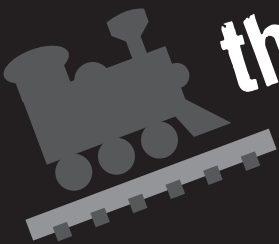



ENRICHMENT GUIDE



the
LITTLE
ENGINE *that*
COULD



SCHOOL DATES

FEBRUARY 1-11, 2011

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A Note to Teachers and Parents

Dear Teachers and Parents,

Thank you for being a part of the First Steps Series and our production of *The Little Engine That Could*. The Blue Engine is small and doesn't think she has the ability to complete the difficult task of bringing the toys over the mountain. However, with a positive attitude and encouragement from her friends, she is able to complete this difficult journey with ease! Just like the Blue Engine in our story, we want to encourage our children to help others in need, to keep a positive attitude, and to try their best in all of the tasks they undertake. *The Little Engine That Could* is a timeless tale that is sure to inspire us all to "know we can!"

Enclosed in this enrichment guide is a range of materials and activities intended to help you discover connections within the play through the curricula. It is our hope that you will use the experience of attending the theater and seeing *The Little Engine That Could* with your students as a teaching tool. As educators and parents, you know best the needs and abilities of your students. Use this guide to best serve your children—pick and choose, or adapt, any of these suggestions for discussions or activities. We encourage you to take advantage of the enclosed student worksheets— please feel free to photocopy the sheets for your students, or the entire guide for the benefit of other teachers.

Enjoy the show!

Julia Magnasco
Education Director
(414)267-2971

First Stage Policies

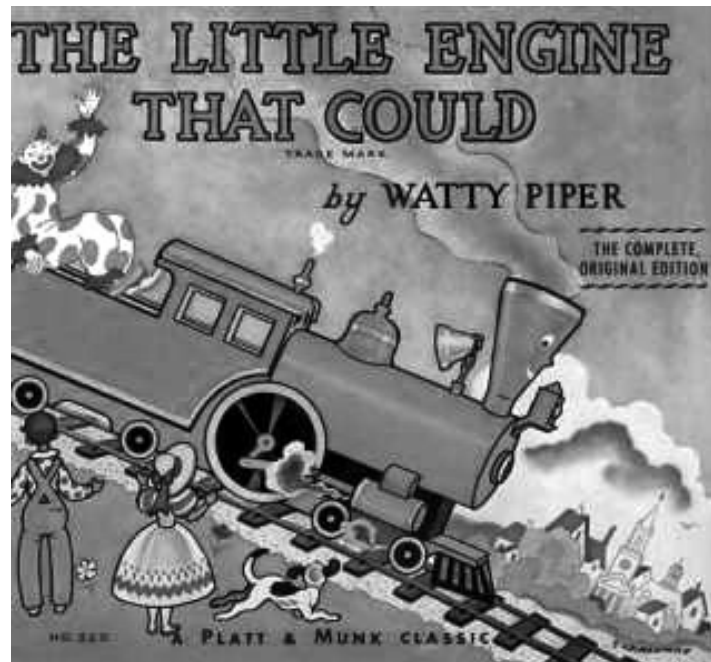
- The use of recording equipment and cameras are not permitted during the performance.
- Food, drink, candy and gum are not permitted during the performance.
- Electronic devices are not permitted in the theater space.
- Should a student become ill, suffer an injury or have another problem, please escort him or her out of the theater space.
- In the unlikely event of a general emergency, the theater lights will go on and the stage manager will come on stage to inform the audience of the problem. Remain in your seats, visually locate the nearest exit and wait for the stage manager to guide your group from the theater.

Seating for people with disabilities: If you have special seating needs for any student(s) and did not indicate your need when you ordered your tickets, please call our School Sales Specialist at (414) 267-2962. Our knowledge of your needs will enable us to serve you better upon your arrival to the theater.

Setting the Stage : Synopsis

The story begins with Morning Train on his way to deliver toys to the other side of the mountain. Monkey, Red Dress Doll and Clown are all excitedly talking about how fun it would be to go to a birthday party. All of a sudden, there is a loud noise and Morning Train stops in his tracks. He has broken down. Monkey reveals a secret, that he was a returned toy. All of the other toys sympathize with his story. Red Dress Doll is worried that they will all become abandoned toys too if they do not get to the other side of the mountain.

