 seconds for light to travel from the Earth to the moon, it would take 9,610 days or 26.3 years to walk the 384,403 kilometre distance at a rate of 40 kilometres per day (Phil Simborg, [http://www.bg-info.com/humor\\_-\\_facts.htm](http://www.bg-info.com/humor_-_facts.htm)).
- It's 7,428 kilometers from St. John Newfoundland to Vancouver, British Columbia. It would take 186 days to walk that distance at 40 kilometres per day (<http://www.saferoutestoschool.ca/index.php?page=asrtsrg>; Active & Safe Routes to School Resource Guide, Chapter 4, Implementation Process).
- The world's longest designated hiking trail is the Pacific Crest Trail, which runs for 4,260 km (2,650 miles) along the West Coast of the USA between the Mexican and Canadian borders (<http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/>).
- Mount Everest is the highest mountain in the world.
  - It measures 8,850 metres or 29,035 feet to the summit of the mountain.
  - The first seven attempts on Everest started in 1921 and all were unsuccessful.
  - The first climbers to reach the summit were Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay in 1953
  - The first disabled person, Tom Whittaker, climbed Mount Everest three times before he reached the top in 1998
  - Overall, more than 600 climbers from 20 countries have climbed to the summit. (*From: Dorset County Council's Road Safety Team, Walk Up Everest project* [www.dorsetcc.gov.uk](http://www.dorsetcc.gov.uk))

## Walking Words -- Language

- Irish writer, William Hazlitt (1778-1830), wrote the first essay dedicated to walking called, "On Going a Journey," in 1821. (*"wanderlust: A History of Walking"* by Rebecca Solnit, p. 119 and <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/PRhazlitt.htm> and <http://www.blupete.com/Literature/Biographies/Literary/Hazlitt.htm>)
- Scottish author, photographer, and school teacher, Hamish Brown, climbed all of Scotland's 279 Munros (peaks over 3,000 meters) for the only valid reason - for fun! (*"wanderlust: A History of Walking"* by Rebecca Solnit, pp. 146-147 and [http://www.braeheadnews.org.uk/html/hamish\\_brown.html](http://www.braeheadnews.org.uk/html/hamish_brown.html))
- The English writer, Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), was an avid walker from 1794 to 1804 and this is reflected in the poetry he wrote during that time. He was the first known outsider to climb mountain tops for the pleasure of it. His 1802 ascent of Scafell Pike, the highest Lakeland peak, is the mountain's first recorded climb. (*"wanderlust: A History of Walking"* by Rebecca Solnit, pp. 108-110 along the bottom of the pages. P. 116, "William

### Science:

- **Aurora Borealis** Ever go for a night walk/hike? Look up and see if you can see the Aurora Borealis, the lights you see in the Aurora are produced by particles from the sun produced by solar flares colliding with gases in the Earth's atmosphere. Aurora Borealis is most frequently viewed from beyond the Arctic or Antarctic Circle but can be seen as far away as 45° latitude. ([Nordlyssenteret, 2003, http://www.northern-lights.no/](#)) (<http://www.aurorachasers.com/FAQ/index.html#G12>)
- **Moving Creatures** What do monarch butterflies and hummingbirds, whooping cranes and wolves, manatees and gray whales all have in common? They all cover enormous distances under their own power every year! See: <http://www.learner.org/jnorth> for information on how you and your class can track the migration of birds, whales and butterflies.
- **Worms** If you walk to school on pavements sidewalks you will likely see worms along your journey in the spring and fall. They are known as the intestines of the soil. Over a million worms can be found in a single acre. These creatures have 5 hearts and eat by pushing their pharynx out of their mouth and sucking in then pushing it down into their esophagus and then further into the worm's digestive system. Earthworms are slimy because they produce a mucus on their skin which allows them to breath through their skin. See: <http://yucky.kids.discovery.com/noflash/worm/pg000216.html> for more information.

### Land Use Planning -- Geography

- **Kids on the Move** is a set of activities developed by the City of Portland Office of Transportation to help students learn pedestrian, cycling, public transit and automobile safety. See: <http://www.trans.ci.portland.or.us/saferoutes/learning/teachers/KidsOnTheMove/default.htm>.
- **Kids Planning Guide** is a resource for teaching children and youth about urban planning and community development. Different sections in the guide examine various aspects of community and community planning. Sections include "Walk Around the Block", "The Neighbourhood You Live In", "Places You Go in Your Community", "Your Community, How it All Fits Together" and "Creating Better Communities with Kids". See: <http://www.cip-icu.ca/English/images/kidsguide.pdf>.

### Physical Activities

- The **Heart and Stroke Foundation** has designed the "Powerskills" series of curriculum linked sports, fitness and drama activities for teachers and parents to share with youth. See: <http://www1.heartandstroke.ca/Page.asp?PageID=33&ArticleID=725&Src=living&From=SubCategory>.
- 2005 is the International Year of Sport and Physical Education! See the Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (CAHRERD) website for activity ideas for the entire year. Their website is: <http://www.yearofsportandpe.ca>.
- **Need a 5 Minute Warm Up?** Get moving with Toronto Public Health's 5 Minute Stretch and Movement sessions. See: <http://www.toronto.ca/health/movespot.pdf> to download the activities. There are 5 different activity sets, one for each day of the week.