



# BAKER'S DOZEN SELECTIONS

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## VEHICLE MINI LESSONS

The vehicle-themed Baker's Dozen selections are paired with engaging activities designed to help parents, caregivers, and early childhood educators enrich young learners' reading experiences while supporting the development of early reading comprehension skills. Each activity aligns with early childhood academic standards to ensure meaningful learning.

**Big Truck Little Island** by Chris VanDusen  
Candlewick Press, 2022

**On the Go Awesome** by Lisl H. Detlefsen  
illustrated by Robert Neubecker  
Knopf, 2020

**Bulldozer Helps Out** by Candace Fleming and Eric Rohmann  
A Caitlyn Dlouhy Book, Antheneum Books for Young Readers,  
Simon & Schuster, 2017

**ABCs on Wheels** by Ramon Olivera  
Little Simon, 2016

**Whose Truck?** by Toni Buzzeo and Jim Datz  
Abrams Appleseed, an imprint of Abrams, 2015

**Fire Engine No. 9** by Mike Austin  
Random House, 2015

**Tugboat** by Michael Garland  
Holiday House, 2014

**Five Trucks** by Brian Floca  
Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2014

**Alphabet Trucks** by Samantha R. Vamos  
illustrated by Ryan O'Rourke  
Charlesbridge, 2013

**Flight 1-2-3** by Maria van Lieshout  
Chronicle Books, 2013

**Little Tug** by Stephen Savage  
A Neal Porter Book:

An imprint of Roaring Brook Press, 2012

**I Am a Backhoe** by Anna Grossnickle Hines  
Tricycle Press, 2010

**Machines Go To Work** by William Low  
Henry Holt and Company, 2009

**The Life of a Car** by Susan Steggall  
Henry Holt, 2008

**Tip Tip Dig Dig** by Emma Garcia  
Boxer Books, 2007

**Subway** by Anastasia Suen  
illustrated by Karen Katz  
Viking, 2004

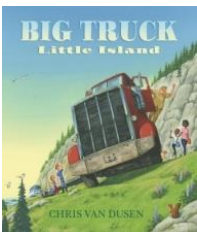
**Construction Countdown** by K.C. Olson  
illustrated by David Gordon  
Holt, 2004

**Truck Duck** by Michael Rex  
Putnam, 2004

**All Aboard!: A True Train Story** by Susan Kuklin  
Orchard, 2003

**Digger Man** by Andrea Zimmerman and David Clemesha  
Holt, 2003

Pennsylvania Department of Education. *Academic Standards for English Language Arts: Grades PreK-5* (2014)  
*Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood: Kindergarten* (2016)



**Big Truck Little Island**  
by Chris Van Dusen

Readers, get ready! For transportation vehicle lovers and beyond, this book has something for everyone. Through rhyme and bold illustrations, readers will gasp as a truck hauling a massive twenty-ton load slides in the mud and blocks passage through a narrow island road. Travelers on both sides of the truck are desperate to get to their intended destinations. Trust, friendship, and creative problem solving save the day in this fascinating story based on a real community in Maine. All is well as travelers reach their locations in time, the truck gets back on the road, and the surprising and delightful load is revealed. Readers will agree this book is going to be a favorite for the long haul.

### Tips for Using with Children

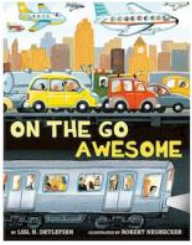
After showing the cover of the book, turn to the title page. Point out the tugboat pulling the barge with a large truck on it with a covered load strapped down. Read the title and the name of the author/illustrator. The title makes us think that they are going to an island. Read the first page of the story that tells that the barge is taking the big truck to an island. Turn the page and show the picture of the island—land surrounded by water. The tugboat is approaching the island in the picture. Continue reading what happens in the story, pointing out the details and the action depicted in the double-page illustrated spreads.

### Tips for Using with Families

Explain to families that with very young children, the text may be too long for their attention spans, so consider discussing the detailed pictures with them instead. Encourage adults to pre-read the text to add to their children's understanding and descriptions. When reviewing the aerial image of the island, trace the path along the road that the truck must follow. Use this page as a reference on and off during the story. Younger children can respond with their own story ideas of what they think is happening in the pictures. For example, emphasize pictures with a four-year-old and content with older children.

**CC.1.3.PK.A:** With prompting and support, retell a familiar story in a sequence with picture support.

**CC 1.5.PK D:** Use simple sentences; share stories, familiar experiences, and interests, speaking clearly enough to be understood by most audiences.



