



## Model Train: Plano History Worksheet



This model portrays Plano and other small towns like it in 1920.

*How many years ago was 1920? How does this town look different from what it's like today?* \_\_\_\_\_

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In 1920 Plano's population was around 1,300. Now it's over 275,000.

*What changes do you think the electric railway brought to Plano?* \_\_\_\_\_

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The train ran on electricity that was converted in \*this\* building, circled in **red**. This building was the **Plano Station** for the **Texas Electric Railway**. It began operation in 1908.

*There were many possible modes of transportation from 1910 to 1940. Fill out the chart below by listing their pros and cons. (Hint: Which options require the most physical effort? Which are the most expensive? The most affordable? What option is best when it's raining? What if you had to travel from Plano to Dallas? Which option do you think is best? Why?)*



	Pros	Cons
Walk		
Bicycle		
Animals (ex: Horses)		
Car		
Trolley		

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The Interurban Railway ran on **direct current (DC) electricity**, which means energy only flowed in one direction, from the Plano substation to the trolley wires. Trains connected to the wires with a **trolley pole**, which is circled in **red** in the image above. As long as the trolley pole was connected to the wires, the train received electricity and was able to move down the railroad track.

*Have you ever ridden the DART? How is this different from DART? \_\_\_\_\_*

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*How else do you think people used electricity in the 1930s? (Hint: Are store lights, home appliances, radios, theaters, and heating the same today?) How do we use*

*electricity now?* \_\_\_\_\_

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In the picture above, a freight car is pulling over onto a **siding**. A siding is a short piece of track that branches off of the main railroad. Trains can use these sections of the railway to pull over and allow another train to pass. This helps prevent collisions even if trains are going in opposite directions.



Let's take a closer look at the schoolhouse. This is where all of the children in Plano would go to school.

*How is this different from today? Why? (Hint: Is our population the same size? Does that mean there are more or fewer kids? Is there electricity in school buildings? Do we have school buses?)* \_\_\_\_\_

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