



## Florida's Transportation History

---

**Lesson Essential Question:** How did the development of transportation significantly contribute to the growth of Florida?

**Objective:** Students will be able to use primary sources and information to examine the causes and effects of different types of transportation throughout Florida's history.

**Materials:**

- Background information and images of developments in transportation by aviation, bridges, ports, roads, and rail.
  - Multi-Flow map for cause and effect and assignment instructions
- 

**Instructions:**

**1. Have the student download and read** the background information on the different developments of transportation in Florida.

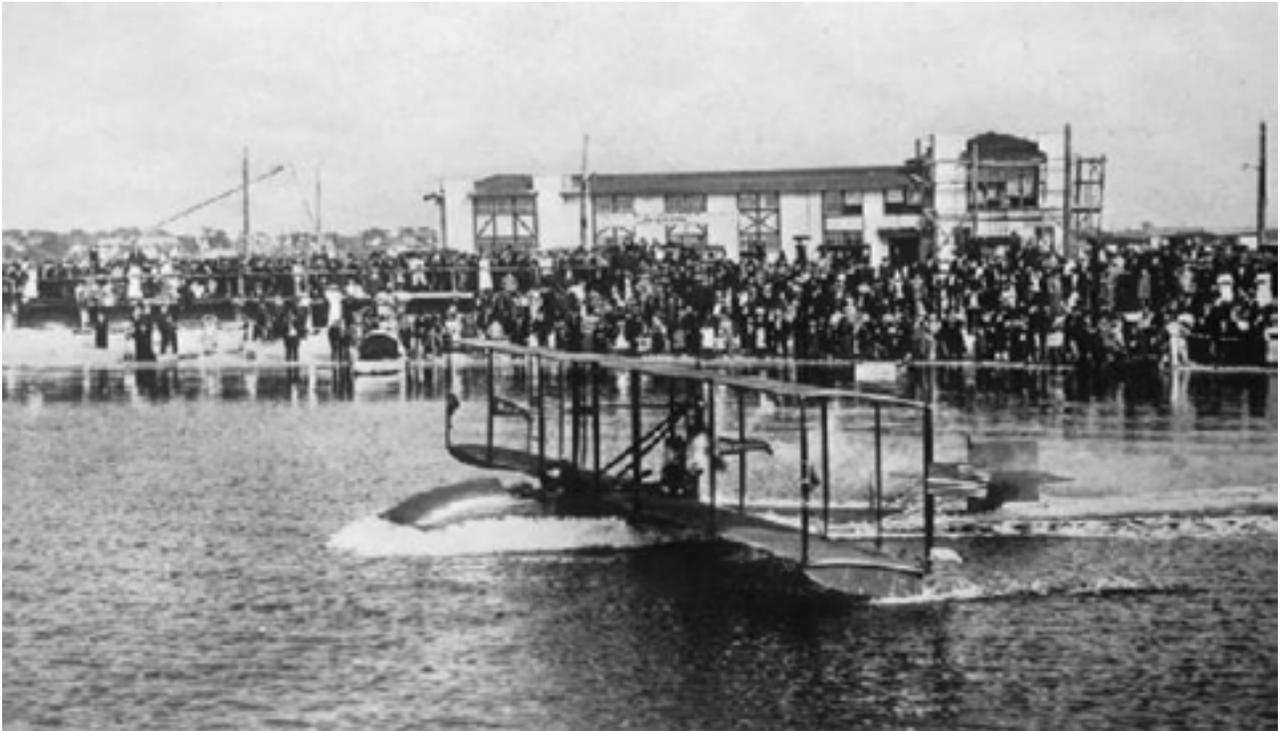
**2. As they read,** have the students construct a Multi-Flow Map to show the causes and effects of the development of different types of transportation (Aviation, Bridges, Rail, etc.) Explain the concept of cause and effect in that the causes are what lead up to the main event, and the effects are the results. *Important: make sure they understand that for this lesson, the development of the type of transportation is considered the main event.* Students are to map out the causes and effects for 3 different developments in Florida transportation.

**3. Students will write a short essay** that explains the significance that each development had on contributing to Florida's growth by specific examples in each paragraph.



