

# **LOCAL STUDIES**

## **‘Bradshawing’**

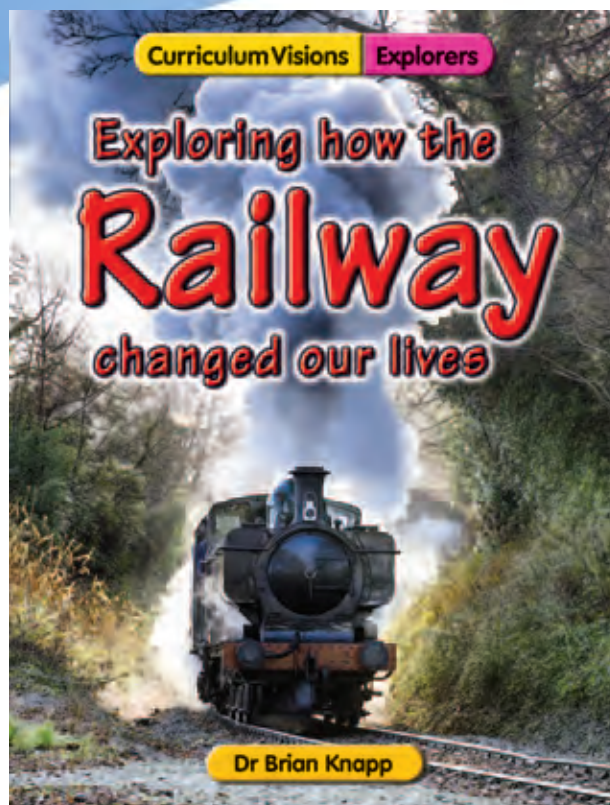


**How to teach local  
studies using  
railway stations and  
bus stops**

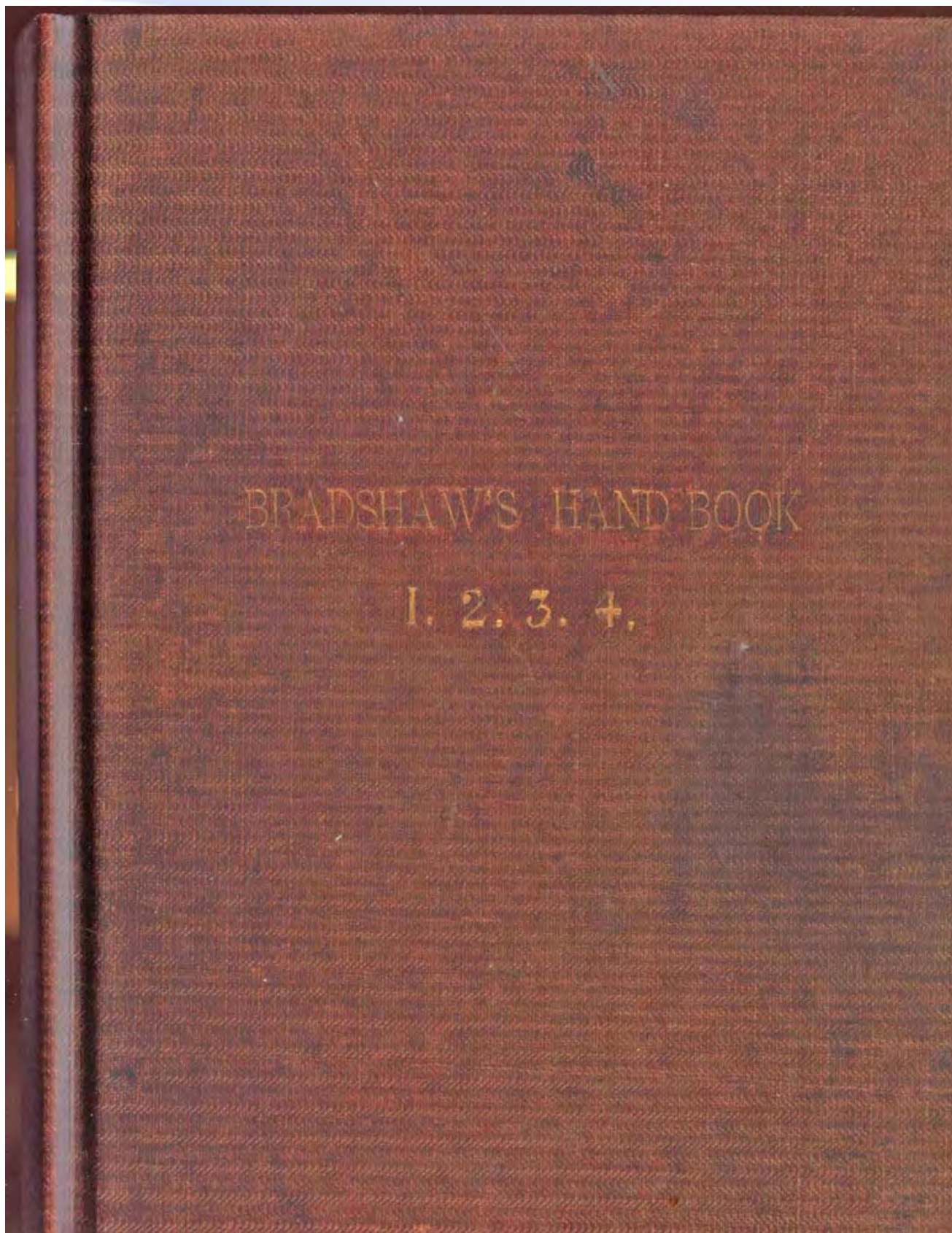
# Basic resources

## 1. Bradshaw

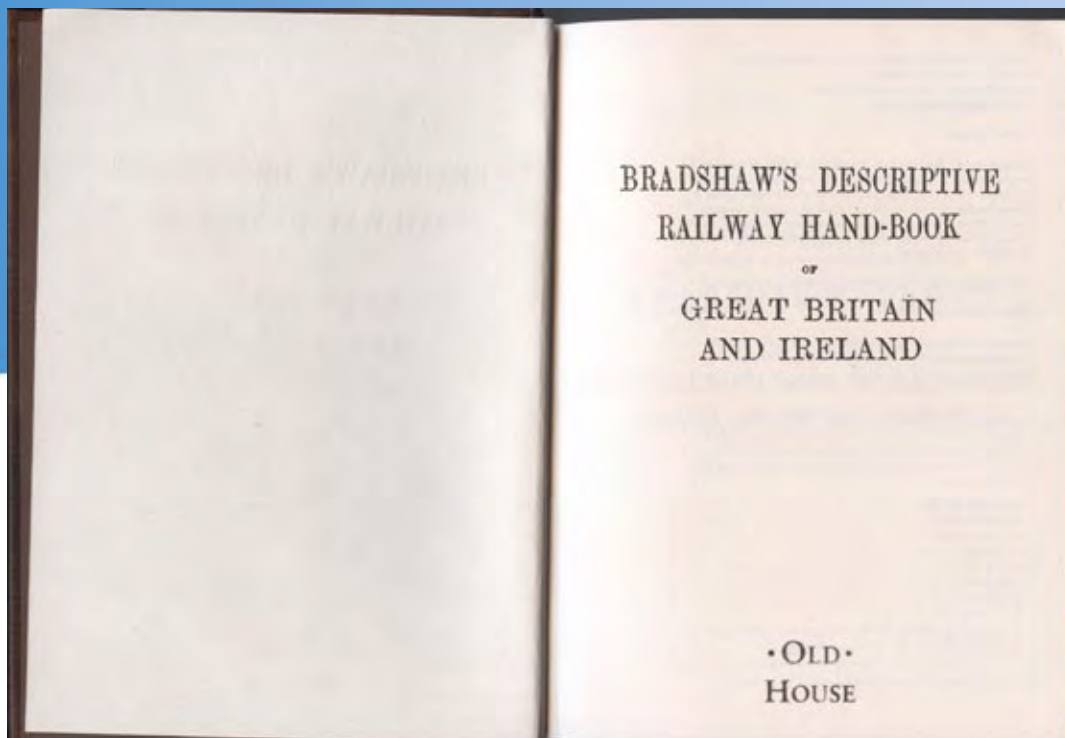
- ▶ I am sure you will know of Bradshaw, the guide to Britain's railways written in Victorian times. It is still available cheaply in hardback.
- ▶ What Bradshaw did was to produce a kind of travel guide, telling people what they would see.
- ▶ Most people still have a railway station somewhere near, and the idea here is to produce a local tourist guide for people alighting from the local railway station today.
- ▶ The purpose of using Bradshaw is to get used to reading literature written in Victorian times, and the idea is to write the tourist information sheet with your students in the same style.
- ▶ If you no longer have a railway station nearby, then use a bus stop. You and your students can then suppose you got to a railway station then took a bus and start from there.
- ▶ We can call this idea of making a travel guide from a local station (or bus stop) 'Bradshawing', after the man who wrote the guide.







# Local studies



Here are some screenshots of Bradshaw. If you get a copy for your class, you can discuss the way it is presented, the font, the style of writing and many other things about how Victorians compiled their books, including the absence of photos (which were not possible at this time).





# Start with the book

## 1. The 'Bradshaw'

**Objective:** To find out what is going on locally, noticing that Bradshaw talked about landscape, history, places to visit, but also what people worked as and, importantly, gave an opinion about each of these things. So it is not just a piece of hard fact, but a view on life. This makes it a more challenging thing for the more able students to do.