***On the Go Awesome***  
by Lisl H. Detlefsen,  
illustrated by Robert Neubecker

For young readers who are on the go, this book has it all. Cool trains, fun excavators, exciting airplanes, and more fill the pages, showing the many ways travel can occur. However, the author and illustrator take these vehicle voyages a step further by putting the reader in the driver's seat. Trains are cool to watch and ride, but imagine being the conductor. Through illustration and imagination, the reader is in charge of getting travelers to their destinations. If you love travel, or love the vehicles that get you there, this book is your passport to awesome.

#### Tips for Using with Children

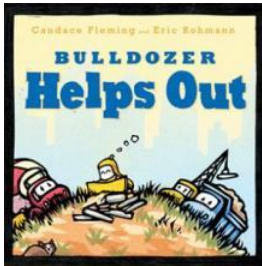
The sky is the limit when readers are on the go and awesome. Providing young children with materials such as blankets, chairs, large cardboard boxes, laundry baskets, or furniture cushions will prompt them to create their own vehicles and extend the story into creative play. Children will enjoy transitioning from observer to participant and can practice taking turns being the leader. When walking around their community, children can look for vehicles in action, on land, sea, or in the sky, and talk about where they think each might be going.

#### Tips for Using with Families

Adults can talk with children about the travel experiences they have had. What are the different ways they get from place to place? Have they traveled using any of the vehicles in the book? What other ways have they traveled to different places in their lives? Examples may include: a hay wagon, horse, three-wheeler, snowmobile, etc. Making personal connections to the story will support young readers' understanding of the content. Which vehicle in the story would they most like to drive? Where would they go?

**CC.1.4.PK.P:** Recount a single event and tell about the events in the order in which they occurred.

**CC.1.5.PK.B:** Answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.



***Bulldozer Helps Out***  
by Candace Fleming  
and Eric Rohmann

Little Bulldozer is ready to lend a hand at the construction site, but there is just one problem: his co-workers think he is too small for the job. After watching the action from the sidelines in disappointment, he is finally given an opportunity to clear and flatten a small area. Bulldozer eagerly gets to work, but abruptly stops when he discovers something in the debris. When the larger trucks find that Bulldozer hasn't done his job, they also find that, in this case, there is more than meets the eye!

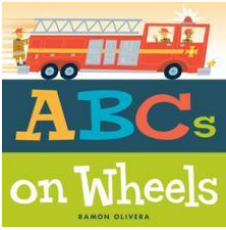
#### Tips for Using with Children

When reading this book with children, talk about the different times when Bulldozer has to stop and watch. At the beginning of the story, he has to wait and watch the bigger trucks work. Later in the story, he stops and watches to see if the kittens are cozy in the special space he created. Children can talk about times when it is important to stop and observe what is going on around them. Adults can take a walk outside with children, encouraging them to look closely at the things they find along the way. Are there things they may have missed if they had not stopped to look closely? When playing with toy construction vehicles outside in the grass or dirt, or inside with rice or playdough, what types of things can children find when they dig slowly and carefully?

#### Tips for Using with Families

Children are wonderful observers. As adults, we focus on the text when we read. Children focus on the illustrations and often catch details that adults may miss. As families read with children, they can ask questions and listen closely to what their child has to say. Are there any clues within the illustrations that help predict what might happen next? Invite children to enjoy and join in as you read large print words and sound words depicting the vehicle noises.

**CC.1.2.PK.B:** Answer questions about a text.



**ABCs on Wheels**  
by Ramon Olivera

Start your engines! This alphabet book is sure to be a hit with children who love moving vehicles and their parts. Each alphabet letter is written with its capital and lower case label Aa, Bb, Cc, and so on. A bonus of the book is that it also contains opposites such as "Nn is for new car. Oo is for old car." The new car page is in black, white, and gray showing a young man getting the keys to his new car. The opposite page shows a colorful illustration of the same gentleman, now older, with the same car, handing the keys to a new buyer. The illustrations are rich with possibility for readers to use the pictures to tell short stories as they page their way from A to Z.

### Tips for Using with Children

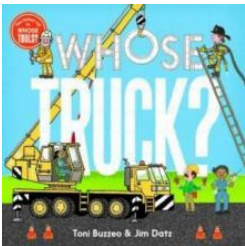
In this concept book, it is important to talk about the pictures on each page as the alphabet letters and words are read aloud. For example, in the first double-page spread, Aa is for axle and Bb is for bumper. The four framed pictures show a mechanic as he is building the car. As you discuss the pictures, you can ask the children questions such as: What does the axle in a car do? Why do cars have bumpers on them? Do you know anyone who likes to fix and work with cars? Using a model of a car to show the different parts would be a visual and tactile way to demonstrate car parts. There are many discussion possibilities in the pages of this book: opposites, types of vehicles, jobs related to vehicles, future and past forms of transportation, car maintenance, race cars, vehicles that provide security, and so on.