In the distance, we hear a Shiny New Engine, a passenger train, quickly approaching. Shiny New Engine demands the toys get out of his way, for he is in a hurry to get to the Round House- the place where engines go when they're not busy. The toys ask Shiny New Engine to help them over the mountain because their train has broken down. He refuses to help; he's too important to help with their little problem. The Shiny New Engine chugs off as the toys groan sadly. The sound of another train is heard and clown waves his flag to stop the train. Freight Train stops before the toys. He is very big and strong - and very slow. The toys speak up and ask Freight Train to help them over the mountain. Freight Train is surprised by the request - he has never been asked to help before. He only pulls things that are important. The toys tell him that they are special, but that does not convince Freight Train to help them. Freight Train puffs off. The toys collapse with sadness.



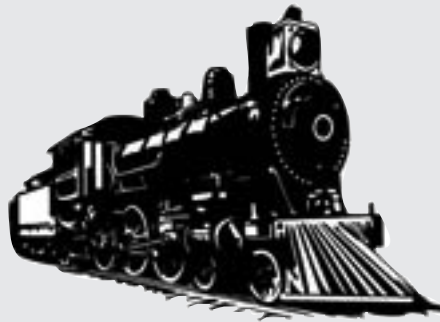
Chugging is heard in the distance as Rusty Old Train slowly appears. He slowly moves to a stop, and falls asleep. The toys tickle him awake and he toots his steam whistle loudly. He tells the toys that he used to be the fastest train on the track, but now he is tired all the time. The toys realize the Rusty Old Train cannot help them over the mountain and he slowly chugs off.

The toys are nearly hopeless. Red Dress Doll begins to loudly sob and wail. As Clown tries to calm her down, a very little blue engine is seen moving towards them. Red Dress Doll is disheartened that this engine is so small and she is about to give up. Clown encourages her to keep her hope as he says, "sometimes even the littlest among you can do the biggest things!" With that, the toys go over and ask Blue Engine to help them over the mountain. Blue Engine kindly tells the toys that she is unsure that she could ever make it over the mountain. She also reveals he has never been over the mountain before. With some faith, the toys try to convince Blue Train to help them, even though she does not have the speed of the passenger trains or the muscles of a freight train. With an, "I think I can, I think I can," the toys hop aboard Blue Engine as she goes faster and faster. With a mix of disbelief and excitement, the toys cheer on Blue Engine as he gets to the top of the mountain. Just as they get to the top, they see the city in the valley and the train comes to a stop at the peak-they made it to the top! They cheer and thank the little Blue Engine as they sail down the mountain. ●

About the Author

Taken from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Little_Engine_That_Could

A Brief History of The Little Engine That Could and Watty Piper



A brief version of the tale *The Little Engine That Could* appeared under the title *Thinking One Can* in 1906, in *Wellsprings for Young People*, a Sunday school publication.

The full story of *The Little Engine That Could* first appeared under the name *The Pony Engine* in the *Kindergarten Review* in 1910, written by Mary C. Jacobs (1877–1970).

Another version of the story appeared in the six-volume *Bookhouse Books*, which were copyrighted in the UK in 1920 and sold in the U.S. via door-to-door salespersons. Although this version contained no author attribution, it was edited by Olive B. Miller and published in Chicago. The *Bookhouse* version began, "Once there was a Train-of-Cars, and she was flying merrily across the country with a load of Christmas toys for the children who lived way over on the other side of the mountain."

The best known incarnation of the story *The Little Engine That Could* is attributed to "Watty Piper", a pseudonym used by publishing house Platt & Munk. With illustrations by Lois Lenski, this retelling of the tale *The Pony Engine* appeared in 1930. The first edition attributes Mabel C. Bragg as the originating author. However, Mabel C. Bragg, a school teacher in Boston, Massachusetts, never claimed to have originated the story.

In 1954, Platt & Munk published another version of *The Little Engine That Could*, with slightly revised language and new, more colorful illustrations by George and Doris Hauman.



About the Composer and Lyricist

Taken from: http://www.brooklyncenteronline.org/downloads/SG1011_Mercer.pdf

A Conversation with Stuart Kenny

"In college I majored in English. I consider myself more of a writer than a musician. I'm into words. Every time I write a song, I think through each word carefully. I also think about the character. When I wrote songs for *The Little Engine That Could*, I studied a lot of railroad terminology. I also looked at the different kinds of trains and speculated about their feelings and lives. For instance, I saw the Big Train as sort of a construction foreman -- always working hard, always concerned about deadlines."

