

## *TRAINS DON'T SLEEP*

Teacher's Guide

written by Andria Warmflash Rosenbaum, illustrated by Deirdre Gill,

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt 2017

### **Discussion and Activity Guide for Pre-School Classes**

#### **Pre-reading**

Play train sounds for your class.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oJAVJPX0YY> (steam engine)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrEwcapIqNg> (diesel engine)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQw69tpcpPY> (electric engine)

What is a train? (A group of connected railway cars.)

What do they do? (Transport people from place to place.)

Who drives a train? (engineer)

What are the people riding the on the train called? (passengers)

Who collects the tickets? (conductor)

What sound does a train make? (Whistle, hoot, clang...)

How does it feel to ride on a train? (rocking, rolling, constant motion.)

Point out the three different trains in the book on the title page with illustration of freight, passenger and circus trains. Define what each does.

*Passenger train --takes people from place to place*

*Freight --moves goods from farm and factories to stores*

*Circus --used to travel around the country to different cities to put on shows*

Read **Trains Don't Sleep**.

### **IMAGINE**

Ask: Where would you like to travel on a train? How long would the trip take? What kind of route would it take? What are the tracks made of?

### **MUSIC AND MOVEMENT**

Line up your class. Designate child at head of line as the “engine” and the child at the end of the line as the “caboose”. Play the songs “Down by the Station”, or “I’ve Been Working on the Railroad” while guiding them around the room. Have them take notice of what happens when you they move faster, slower and stop.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDvmZMsQm-I>

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=ive+been+working+on+the+railroad+youtube&&view=detail&mid=00F642E3C7AF171BC80300F642E3C7AF171BC803&&FORM=VDRVRV>

**Vocabulary Words** -- in the order they appear in the book

Coupled --*joined*

Front -- *the head, or beginning*

Rear --*end*

Station --a place, platform, or building where people get on and off a train

Route -- a road, path, or way to travel

Looming --to tower over

Gritty --grimy, dirty

Passengers -- people riding the train

Trestle --train bridge

Canyon -- a narrow hole with high, steep cliff walls

Trudge -- to walk, move, in a heavy way

Transport --move from place to place

Trekking -- making a slow trip, or journey

Idle --standing still with engine on

Heave --to move with great effort, power, strength

#### **LANGUAGE ARTS**

**Review and explain the vocabulary words, pointing them out in the illustrations. Then write an acrostic poem as a class based on one of the train vocabulary words.**

**Example:** TRUDGE

**T**rekking,

**R**umbling

**U**nderground

**D**aily,

**G**oing

**E**lsewhere

**SCIENCE—**

Explain and discuss how each of the trains in Trains Don't Sleep was powered.

Discuss how different trains are powered today. (No more steam, coal Mostly electric and diesel.)

How might the trains get their power in the future?

Why are wheels round?

Experiment "rolling" different shapes. Shape clay into different shapes (square, triangles, circles) Take a toothpick and stick 2 of the same shapes into the ends. Will it roll? Chart your results.

**SHAPE ---**

**WILL IT ROLL? --**

**EXPLAIN ---**

**ART**

Design and create your own train. You can construct it out of recycled cardboard, plastic, foil or any other material you choose. How might it work? What does it use for power? What job, or function might it perform? How is it different from the three trains in Trains Don't Sleep? How is it like the three trains?

Directions for making a train out of recycled material.

<http://www.preschoolexpress.com/theme-station09/trains-aug.shtml>

## Reading and Discussion Guide For Ages 5-7

### Pre-Reading:

Share the cover of **Trains Don't Sleep** with your class.

Discussion: Who is the author? *Andria Rosenbaum*

Who is the illustrator? *Deirdre Gill*

What is this book about? *Riding a train, different types of trains and where they might travel.*

Where might it take place? *(Talk about the different landscapes --city, country, desert, forest...)*

Share the title page with the class having them take note of the number and type of trains pictured.

Ask class if they know how each (Steam, Diesel/coal, electric) works?

What might each of them carry?

Share the glossary at the back of the book with the class. Focus on each of the different types of train cars. Discuss their purposes. As you read the book, ask them to identify which of the three trains is pictured.

Play train sounds for your class.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oJAVJPX0YY> (steam engine)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrEwcaplqNg> (diesel engine)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQw69tpcpPY> (electric engine)

Ask them to close their eyes and listen. Share ideas.

### Reading:

Read **Trains Don't Sleep** .

Ask the students if there's anything special, or different about the language?

Why do they think it might be written in rhyme?

How are the word sounds similar to the sounds real trains make?

How are they different?

Read the first three stanzas.

Is there anything about the rhythm that reminds them of the sound trains make?

What words or descriptions bring this story to life, or make you feel and see picture in your head when you close your eyes?

### **SHARE**

Look at the illustrations.

How do they make you feel?

How do you think the illustrator created them? By hand, brushes, computer? In what way do they make the book more interesting? What do they add to the story? How are they the same/ different from the words?

What do you think is the most important train car? (Engine) *Why? It moves all the other trains.*

Name some of the cars you might find on a passenger train. (See glossary)

Name some of the cars you might find on a freight train.

What is the purpose of a circus train?

What kind of engine might have pulled it?

What kind of animals and people might have ridden on one?

Describe how a circus train might smell?

Describe how it might sound going over the tracks?

Have you traveled on a train?

How did it sound, feel, smell?

What did you see out the window?

## **SCIENCE**

Explain and discuss how each of the trains in **Trains Don't Sleep** was powered.

Discuss how different trains are powered today. (no more steam, coal) Mostly electric and diesel. How might trains get their power in the future?

### **Why Are Wheels Round?**

Experiment "rolling" different shapes. You can use toothpicks, or bamboo skewers with different shapes to see if they roll. Have children make different shapes out of clay (square, triangle, circle) Attach to toothpicks and see which of them roll. Chart your results. Discuss what shape works and which shapes don't.

### **Easy Science for kids: Wheel and Axel**

<http://easyscienceforkids.com/kids-the-wheel-and-axle/>

## **IMAGINE**

Where would you like to travel on a train? How long would the trip take? What kind of route would it take? What would the tracks be made of?

**CREATE**

Make your own train. You can build it out of recycled cardboard, soda cans, juice containers, plastic, foil or any other material you choose. How might it work? What does it use for power? What job, or function might it perform? How is it different from the three trains in **Trains Don't Sleep**? How is it like the three trains?

**WRITE**

A poem, or story about your train. Where does it go? What its job? Who rides in it? What can you see out the window when riding on your train? What does your train sound and smell like?

Or write about a specific trip on a train. Where do the people get on and get off? What do they do while they're on the train? Who might they meet? What might they do while on the train? What do they see and hear on the train? Describe the conductor, or the engineer.



Which  
**TRAIN**  
are  
you?