### Tips for Using with Families

Demonstrate with families how to discuss the pictures on each page of this alphabet book and relate them to the child's world. The talk may include people in the child's community who have some of the jobs shown, or who drive the types of vehicles that are pictured. Perhaps the family enjoys going to car races or has seen a car towed or watched large construction vehicles work on buildings or roads. There may be an ice cream truck that drives through the child's neighborhood or horse and carriage rides enjoyed at a carnival in the past. As the adult shares this book with the child, he or she can point out the alphabet uppercase and lowercase letters and show the letter in the word on the page. Children will recognize that letters have sounds and make words.

**CC.1.1.PK.B:** Identify basic features of print. Recognize and name some upper and lower case letters of the alphabet.

**CC.1.2.PK.J:** Use new vocabulary and phrases acquired through conversations, activities, and read-alouds.



**Whose Truck?**  
by Toni Buzzeo and  
Jim Datz

Young readers will enjoy reading this nonfiction book because it not only identifies the parts of various trucks, but also focuses on the individuals who operate them. The sturdy pages provide rhyming clues that describe six different trucks, including a fire truck, snowplow, ambulance, broadcasting truck, utility truck, and crane. After exploring the different components of each vehicle, readers can lift the flap to see each truck in action. Line workers, highway maintenance workers, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), and more are busy on the job and will draw young readers in. On the final page, the authors reveal two children playing with toy trucks identical to those featured, encouraging creative play. Young readers may jump up after this book to take a toy truck for a spin...but don't worry...they will be back to read this book again!

### Tips for Using with Children

Children are so observant, often noticing details that adults may not. When you are out in the community and see trucks at work, ask children if they notice any of the vehicle components identified in the book. Children may also look for these components on a toy truck that they see at home or at school. Another idea is to cut outlines of vehicles out of paper or cardstock. Add a paper "flap" to the front of the vehicle in the same shape. Children can color the front of the flap, and then lift the flap to add objects inside their vehicles. Adults can help children label the objects they draw.

### Tips for Using with Families

When previewing this book before reading it with children, adults may want to open the flap of each page first. This will provide some clues as to how each labeled object on the front of each flap may be used by the vehicle operators. Children may ask questions about some of the truck components, such as the deluge gun on the fire truck or the telescopic boom on the crane. It is okay if some of these components are new to adult readers as well – children appreciate knowing that adults wonder about things, too, and it will be fun to investigate the answers together at the library, online, or by asking a community member.

**CC.1.2.K.J:** Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading, and being read to, and respond to texts.

**CC.1.2.K.K:** With prompting and support, determine or clarify the meaning of unknown or multiple-meaning words and phrases based upon grade-level reading and content.



**Fire Engine No. 9**  
by Mike Austin

Sound the alarm! There's a fire at the corner of Fourth and Main, and the crew of Engine No. 9 are on their way to help. Readers of all ages will get caught up in the action, from the suddenness of the fire alert to the bravery of fighting the flames. This story captivates the reader by focusing not only on the vehicles and buildings involved, but also the individuals who respond to the call for help and the family who faces loss and then finds the strength to rebuild. Each page features a sound word that captures the energy of the illustrations. In addition, the inside front and back cover contain labeled images of firefighting equipment, and the back page provides tips for what to do during a home fire. If you have been struggling to find an action-packed book that will engage young readers, rest assured, Fire Engine No. 9 is on its way to rescue you!

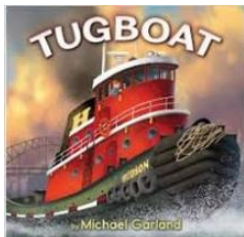
### Tips for Using with Children

Before reading the story, talk to children about what firefighters might need to take with them when going to fight a fire. What might they need to do, and what tools, clothing, or equipment would help them succeed? Document their ideas, and then look together at the items labeled inside the front and back cover of the book. Are there any items the children have questions about? When reading the story, ask children to keep an eye out for these items in action. In the story, the firefighters work as a team and each member has an important job, such as attaching the hose to the hydrant, driving the truck, or breaking the window. After reading the story, ask children if they can think of jobs in the classroom or at home in which everyone has a role and accomplishes a goal as a team. In the case of a fire, the members of a team need to act fast. It might be fun to set up a small obstacle course that involves sounding an alarm, running, pulling, climbing, and/or putting on a fire costume coat or hat, and let children experience the action!

