

I'M FAST!

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by Kate and Jim McMullan

Ages: 4 - 8; Grades: PreK - 3

Themes: Transportation, People at Work, Geography

Running Time: 8 minutes

SUMMARY

From the creators of *I Stink!* and *I'm Dirty!* comes another action-packed book about a freight train's race to Chicago. Who do you think is faster: a train carrying cars full of freight, or a little red racecar? Children will love following the route of these two vehicles as they zoom across the country. Students will also learn about the different kinds of freight that a train carries and the creative ways that trains maneuver across mountains, over bridges, and through heavy snow.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify different types of freight that trains carry.
- Students will compare and contrast different types of transportation.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Do a **KWL** chart (What I **K**now, What I **W**ant to Know, and What I **L**earned) with the students.

Guiding questions:

- What kinds of things do trains carry?
- How do trains move?
- What do trains drive on?
- How do you think that trains go through mountains? How do they go through snow?
- Which do you think is faster, a car or a train? Why?

After filling in the **K** column of the chart, record students' questions about trains. Tell them that they will be watching a make believe movie about a train that is racing a car across the country. Encourage students to watch and listen for new things that they learn about trains from the movie. Revisit this chart after viewing the video to fill in the What I Learned section.

Talk with students about different types of transportation. Ask them to list the types of transportation that they know. Create a T-chart labeled: *Type of Transportation/Use*. Scribe their list and add a visual icon for each type that they name. Add to the list by including common types of transportation that they may not mention, such as: trains, boats, buses, trucks and bicycles. Then, move to the "Use" column and record what students already know about the uses, or functions, of the transportation listed.

Encourage students to watch and listen for other uses for a train during the movie. Follow up this activity with books and movies about other types of transportation.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Revisit the KWL chart. Guiding questions:

- What kinds of things does a freight train carry?
- Why are trains a great way to transport things from one place to another?
- How do trains get through mountains, snow, and traffic?
- What else did you learn about trains from this movie?
- Were any of our questions from the "W" column answered? If not, how could we find the answers?

Compare and contrast trains and cars with students. Use a Venn diagram or 3-column chart to organize ways that these different types of transportation are similar and different. After filling in the organizer with students, guide them in a matching game. Use picture cards (with words for emerging readers) that have pictures of things such as:

- Road
- Track
- Freight cars
- Tires
- Whistle
- Horn

Either as a whole group, or individually, have students match each picture with a train or a car. Use a T-chart with a picture of a train on one side and a picture of a car on the other to organize the matching.

Revisit students' answers to the question: What do freight trains carry? Provide students with construction paper cut-outs of different types of freight cars as seen in the movie (stack car, box car, auto-rack, hopper, tank car, coal car, gondola, and flatcar). Then, have students draw or glue cut-out pictures of the types of freight that each car carries. Each student should work on 1-2 types of cars. When they are finished, link the cars together and display on a wall around the room.

Discuss the story plot with the students. Focus on the comprehension strategy of identifying the problem and solution.

Guiding questions:

- What was the train's problem in the beginning of the story? (*He wanted to win the race*).
- What other problems or challenges did he face? (*A mountain, a snowstorm, cows on the tracks*).
- How did he solve these problems? (*tunnel through the mountain, a plow for the snowstorm, blowing whistle at the cows*).
- Did he win the race in the end? (*Yes, he did*).

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Trashy Town, by Andrea Zimmerman & David Clemesha, ill. by Dan Yaccarino

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