

# Modern-day pilgrimage is ratings smash hit

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**Triumphant:** Alfie and Owen, a football referee and a trainee pilot from Hertfordshire, were this year's winners.

**Are human beings born to travel? The latest series of Race Across the World has just reached a thrilling end. Its popularity is a measure of our obsession with travel.**

## What's happening?

After 50 days and more than 15,000 kms, the two leading teams were both within touching distance of victory. Friends Owen and Alfie sped towards the Indonesian island of Lombok in a speedboat. Mother-and-daughter team Eugenie and Isabel followed in another close behind.

Just eight minutes ahead, Owen and Alfie arrived on a beach to find at a table with a book on it. It told them they had won the race and £20,000.

## Find out more

The show has been a huge hit, attracting audiences of over 7 million.

Contestants are not allowed smartphones or bank cards, and can only travel by land or sea. They are given a map of the world, a small amount of money and have to earn more as they go.

Humans have travelled since the birth of our species. According to one expert, Christopher Ryan, for most of history "we've lived as nomadic hunter-gatherers moving about in small bands of 150 or fewer people".<sup>3</sup>

One of the most famous travellers of all time was Marco Polo, who left Venice in 1271 at the age of 17 and travelled to Shangdu in China.

Throughout the ages, finding trade routes and new lands to settle in have been major reasons for travelling. Religion has played an important part too. In the Middle Ages many Christians made their way on foot from England to Rome. Muslims today are encouraged to visit Mecca.

## Are human beings born to travel?

### Some say

Yes! Staying at home means you will only ever have one view of the world. Travel means you see the wonder of the Earth and all of the variety of different places and people on it.

### Others think

No! There is a reason that most humans around the world live in cities. Why give up the easy life, with everything you could possibly need nearby, for the uncertainty of travel?

## Six steps to discovery

### 1. Connect

**How do you feel about this story?** - Would you like to take part in *Race Across the World*?

### 2. Wonder

## Some people say

*"Never did I think so much, exist so vividly and experience so much...as in journeys I have undertaken alone and on foot."*

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778), Swiss philosopher

*What do you think?*

**What questions do you have?** - For example: How do you get to go on *Race Across the World*?

### 3. Investigate

**What are the facts?** - Pick out one thing we know for certain about this story and one thing we cannot say for sure.

### 4. Construct

**What is your point of view?** - Your family tell you they have decided to give up living in one place. Think about what you would say.

### 5. Express

**What do others believe?** - What would be the most exciting place to travel to? Take it in turns to say.

### 6. Reflect

**What might happen next?** - Imagine that you are taking part in a new series of *Race Across The World*. You have to travel from your home town to Brescia in Italy without taking a plane and spending as little money as possible. Use a map to work out your route.

## Glossary

**Indonesian** - The country consists of over 17,000 islands in the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

**Species** - A set of animals or plants with similar features. Members of the same species can breed with each other.

**Nomadic** - People who move around and do not live in one place are nomadic.

**Venice** - A seaport in Italy. It is built on many small islands.

**China** - A country in East Asia, home to 1.4 billion people.

**Trade** - The activity of buying and selling goods.

**Mecca** - Islam's holiest city and the birthplace of the prophet Muhammad. Only Muslims are allowed into the city, and millions make pilgrimages there.