### Tips for Using with Families

Don't be afraid to let children get their hands on this book! Adults can encourage children to take the lead in holding the book, turning pages, and turning the book when the illustrations depict vertical images such as whooshing down the pole or climbing the ladder. Adults can use their fingers when reading to point to each word and draw attention to the text. It won't take long before children are chiming in with the sound effects. Children may also enjoy using their finger to trace the path that the firetruck takes on the illustrated map showing the path to the fire. The end of the book presents some tips for what to do during a home fire. Adults may want to consider a plan for their family in case of an emergency and discuss this together as a family after reading the story.

**CC.1.2.PK.G:** With prompting and support, answer questions to connect illustrations to the written word.



**Tugboat**  
by Michael Garland

Tugboats are small in size but can take charge of some pretty mighty jobs! Readers will enjoy following this Hudson River tugboat as it completes a variety of tasks, such as carrying heavy parts for the Willis Avenue Bridge renovation, pulling a fireworks barge, and working through a blowing snowstorm. This nonfiction book introduces related vocabulary through an end-of-book glossary and provides background on the Willis Avenue Bridge. Each illustration contains much to see and talk about, captivating both child and adult readers.

### Tips for Using with Children

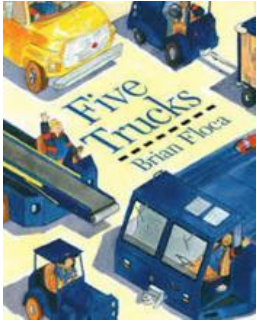
As adults are reading this book with children, it would be fun to look at the words that appear on some of the boats. Some boats are named for the job that they do, or the place they are located, while others are given a sentimental name by their owners. Children might enjoy drawing a picture of their own unique boats, and then choosing a name for it. Does their boat move fast or slow? Is it small or large? What types of jobs does it do? Adults will inspire children to learn new vocabulary words that appear in the book's glossary by using some of the words themselves as they discuss the children's boat drawings with them.

### Tips for Using with Families

A glossary is a very helpful tool to use when preparing to read a new book to children, especially if the topic is somewhat unfamiliar. This book provides a simple, illustrated glossary, in the back of the book, as well as a brief paragraph on the Willis Avenue Bridge. Encourage adults to look over these sections prior to reading with children, so they are more prepared for questions the children might ask. After the story, it might be fun to play a game using the glossary. For example, the adult could ask the child, "Can you find a tall ship? A tall ship is a large ship that has sails." The adult and child can take turns giving clues and identifying items in the glossary.

**CC.1.1.PK.B:** Identify basic features of print. Recognize and name some upper and lower case letters of the alphabet.





**Five Trucks**  
by Brian Floca

Five drivers for five trucks! Where are they headed? Count along, and identify the different trucks as they motor to their common destination, the airport. Floca's detailed and realistic illustrations provide lots of visual interaction for readers of all ages. The simple story is engaging and will please even the youngest automobile or aviation enthusiast.

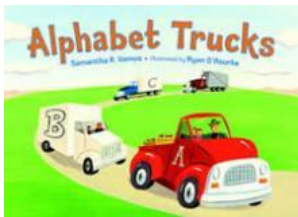
#### Tips for Using with Children

*Five Trucks* is a book that invites counting and close examination of trucks. Let's count and look closely at each of the trucks. What job do they each have at the airport? What makes each truck special or different? After reading, ask children if they've been to an airport. Have they seen any other types of vehicles at the airport? Be sure to point out the names of the trucks at the bottom of each page. Help build children's vocabulary by using those names when you talk about the book.

#### Tips for Using with Families

Pair *Five Trucks* with some other terrific truck books for an action-packed story session. Books such as *Truck Duck* by Michael Rex, *Truck* by Donald Crews, *I Love Trucks* by Philemon Sturges and Shari Halpern, and *Digger Man* by Andrea Zimmerman and David Clemesha are terrific jumping off points to discuss what different types of trucks do. Encourage families to trace their fingers under the words as they read some of the pages. Young children have an easier time focusing on large print as seen in this book.

**CC.1.2.PK.J:** Use new vocabulary and phrases acquired through conversations, activities, and read-alouds.



**Alphabet Trucks**  
by Samantha R. Vamos,  
illustrated by  
Ryan O'Rourke

Start your engines! This book journeys through each letter of the alphabet, highlighting familiar trucks like apple trucks, box trucks, and cargo trucks, while also introducing some less familiar trucks such as x-ray trucks, yard trucks, and zipper trucks. Vehicle lovers will have a blast identifying the letters, saying the letter sounds, and tickling their tongues with fun vocabulary like the "knuckle-boom truck." Families visiting the library should check this book out before they "hit the road."