### Making your Bradshaw

#### "Gathering facts"

- ▶ You can't do a Bradshaw without gathering local facts about your area. The Bradshaw gives your students a real reason for gathering those facts: where would you go to shop, where would you go to school, where are the religious buildings, when were they built/first used/ and a bit about the history of your locality. Make sure you explain about places of local interest such as unusual buildings, historical places, which are the main roads and so on.
- ▶ Because it is a Bradshaw students now have to think about giving their visitors some idea of what your local place is like in a couple of paragraphs. This means they have to summarise the information and so this is all part of English Literature.
- ▶ Now they can consider telling a potential visitor what to go to see and how to get there from the railway station/bus stop.
- ▶ Now you can go over the writing style. Have they understood what a Victorian style is like compared to a modern style? One thing you could do is to get a Lonely Planet or similar modern guide to Britain and see how that is written. Get students to

comment on the differences between Bradshaw and modern guides and which they prefer. But, all the same, they are going to do this in a Victorian style.

- ▶ Now consider how to present it. Will it be a pamphlet available at a local station? If so, how would they organise it into headings and paragraphs? Use this as an opportunity to think about how to present information.

## 2. Plenary session

- ▶ Review the way that a good modern equivalent of a Bradshaw needs many stages of work, starting with gathering information, knowing where your reader is starting from and so on. The writing only comes after all of that.

## 3. Further work/homework

- ▶ Get students to think about other modern ways of presentation. Could they do a version to put online on your school website?