

Transportation: Planes, Trains, Boats, Cars, Trucks

SOCIAL

FYI: *you can get economical toy vehicles at the Dollar stores as well as stickers. Paper, tape, books etc. Once you print out pictures of different types of transportation they can be used for several activities.*

How We Travel

Materials Needed: Large chart paper; Marker, pictures of each type of transportation.

Prepare in advance a large piece of paper separated by lines into 2 columns, with the left column being not as wide as the right column. Label the chart How We Travel

In the right column, draw pictures (or glue on pictures) of different ways the children might travel (car, truck, van, bus, horse, boat airplane, etc.). Ask if any of the children have ever traveled in a car. Write down the names of the children who have in the right hand column. Continue this for each mode of travel you have listed. **Extension:** Help your children with name recognition by preparing in advance pieces of paper with each child's name on it. Make enough name tags for each child to be able to put their name next to every mode of travel (just in case they have traveled on each type!). When asking if they have ever traveled by car, have them glue or tape their name next to the picture of the car. Continue for each mode. **Extension:** Add a third column to the right of where the children's names will be. When done with this activity, have the children help you count the names next to each mode of travel and write that number in the box to the right. When completed, ask which row has more (or ask which is more 10 children or 6 children). This extension activity can be done later in the day or on another day rather than all at one sitting. **Target: peer interaction**

Let's Move!

Materials Needed: Toys that represent different modes of travels (or pictures). Ask the children to all stand up. Tell them you are going to show them different modes of transportation and when you do, they should move like that item. Encourage them to also make the sound that goes with it! Be sure to join in the fun to model this. Example: "Yes! It's an airplane! Let's move like airplanes! Let me hear your best airplane noise! Are they loud or quiet?" **Target: peer interaction**

Show and Tell Materials Needed: Transportation Theme Toy or vehicle from home from each child. Send a letter home in advance announcing "Transportation Show and Tell Day" to the families. Ask children to place their Show and Tell item behind their backs. Take turns asking each child to show the item they brought in and encourage them to tell their friends about it.

Target: sharing ideas

Note: Some children are not sure what to say! This is a GREAT opportunity to help them to develop their group speaking and social skills. The goal for Show and Tell is for the children to share information about something of theirs in order to get to know each other better! A personal Show and Tell time is great for this! However, if there is concern about bringing items in from home (such as concerns that it will get lost or broken), rather than ask families to send something in, take the children on a Show and Tell hunt in your day home and have them choose ONE transportation item from the materials available to bring to talk to their friends about. Be ready with some questions such as "Does it work in the water? Does it have wheels? Where would you go if you could travel on that?" **Additional Note:** Some children will forget to bring in a show and tell, it's inevitable! Encourage that child to choose their favorite

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transportation item from your toys. When it is their turn, in addition to questions about the item itself, ask why they like to play with that one at your house.

Musical Transportation Theme Chairs In advance, make a set of papers with transportation theme items on them. Make 2 of each. Include pictures of cars, trucks, buses, horses, people walking etc. Tape one of the pictures on the floor. Give a matching card to each of the children. Explain that when the music is on, they should all walk around and look for their matching card, but don't touch it, keep walking. Tell them that when you stop the music, you will yell "Time to Park!" and they should find the matching card on the floor and sit on it. Show them the direction you want them to go when the music is playing or they are walking (so they don't bump into each other!). Start the music and play. Play as many times as there is interest. This is a NON competitive game. The purpose of games at this age should be to promote social skills and following directions, not "winning" or being "better"...promote teamwork **Target: teamwork**

BUS RIDES

- Ask your children to tell about bus rides they have taken. Talk about different kinds of buses: city buses, school buses, long-distance buses, and so on.
- Form a bus with lined-up chairs. Let the children take turns being the driver while the others act as passengers. Encourage them to tell what they see as they "ride" through town.
- Take your children on a real bus ride. **Target: sharing ideas**

Clickety Clack

Have the children spread out around the room. Pick one child to be the engine of the train. Give each child a ticket with a number on it. The ticket should be large enough so the number can be clearly seen. Have the child who is the engine pick up the passengers in order. For younger children, just have them pick up the passengers, or have them use color tickets, pick up the red, then orange and so on. **Target: cooperation**

HOOK ON THE TRAIN

- One child is chosen to be the engine of a train.
- This child chugs around the room and then backs up into another child.
- The new child connects onto the train by grabbing on to the waist of the engine.
- Then these two children chug around the room and back into another child.
- The game continues until all of the children have hooked onto the train. **Target: taking turns**