"I've worked at places all across the country. When I came to Omaha, I brought the tape of a project that I was working on, which became *Dragons, Snakes, and Stars*, a production that was brilliantly produced at The Rose Theater by its Teens 'N' Theater program. That led to the job of composing for *The Little Engine That Could* and *There's an Alligator Under My Bed*."

"I loved writing the songs for *The Little Engine That Could*. It felt like I had achieved a personal best."

About the Playwright

Taken from: <http://www.njpac.org/joomla/images/pdfguides/TGEngine1.pdf>

James Larson

James Larson is the Artistic Director of The Rose, formerly the Omaha Theater Company, in Nebraska. Larson has written several plays for young audiences, but he says THE LITTLE ENGINE THAT COULD is "one of the most special shows I've written. I really enjoyed inventing the histories of each of the characters and making them tangible."

A member of the esteemed Iowa Writers' Workshop, Larson received playwriting grants from the University of Minnesota's Office of Advanced Drama Research and the Rockefeller Foundation for his work.

His plays for both adults and children have been produced throughout the country and across Europe.



Recommended Reading

- *Chugga Chugga Choo Choo* by Kevin Lewis and Daniel Kirk
- *Thomas the Tank Engine: The Complete Collection* by Wilbert Awdry and C. Reginald Dalby
- *I Love Trains* by Philemon Sturges
- *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel* by Virginia Lee Burton
- *The Little Red Caboose* by Marian Potter
- *The Poky Little Puppy* by Janette Sebring Lowrey
- *The Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown



Pre-Show Questions

1. This play is about trains. What kinds of trains have you seen before? Have you ever ridden on a train before? What is different about riding in a train and riding in a car?
2. Actors will be pretending to be the different trains. What do you think they will wear (costumes) to look like a train?
3. What kinds of sounds do trains make? When do you hear the sounds of trains?
4. The Little Blue Engine helps all the toys, even though she is small. Even though you are small, how do you help out your family and friends?



Count What the Little Engine is Carrying

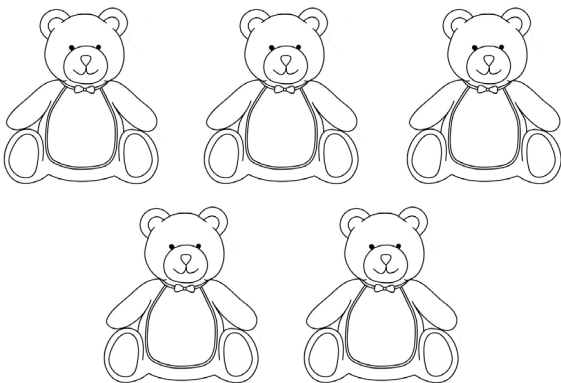
MATH STUDENT WORKSHEET

Adapted from: http://www.teachervision.fen.com/tv/printables/penguin/LETC_counting.pdf

The Little Engine carries more than she thinks she can, including lots of good things for boys and girls. Below, count how many of each toy she is bringing up the mountain.