#### Tips for Using with Children

This book introduces many different kinds of trucks; some may be familiar and some may not. It might be helpful to have other nonfiction reference books close by that can help provide additional information about specific trucks in which children have a special interest. *Alphabet Trucks* also sets the stage for some interactive letter play. Using masking tape and a marker, children can assign letters to photos or drawings of different vehicles, or perhaps to toy vehicles so that they can create a letter parade of their own. It may also be fun to incorporate letter cutouts or magnets into block play, where children can label buildings, "dump" letters from a dump truck, and more.

#### Tips for Using with Families

Adults may want to preview the different kinds of trucks in this book before reading with children to prepare for some of the questions their children might ask. Some of the trucks are unique and could be new to both adults and children – which is a nice way to expand vocabulary and learning. Children may have a favorite truck that they want to look for or go back to while reading. This provides a nice opportunity for adults to ask children about the names of their favorite trucks. What letters do those trucks begin with? Sometimes we have different names for the same kind of truck, like "digger" and "excavator." When this happens, adults can point to the different beginning letters in each word and talk about the sounds each letter makes.

**CC.1.2.PK.J:** Use new vocabulary and phrases acquired through conversations, activities, and read-alouds.

**CC.1.5.PK.A:** Participate in collaborative conversations with peers and adults in small and larger groups.



*Flight 1-2-3*  
by Maria van Lieshout

When taking a flight, what do you see? This counting concept book takes young readers on a tour of an airport and the in-flight signs that can be found around the world. There are named items to count on each page (1 airport, 2 luggage carts, 3 check-in desks, etc.). This helps preschoolers build their number sense. There are also other items and multiples of the same number to count on each double-page spread. For example, on the 5 trash cans page there are also 5 items in each trash can.

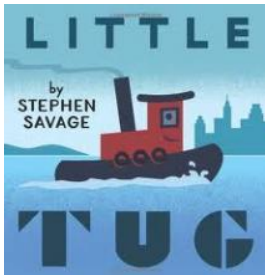
#### Tips for Using with Children

This is the perfect story to share with young travelers preparing for an airplane trip. In a classroom setting, it's the perfect book to help instigate a "pretend" airport visit and imagining an airplane ride to another destination. It's also a terrific counting book that introduces young people to the signs that can be found at an airport. Airport signs can be created to imitate those in the book. After "picture talking" the book, children can be invited to "act out" the trip to the airport with adult guidance.

#### Tips for Using with Families

This book can help demonstrate to families the importance of sign and symbol recognition in early emergent literacy. Share the book and discuss with families other known signs that children often recognize in their environment. One behavior that can help develop a child's reading ability is to identify signs and labels in their environment. Families can encourage early literacy by pointing out environmental print in the child's world. A fun activity at a parent meeting might be creating an airplane travel prop box for children to use in the classroom. The prop box could include signs, passports, luggage, paper money, and so on.

**CC.1.1.PK.B:** Identify basic features of print. Recognize and name some upper and lower case letters of the alphabet.



*Little Tug*  
by Stephen Savage

This book introduces us to a little red tugboat that may not be the tallest, fastest, or biggest boat in the harbor. However, Little Tug plays a very important role supporting other ships in need. His friendship is appreciated by the other boats, and when their work is done, they each contribute a special part to Little Tug's bedtime routine. Sweet and simple with charming illustrations, this book will be sure to "tug" at your heart.

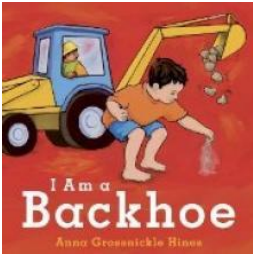
#### Tips for Using with Children

This book will spark children's interest on several levels. Talk about the different kinds of boats that appear in the story and how each of them does a special job and moves in various ways. Children may like to look at pictures of different tugboats and talk about the ways that they are helpful. What would happen to the tall ship, the speedboat, and the ocean liner if Little Tug wasn't there to help? Children may also be curious about the fact that even though Little Tug is the smallest boat in the water, he is very, very helpful. Ask children if they can think of ways in which they help each other or the adults in their lives. Adults could create a list of all the ways that children are helpful and very important in the lives of others.