## The Development of Aviation:

### The World's First Commercial Aircraft! - January 1, 1914



*This is the first flight of the world's first commercial aircraft, a Benoist Type XIV, Model No. 43, in Tampa-St. Petersburg on January 1, 1914. Thomas Wesley Benoist, who once manufactured more planes than the Wright brothers, was the first to keep and record costs per "air-ton-mile" as early as 1912.*

The history of flight in Florida began with Lincoln Beachey, the first man to fly from Florida soil. In 1911, Beachey made the first night-flight in the history of the world over Tampa. As aviation progressed, companies pioneered the scheduled transport of passengers by air. On January 1, 1914, the Benoist Company scheduled passenger service from Tampa to St. Petersburg with a five dollar fare. The Benoist "Air Boat" made its first flight over Tampa Bay (25 miles at 60 mph) on January 12.

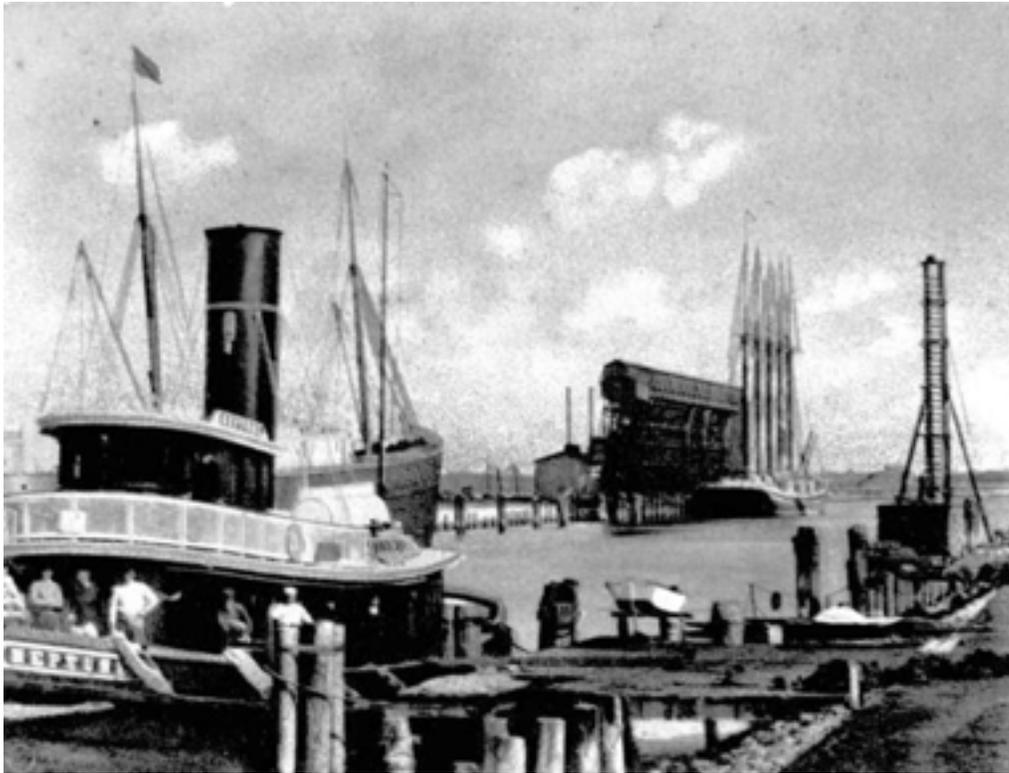
## The Development of Bridges: The Gandy Bridge 1930



*The Gandy Bridge, the first to cross Tampa Bay, was a dream of former Philadelphia industrialist George S. “Dad” Gandy 10 years before it was a reality. After two years of construction, Dad Gandy made the dedication speech on November 20, 1924 with a four-word one liner, “The bridge is built!” It cost \$3 million to build at that time and was one of the longest bridges in the world. The 2 1/2 mile concrete bridge with 3 1/2 miles of causeways cut the driving distance between St. Petersburg and Tampa from 43 miles to 19 miles.*

Major accomplishments in bridge-building in Florida include the Gandy Bridge across Old Tampa Bay, which, when completed in 1924, reduced the travel time from St. Petersburg to Tampa by half. With more than a thousand miles of coastline, many scenic rivers and navigable waterways, and countless lakes dotting its interior, Florida has historically challenged those who would build highways and bridges. Up until the Civil War, bridges in Florida were mainly primitive and temporary. With the advent of rail in the late 19th century, however, specifically Henry Flagler’s Florida East Coast Line, it was evident that stronger structures were needed to carry heavy loads across wide spans of water and uneven terrain.