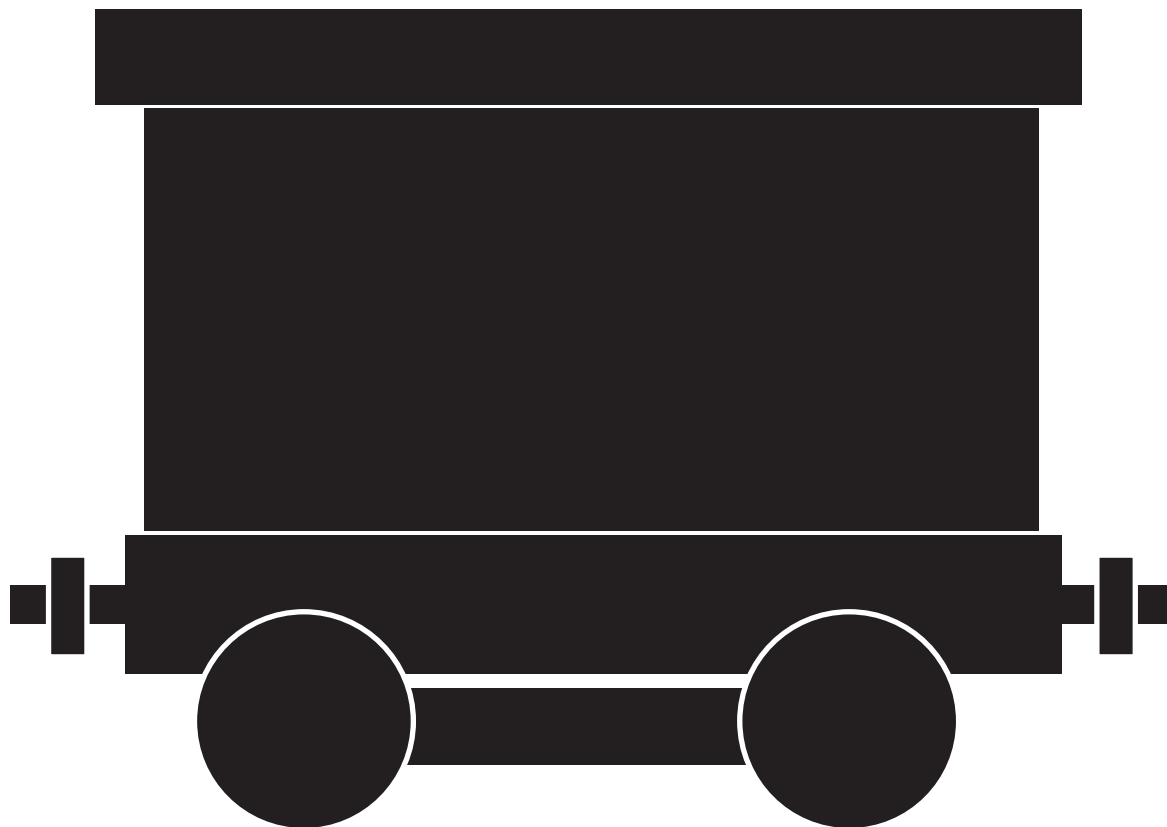


What's in Your Train?

ART STUDENT WORKSHEET

Adapted from: http://www.teachervision.fen.com/tv/printables/penguin/LETC_BuildTrain.pdf

The Little Engine gets to carry lots of goodies and toys in her car. If you were a train, what sorts of things would you want to carry? Use the space below to fill in the train car with some of your favorite things!



I Think I Can: Goal Setting

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL READINESS CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Adapted from: <http://www.proteacher.net/discussions/showthread.php?t=169129>

Begin by reading the story of *The Little Engine that Could* with your students. Ask for your students to join in the story by saying, "I think I can. I think I can. I think I can" along with the Little Engine. Afterwards, talk with students about what a goal is and what the Little Engine's goal in the story was. Then, set goals by completing a paper that says,

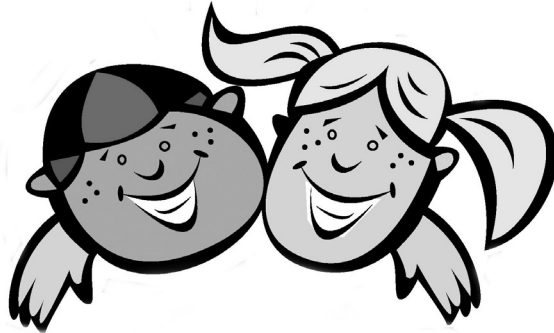
"This year in school I think I can _____

Draw a picture below of you completing your goal.



Little Helpers

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL READINESS CLASSROOM ACTIVITY



Learning how to help makes you feel good as a person. Helping someone even in the smallest way has its rewards. Children can learn early on that helping others is the responsible and right thing to do. They can learn that when they see someone in need of help, they should help out if they are able to.