#### Tips for Using with Families

If families are not familiar with the different kinds of boats featured in the story, it might be helpful to talk about the boats or even research some simple facts about them prior to reading. This will prepare the adults for any questions children may have. Because the boats help Little Tug prepare for bedtime, families can talk about the bedtime routines that their child has at home and how they are similar to or different from Little Tug's. Another fun activity families could try is talking about "humming." In the story, the speedboat "hums" a lullaby to Little Tug. Talk about the difference between humming and singing. Families can try humming a familiar lullaby ("Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" is one example) together.

**CC.1.4.PK.V:** Participate in individual or shared research and writing projects.



*I Am a Backhoe*  
by Anna  
Grossnickle Hines

Little ones everywhere will enjoy this book, not only because they can read about construction vehicles, but because they can become one! Simple text and descriptive words guide children as they dig their "scooper hand" into the sand and dig, lift, turn, and tip like a backhoe. Bulldozers, dump trucks, rollers, and more come to life as children move like the machines. At the end of the book, the child's father joins in the fun, and the couch becomes their "garage" as they read and transform into the vehicles together.

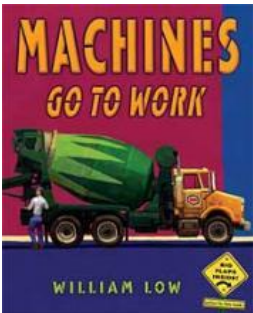
### Tips for Using with Children

Children will love to act out the motions described in the story and transform into construction vehicles. Can they think of other vehicles they can become? What would they look like? Locate some props, such as a small bin of sand or a box of soft toys, and ask children to show you what each of the vehicles can do with the items. Help children to say the different sounds that vehicles make. If possible, visit a construction site where children can see construction in action!

### Tips for Using with Families

In this book, the child's father joins in the pretend play at the end of the book. Families can encourage children's play and increase their enjoyment of the activity by joining in, too. Families may want to think ahead about what types of objects and props they can use from home to extend the play. Children may be familiar with some of the construction vehicles and may want to make up their own names or sounds for them. Families can include these names and sounds when they read to help build their child's confidence and interest in reading. If children have some small toy trucks to play with, families can extend learning by taking some time to roll, tilt, dump, and beep with their child.

**CC.1.5.PK.A:** Participate in collaborative conversations with peers and adults in small and larger groups.



*Machines Go To Work*  
by William Low

Action news helicopters, backhoes, container ships, railroad crossing signs—the hard work never ends for the big machines in this action-packed book. Rich, computer-generated illustrations accompany big machine sounds (WWAAAAAAWWWWWRRRR! went the fire engine). Generously-sized flaps extend the story and provide opportunity for discussion on the helping hands that big machines provide each day. Extra information about the big machines is provided at the back to satisfy even the biggest machinery enthusiast.

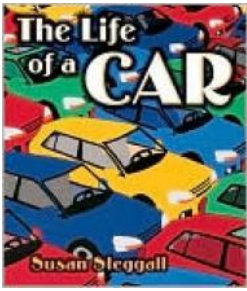
### Tips for Using with Children

Mark the pages that have the machines on them with sticky notes. Before reading, tell children that this is a book about big machines and the work that they do. Help prepare the children for the story by showing each of the machines marked. Ask children if they know the name of each machine and what kind of work it does. Next, read the story, opening the accompanying flaps.

### Tips for Using with Families

Suggest to families that they look for other big machines around town. Ask your child to describe what the machine is doing, and how it is lending a helping hand to the situation.

**CC.1.2.PK.A:** With prompting and support, retell familiar stories including key details.



*The Life of a Car*  
by Susan Steggall

This book will fascinate children and adults alike as it outlines the life cycle of a car. It begins with building a car and ends with recycling it to create a new one—with some surprises in between! The book contains simple text, but the double-page illustrations provide much to look at and discuss. As readers open this book and follow the journey of a little blue car and its owners, they may find that they can relate to many of the adventures along the way.

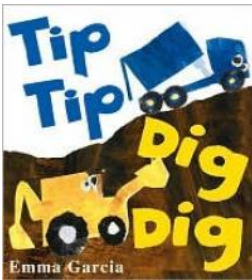
#### Tips for Using with Children

Invite children to draw a picture of a car they have seen or would like to see. Encourage them to talk about the parts of the car, both on the inside and outside. Adults can help children label the different parts of the car in their pictures. Children may also enjoy using toy vehicles and props to go through the different actions shown in the book, such as going to the garage to be fixed, riding on the delivery truck, or being washed.