## The Development of Ports: Port of Tampa early 1900s



*"The Neptune," seen here docked at the Port of Tampa with some of its crew, was built in Palatka in 1902. Historically a port for cruises, ship repair, and bulk cargo such as phosphate and refined fuel, the Port of Tampa now imports and exports nearly 50 million tons of cargo annually and ranks as the nation's third largest in terms of domestic tonnage.*

In 1896, wealthy businessman and railroad pioneer, Henry Flagler, extended his East Coast Railroad to Miami. Shortly thereafter, he funded construction of the Port of Miami and began collecting dockage fees. The Port of Miami welcomed its first passenger ship on scheduled sailings to Baltimore in 1920, and in 1924 inaugurated service to New York. In the 1930s, regular cruises between Miami and Havana, Cuba became popular. Currently the port has 750 acres dedicated to rolling stock, container yards, refrigerated warehouse space, gantry crane facilities, 12 modern cruise terminals, and administration offices. Today, four of Florida's 14 seaports rank in the top 25 in the nation in the volume of merchandise traded.

## **The Development of Roads: Taking the Bus Between Tampa and Lakeland October 1919**



*The U.S. Tire Company had this picture taken in an effort to promote travel by motor vehicle. The road improvements between Tampa and Lakeland encouraged people to travel by bus between the two communities. The photo was taken on Twigg Street in Tampa, just outside the Federal Building.*

There has been a fundamental change in America's transportation needs. Just a hundred years ago, most people lived on farms or in thousands of small rural communities. They lived close to where their food supply was grown and most people were either directly or indirectly involved in growing their food. Now, that is all changed. With the automobile as the preferred mode of transportation since the 1920s, most people now live in cities - urban centers far from the farm, meaning their food and other needs must be transported to them. Florida roads received a healthy boost in 1931 when the gas tax was increased to six cents per gallon, with three cents going to the department for construction and maintenance and another three cents going to the counties to repay existing debts. The 1940s was the most important decade for transportation in Florida. Not only did federal funds become available for municipal roads, but World War II placed priority on several Florida projects. The most notable of these was the construction of the Overseas Highway - a system of roads, bridges and ferries linking the Florida mainland with Key West. The 1950s saw the construction of Florida's Turnpike. Once administered by the Old Sunshine State Parkway Authority, Florida's Turnpike is now part of the Department of Transportation.

## **The Development of Rail: Vegetable Train 1907**



*The Florida and West Indies Railroad and Steamship Company completed work on this track in 1903. This wood-burning vegetable train ran from Turkey Creek in Hillsborough County south to Palmetto in Manatee County. Farmers would place their vegetables along the track for pick-up by the train. The man with the broom kept the tracks free of gravel.*

The history of rails in Florida spans more than 160 years. The opening of peninsular Florida following the Civil War was in large part driven by railroad expansion. While the sound of the steam whistle echoing through the north Florida pine forests evoke images of the past, it was the passenger trains of Henry Plant and Henry Flagler that established the urbanized Florida of today.