Activity

1. In a distinctively marked off area in the classroom, such as on the classroom carpet, spread out a number of toys, blocks, and other items to practically cover the entire space.
2. Next, have the students sit around the blocked off area.
3. Give one student a basket and ask him to clean up the entire area by placing the items in the basket, but tell him he will only get 90 seconds to clean up the area. Make sure you are timing the student with a stopwatch or the class clock.
4. Once you see the student needs help, ask another student to assist the other in filling up the basket.
5. If the 90 seconds are quickly coming up, have yet another student help in cleaning up the area. Make sure that the students are successful in completing the task at the end of the time.
6. Afterwards, ask the class if they think the first student could have cleaned up the entire area by himself in the 90 seconds. How was the student able to complete the task in the short amount of time? Discuss with students that it was only with the help of classmates working together that made them able to complete the task.
7. Finish up by asking students how it feels to help someone. Then, brainstorm with students times that they have helped a classmate or someone in their family.
8. Provide students with a large sheet of white paper. With adult assistance, have students brush paint on their hands and place their helping handprints in the center of their paper. Finally, help students write one sentence about a time they helped someone in need.
9. Place your students helping hands around the classroom, and remind them to help others when they see someone in need, and to ask for help when they can't do a task alone!

Emotion Charades

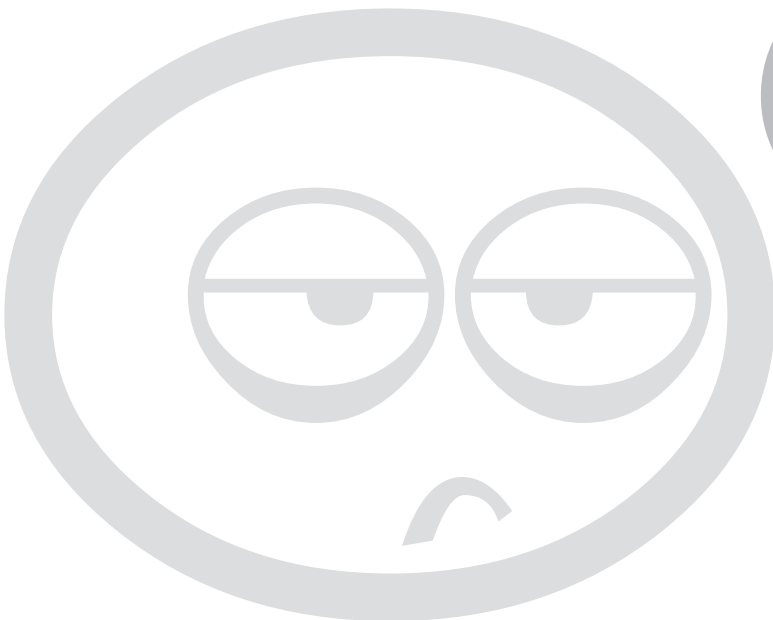
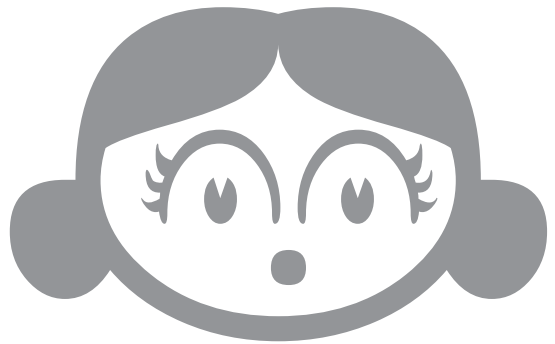
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL READINESS CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Adapted from: <http://www.fishfulthinking.com/Emotional-Awareness/ActivityEmotionCharades>



Activity

1. Write down feeling words on slips of paper and place them in a bowl.
2. Have students take turns picking a slip of paper from the bowl and then acting out the word written on it. If a child prefers, s/he can draw the emotion rather than act it out.
 - a. For young students still learning to read, you might need to read the word to the child.
 - b. Keep the feelings simple such as: happy, sad, mad or scared.
3. Once the class correctly guesses the emotion being acted out, ask them to think of a situation that would lead to that emotion (e.g. someone may be sad if they are sick and can't play outside, or if they lost one of their favorite toys).



All Aboard the Reading Train

READING CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Adapted from: <http://www.brighthub.com/education/k-12/articles/7249.aspx>, by Laurie Patsalides, Read more: <http://www.brighthub.com/education/k-12/articles/7249.aspx#ixzz16h6yMWnI>

Activity _____

1. Begin by making the train display by cutting out an engine and five cars from colored poster board. Next, cut out letters from black poster board (or use pre-cut letters).

2. Place the large train on the board, or you can have students come to the front of the class and hold the train cars while doing this activity.