#### Tips for Using with Families

Encourage adults to talk about each page with children. Can they follow the little blue car through each page of the book? The illustrations provide a chance for families to talk about the differences among the vehicles they see, including tow trucks, delivery trucks, motorcycles, and a variety of cars. If families own a car, it would be interesting to talk about how their car is similar or different to those in the book. Adults can help children connect the happenings in this story to real life by going through a car wash, looking under the hood of a car, or simply talking about what parts of a vehicle might need to be fixed at the garage. A museum of vehicles may be right outside their door!

**CC.1.4.PK.P:** Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.



*Tip Tip Dig Dig*  
By Emma Garcia

This brightly-colored book is packed with action—digger trucks dig dig dig, cement mixers mix mix mix, and cranes lift lift lift. Each one of these colorful pieces of moving machinery has a set of friendly-looking eyes that puts a friendly face on all of this dirty work. All of the action (bulldozing, road rolling, etc.) takes place in the present tense until near the end, when it shifts to past tense—We dug. We mixed. We lifted. We tipped. We pushed. The result of all of this hard work displays as a double-spread of an adventure playground with a sandbox, a see-saw, and swinging tires, with the friendly-eyed heavy equipment vehicles driving away in the background. A fun, colorful, and action-filled book that children will want to read again and again!

#### Tips for Using with Children

In a sandbox—or just an area that has some soft dirt that's safe for children to play in with their hands—have children imitate the actions of some of the heavy construction vehicles in this book. Ask them if they remember the words (verbs) that were used to describe those actions—"dig," "push," "lift," and so on. (If they don't, do the action yourself, then say the word that describes it—"dig," "roll," etc.)

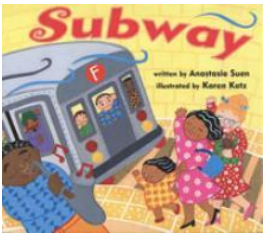
If you have some toy versions of some of these vehicles, great—if not, you can improvise by using some spoons or small plastic buckets to dig, a thick piece of cardboard (or even just hands) to push the sand or dirt, or a rolling pin or plastic bottle filled with water and sealed to "roll" and flatten the dirt.

#### Tips for Using with Families

If there's a construction site near you, take the children to a safe location near it and see if they are able to point out any of the heavy construction vehicles in this book. If they find some, ask them if they remember the action words that were used in the book to describe the work that these vehicles do (e.g., the dump truck "tips," the crane "lifts," etc.). If there isn't a construction site close to you, consider playing a video made for children that shows construction work being done. These are usually quite easy to find. There have been some made about building bridges, making tunnels, building roads, etc.

**CC.1.2.PK.K:** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on pre-kindergarten reading and content.





**Subway**  
by Anastasia Suen,  
illustrated by  
Karen Katz

Repetition and rhythm emphasize the beat of an exciting ride on a city subway with a little girl and her mother. The illustrations feature people from many cultures dressed in vibrant patterns and cheerful colors. This book is a natural for open-ended questions such as, "Where do you think the people are going?" and "Where have they been?"

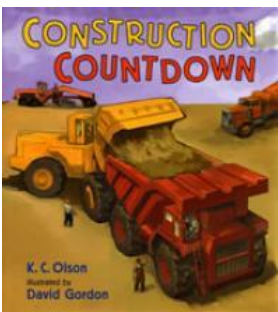
#### Tips for Using with Children

Point to the repeated words in each section of the text (which are highlighted in color) and allow children to finish the refrain. Talk about subway and travel experiences.

#### Tips for Using with Families

Suggest ways that families can engage their children in conversation about this book. Talk about subway experiences. Where might the family be going? Would you like to take a trip like this? What parts seem like the most fun? If you could take a trip anywhere, where would you go?

**CC.1.3.PK.F:** Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.



**Construction Countdown**  
by K.C. Olson,  
illustrated by  
David Gordon

Children will enjoy pointing to every colorful truck as they count down from "Ten mighty dump trucks." The name of each of the trucks is presented in large print and the truck's function is told in a rhyming couplet. The final double-page spread provides a creative surprise when the construction site is revealed as "One gigantic sandbox with room to drive them all."

#### Tips for Using with Children

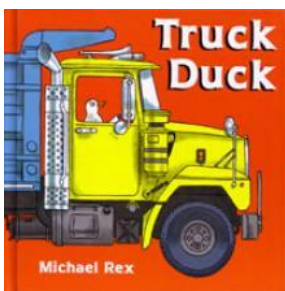
Read this book before taking children to the sandbox to play with their trucks, or before taking a field trip to a construction site. Prompt them to use words and phrases from the book as they participate in the activity. Make a lotto game with cut-outs of the various construction vehicles to help children learn the specific names and thereby expand their vocabularies.