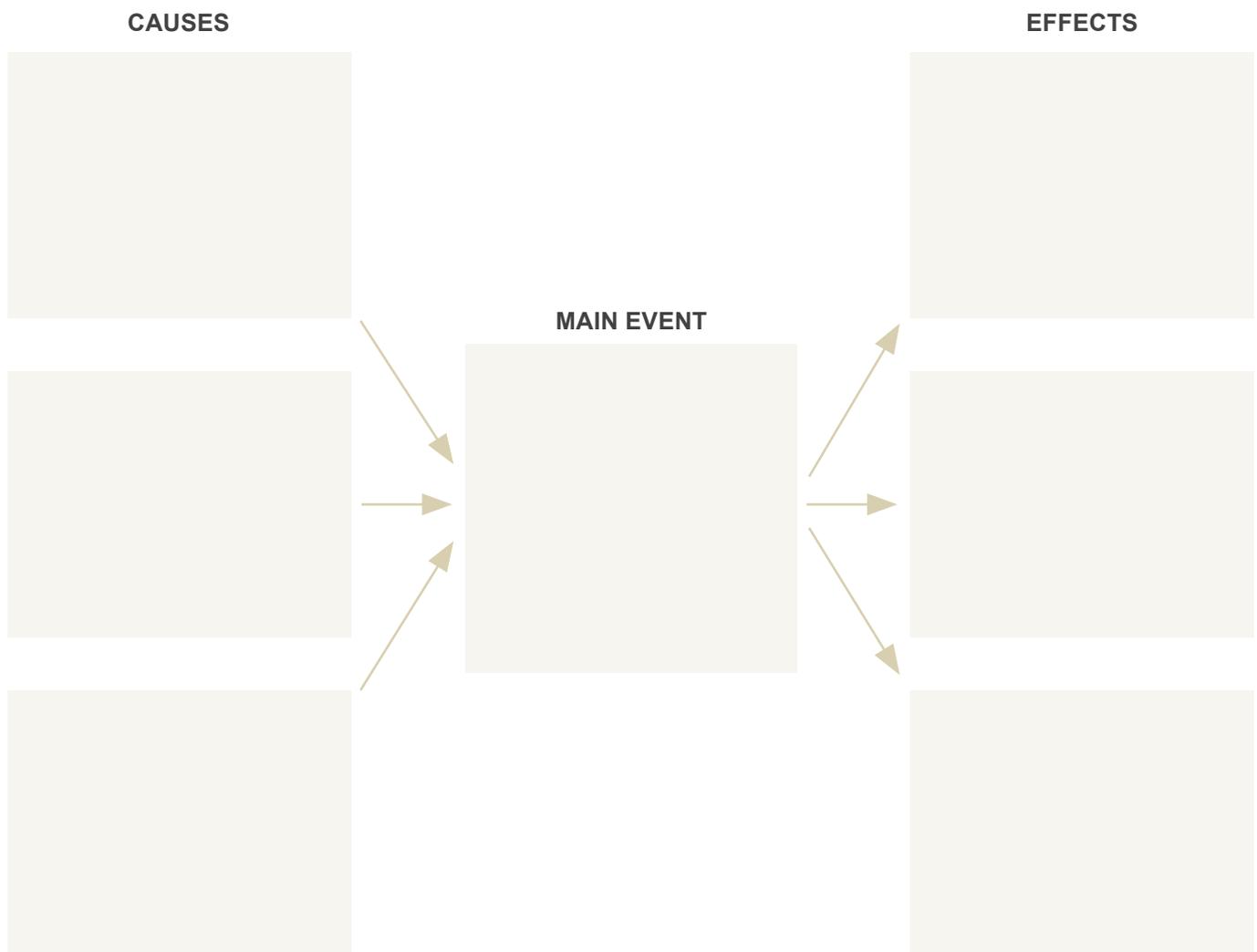
Trains evolved from the rural short lines to the present major rail systems. Now, the commercial freight railroads set new ton-mile records almost yearly. Amtrak has re-established the conventional passenger train as a viable transportation option, there has been a resurgence of commuter rail services such as southeast Florida's Tri-Rail, and a revolution in rail technology stands ready to bring a new age of high speed rail service to Florida.

## Cause and effect of transportation in Florida

### ASSIGNMENT

1. Read the background information on the different developments of transportation in Florida.
2. Use a Multi-Flow Map like this one to show the causes and effects of the development of different types of transportation (Aviation, Bridges, Rail, etc.) The causes are what lead up to the development of the type of transportation (the main event) and the effects are the results. Map out the causes and effects for 3 different developments in Florida transportation.

### Multi-Flow Thinking Map



## Florida's Transportation History

---

*continued*

### Cause and effect of transportation in Florida

#### ASSIGNMENT

**3. Write a short essay** that explains the significance that each development had on contributing to Florida's growth. Use specific examples in each paragraph.