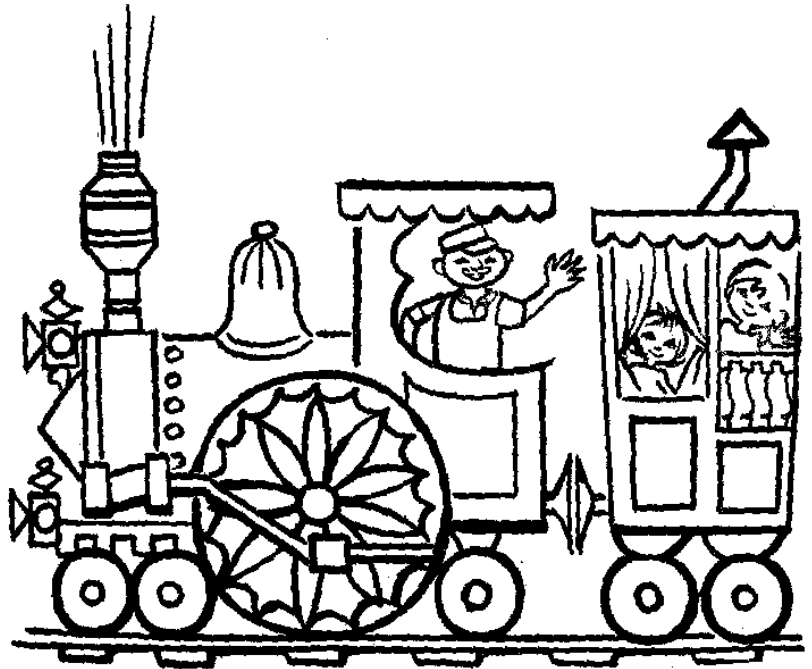
3. When introducing a new word to students, place the first letter of the word on the engine, and each remaining letter of the word on its own car. Have students sound out the word.

a. For easy application, place stick-on Velcro tabs to the backs of the letters and the engine and cars.

b. To sound like a train while sounding out the word, have students chant each letter in the word, beginning slowly and then picking up speed—like the “chug-a, chug-a” of a train!

4. For further learning, have students come up and spell out a new word by adding the correct letters to the cars. Also, explore beginning and ending sounds by changing the first or last letter(s) on the train to form different words.

5. As students become familiar with the reading train activity, allow them to lead the activity as the train conductor. A student can wear a conductor’s hat and point to each letter as the class sounds them out.



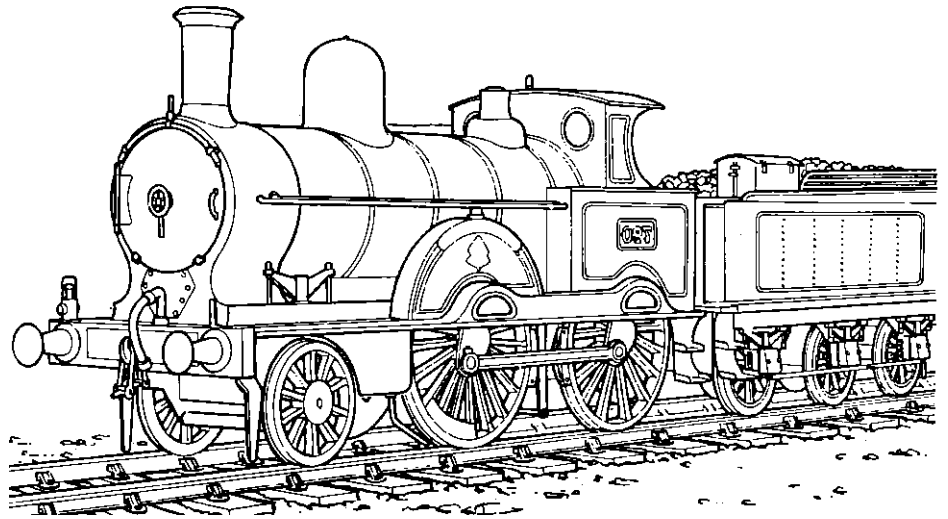
Milk Carton Train

ART CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Adapted from: http://www.hubbardscupboard.org/little_engine_that_could.html

Materials

- Black construction paper
- Paint or markers
- Scissors
- Glue
- Tape
- 3-5 empty individual sized milk cartons