#### Tips for Using with Families

Read this book aloud, modeling how to read it to children. Drop your voice on the rhyming words, point to them, and ask families to fill in the word. Explain that this is one of the ways children learn to read, and that it is a good technique to use with similar books. This book is also a good example of a topic that is often interesting to even the busiest of preschoolers. Finding the right book is a great way to develop readers. Point out that counting down is related to learning to subtract.

**CC.2.1.PK.A.1:** Know number names and the count sequence.

**CC.1.1.PK.C:** Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).



**Truck Duck**  
by Michael Rex

When you mix animals and their favorite vehicles together, you get this energetic book that cheerfully pairs powerful machines with drivers from the creature world. Each double-page spread features a rhyming pair—cab crab, boat goat, sheep jeep—in bright primary colors on sturdy pages sure to stand up to repeated rereading. Children's vocabularies will expand as the adult reader explains the humor and meaning in phrases such as rod cod and hog frog.

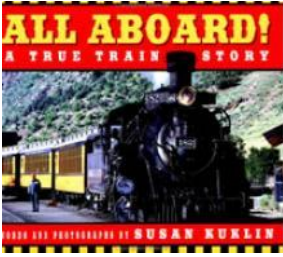
#### Tips for Using with Children

Celebrate children learning to read this book, being certain that they touch the words as they read. Make a matching or memory game with simple rhyming pictures. Include items from the book (caboose/moose; jeep/sheep).

#### Tips for Using with Families

Use this as an example of a good book for children to practice "reading" themselves. Point out that looking at pictures will always be a key to successful reading. Encourage families to enjoy the silly pictures, but to also touch the words as they read this book to their children.

**CC.1.1.PK.C:** Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).



*All Aboard!: A True Train Story*  
by Susan Kuklin

Richly detailed photographs take children through the Colorado Rocky Mountains on a steam train. The rhythmic text highlights the fascinating mechanical noises of chugs, click-clacks, whoos, and hisses that children will love to repeat.

#### Tips for Using with Children

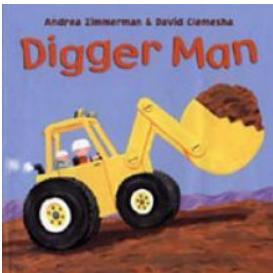
While reading the book, demonstrate for children how to imitate train sounds and actions. For example, when the story says, "chugga-chugga," children can make this sound and move their hands and arms in a circular motion close to their sides.

#### Tips for Using with Families

Share with families how the photography in this book provides an opportunity to talk with children about details that they see in the photos. How many trains? How many train cars? How many people? What colors? What objects? (e.g., wheels, railroad tracks, railroad signs, bridges, mountains, rocks, trees, a river, etc.) Encourage families to have children make comparisons between the items in the photographs and what they might find in their own community.

**CC.1.2.PK.B:** Answer questions about a text.

**CC.1.5.PK.C:** Respond to what a speaker says to follow directions, seek help, or gather information.



*Digger Man*  
by Andrea Zimmerman  
and David  
Clemesha

Children fascinated by big machines will identify with the narrator of Digger Man. The bright acrylic illustrations detail the delight of building and creating a park with a massive earthmover. The story highlights a special sibling bond, with a big brother waiting to teach his little brother the joys of diggers. Active language (e.g., "Scoop the rocks!" and "Push the mud!") will encourage reading along and reading often.

#### Tips for Using with Children

After reading the story, give children the opportunity to "dig" up safe objects using hands, shovels, scoops, sifters, or toy diggers. Have children fill up plastic containers or buckets with their found objects to encourage imaginative play of the story. Although ideal as a playground activity in gravel or sand, it could be adapted as an indoor activity. Consider "burying" objects in cardboard boxes filled with Styrofoam peanuts.

#### Tips for Using with Families

Talk with families about the way concepts like colors and counting can be extended with the pictures in this book. For example, suggest that they count with their children the vehicles on each page, "What color are they?" "What is the boy doing in each picture?" "What is he digging?" (i.e., metal beams and wood from construction, rocks, mud, a big hole.) In the playground picture, suggest that families talk with children about the various tools and toys that are being used in the park to dig in the sand. How many bicycles do you see in this picture? How many children? This type of discussion helps children extend vocabulary and build language skills.

**CC.1.2.PK.L:** With prompting and support, actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.

**CC.1.2.PK.J:** Use new vocabulary and phrases acquired through conversations, activities, and read-alouds.