Activity

1. Wash out 3-5 small milk cartons and tape them shut. Each milk carton will serve as a different train car.
2. Next, paint or color each carton a different color.
3. Using black construction paper, cut out four small circles and two small rectangles for each milk carton you are using. The circles will serve as the wheels and the rectangles will become the train car windows.
4. Once the milk cartons are dry from the paint, lay them on their side. The top of the milk carton will become the front of the train car. Glue the wheels and windows onto each train car.
 - a. If you wish, use white construction paper to create your windows out of and draw a picture in the window of people looking outside and waving!
5. Hold the milk carton train together by gluing the bottom of each train car onto one long strip of black construction paper.
6. If you wish, create a train track with construction paper or blocks for your train to move on.



Birthday Songs

MUSIC CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Taken from: <http://www.teachingheart.net/Birthdayunit.html>

All the toys must make it over the mountain so they can be birthday presents for good boys and girls. The toys are especially excited to hear the children sing birthday songs! Below are a number of birthday songs—try singing them together as a class.

Spider Birthday Cake

*The itsy bitsy spider crawled up the birthday cake,
he ate up all the frosting,
and got a tummy ache,
and when they brought the ice cream,
he ate even more,
and the itsy bitsy spider fell sick upon the floor.*

Twinkle, Twinkle Birthday Star

*Twinkle, twinkle goes this song.
It's your birthday all day long.
Last year you were ____ years old.
This year you are _____ we're told.
Happy birthday, little star.
Now we know how old you are.*

Someone's Birthday

(to tune of London Bridge)

*Someone's birthday is today,
Is today, is today.
Someone's birthday is today,
And it's _____!*

*Let's prepare a birthday cake,
Birthday cake, birthday cake.
Let's prepare a birthday cake,
Just for _____!*

*Add a candle for each year,
For each year, for each year.
Add a candle for each year,
Just for _____!*

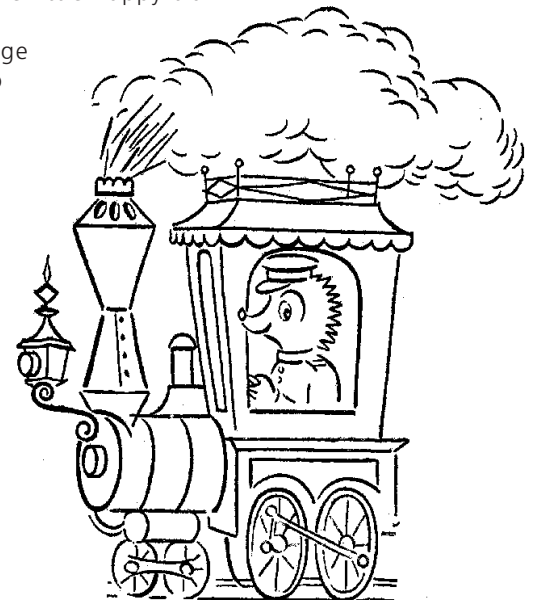
*Make a special birthday card,
Birthday card, birthday card.*

Train Parade

READING CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Taken from: <http://www.teachingheart.net/Birthdayunit.html>

1. Read the story of *The Little Engine that Could* out loud to students.
2. Next, share with students that together we are all going to act out the story of *The Little Engine that Could*.
3. Start by casting the students:
 - a. The largest group of students will play the toys flagging down the engines.
 - b. One small group (2-4 students) group will play the Shiny Engine.
 - c. Another small group (2-4 students) group will play the Big Strong Engine.
 - d. The teacher will play the role of the little engine that could.
4. Narrate the story and give students direction while they act it out.
 - a. **Narration:** "There once was a train carrying lots of toys for children, and they were the best toys in the world!"
 - i. **Student Direction** "Let me see all the toys acting very excited to make it across the mountain to the good boys and girls. What kinds of toys are in the train?" Go up to students individually and ask them what kind of toy they are, and to show you how they work.
 - b. **Narration:** "But the train broke down and couldn't get the toys to their destination. The toys wanted so badly to go to the children, so they waved down a nice new Shiny Engine."
 - i. **Student Direction** "Let me see all the toys jumping up and down and waving, trying to get the attention of another train to carry them into town. Now, let me see the Shiny Engine enter the stage—the Shiny Engine is proud and thinks its better than the other trains. Shiny Engine, how can you show me that you think you're better than all the other toys?"
 - c. **Narration:** "The toys asked the Shiny Engine to carry them to the children, but the shiny new engine would not, and said it was only for transporting people. The toys were very sad."
 - i. **Student Direction** "Let me see the toys ask the Shiny Engine for a ride. Shiny Engine, what do you tell the toys? Toys, show me how you feel when the Shiny Engine will not carry you to town."
 - d. **Narration:** "Then the toys saw a Big Strong Engine, and they waved it down and asked if would carry them to the children. But the Big Strong Engine would not carry them either because this engine only carried heavy loads. They toys were very sad."
 - i. **Student Direction** "Let me see all the toys jumping up and down and waving, trying to get the attention of another train to carry them into town. Now, let me see the Big Strong Engine enter the stage. How can you show me that you are really big and really strong? Toys, can you ask the Big Strong Engine for a ride? Big Strong Engine, how do you reply? How does this make the toys feel?"
 - e. **Narration:** "Then, a tiny engine came down the track. The toys waved the little happy train down and asked it for help. The Little Engine agreed!"
 - i. **Student Direction** Have the toys wave you down, as you chug on stage playing the Little Engine. Have the toys ask you for help, and agree to help them. Ask the students, how do you feel about the Little Engine agreeing to help you? What do you do to show how happy you are?
 - f. **Narration:** "All the toys piled onto the Little Engine, and helped the Little Engine get over the big mountain."
 - i. **Student Direction** Act this part out as the little engine, saying "I think I can," and all the students playing the toys (including the students who played the other engines), encouraging the Little Engine.
 - g. **Narration:** "Celebrate your victory over the mountain."
5. After acting out the story, ask students to share a time when they have tried to do something new that at first was difficult for them.



Post-Show Questions

1. Why didn't the Shiny New Train help the toys? Why didn't Freight Train help the toys?
2. Some of the trains (Shiny New Train and Freight Train) weren't very nice to the toys. How do you think it made the toys feel?
3. If Blue Engine was grumpy, do you think she would have been able to make it over the mountain? Why or why not?
4. At first, the Blue Engine is unsure she can help the toys get to the top of the mountain. But with help from the toys and a good attitude ("I think I can!"), she makes it over the mountain. Have you ever tried something that was hard to do? How did you do it? Did anyone help you?
5. What do you think will happen to the toys and Blue Engine when they get to the city at the bottom of the mountain?

Who Said It?

1. I don't like rolling over mountains. Especially big ones. I like little quiet woodlands in the valley.
2. Nothing is better than being a birthday present.
3. Trains don't eat cake and they don't have parties.
4. I was brand new not that long ago. And a good little boy picked me out at the toy store and his mommy bought him for me and they put me in his toy box.
5. Now, get out of my way. Can't you see I'm in a hurry?
6. The big machines I pulled over the mountain print books and newspapers for grown-ups to read. What can you do for grownups?
7. Nap time? Did somebody say naptime? My steaming is seeming to be simmering down, and I don't have a reason to be chug-chug-chugging along.
8. Because sometimes even the littlest among you can do the biggest things!
9. I have never been over the mountain.
10. I think I can. I think I can. I think I can.



Who Said It? Answers

1. I don't like rolling over mountains. Especially big ones. I like little quiet woodlands in the valley. **BEAR**
2. Nothing is better than being a birthday present. **RED DRESS DOLL**
3. Trains don't eat cake and they don't have parties. **MORNING TRAIN**
4. I was brand new not that long ago. And a good little boy picked me out at the toy store and his mommy bought him for me and they put me in his toy box. **MONKEY**
5. Now, get out of my way. Can't you see I'm in a hurry? **SHINY NEW ENGINE**
6. The big machines I pulled over the mountain print books and newspapers for grown-ups to read. What can you do for grownups? **FREIGHT TRAIN**
7. Nap time? Did somebody say naptime? My steaming is seeming to be simmering down, and I don't have a reason to be chug-chug-chugging along. **RUSTY OLD TRAIN**
8. Because sometimes even the littlest among you can do the biggest things! **CLOWN**
9. I have never been over the mountain. **BLUE ENGINE**
10. I think I can. I think I can. I think I can. **BLUE ENGINE**