PRETEND FLIGHTS

Line up chairs to make an "airplane cabin." Invite your children to sit in the cabin while you "pilot" the plane. As you do so, talk about the sights the passengers can see out the windows. When your flight is over, let the children take turns being the pilot and describing the views. **Target: social interactions**

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PHYSICAL

Gross Motor



Stop and Go

Cut a circle out of red, yellow and green construction paper. Attach a Popsicle stick to each one. Print "Stop" on the red circle, "Slow" on the yellow circle and "Go" on the green circle. Encourage the children to move around pretending to drive a car, truck, bus etc. Hold up one of the signs and have the children do that action. Depending on the indoor space you have available this is probably better done as an outside activity. **Target: listening**

Row Your Boat Parachute Game

Have the children shake the parachute/sheet up and down to the tempo while they sing along to Row, Row, Row Your Boat. Start by singing the song at regular speed/tempo. Then sing fast, then very slow. **Extension:** Have one child be the "Rower"...they are OUTSIDE the parachute and pretend rowing around the outside of the children while they sing. When done singing, everyone freezes, and whomever the "Rower" is standing behind is the next Rower, so they switch places. **Extension:** place balls, small stuffed animals etc. on the parachute/sheet and have the children try to bounce them off. **Target: large muscle movement**

Stay on the Road!

Use chalk to draw roads for the children to ride their ride-on bikes or cars on. This can be done outside. If you do not have child size ride on cars or bikes, have the children drive toy transportation theme vehicles within the roads. **Extension:** Provide stop and go signs, have one of the children become a traffic officer to stop traffic and let them go again! **Target: balance**

Loose Caboose

Choose one child to be a caboose.

Have the rest of the children create one or more trains by hooking together.

In this game the caboose tries to catch onto the back of one of the trains.

Trains chug around and try to avoid being caught by the caboose.

When the caboose finally does catch onto the back of a train, the engine of that train becomes the next caboose.

Continue playing while interest lasts. Outside activity **Target: muscle coordination**

Train Tunnel

- Create a train track on your floor with masking tape.
- Set a small table over the track and drape it with a blanket on two sides to create a train tunnel.

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- Encourage your children to pretend to be trains as they crawl along the tracks and go through the train tunnel. **Target: muscle co-ordination**

Fine Motor

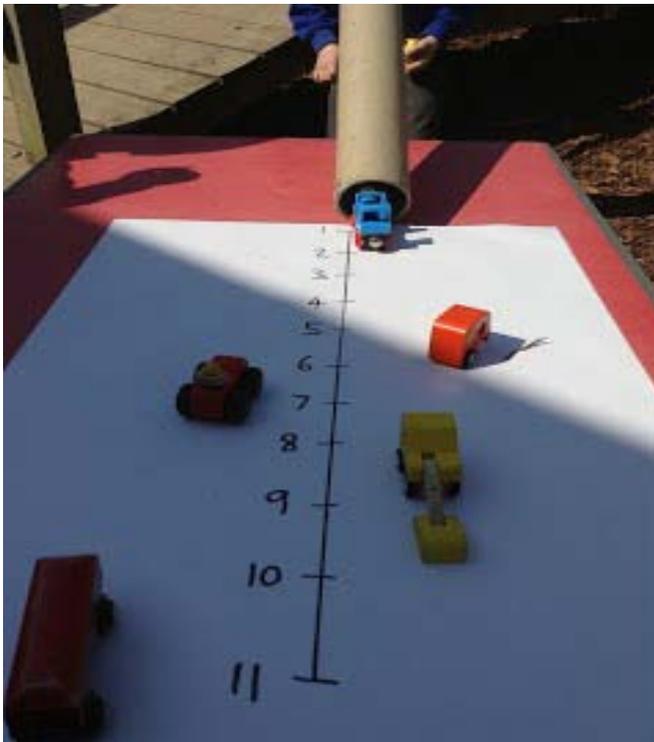
Land the Airplane

Provide the children with premade paper airplanes (if you are not sure how to make them, there are many website that have easy instructions!). Have a large box (or laundry basket) for them to throw their planes into. This is an indoor or outdoor activity. **Target: eye hand coordination**

Tire Prints

In a pie tin, place 3 to 5 teaspoon sized portions of different colored paint evenly spaced about the area. Supply the children with washable toy trucks, cars, airplanes or trains that have wheels that roll. Have the children dip the wheels in the paint and roll across the paper. **Target: grasping**

INTELLECTUAL



Car Roll

Using a cardboard tube (wrapping paper tube), place one end of the tube on a chair or stool and the other end on the floor. On the floor have a large piece of paper where you have marked out different measurements from 1-10 to act as a rule for how far the cars go across the floor. Have the children take turns placing the cars into the tube and having them roll out across the floor.

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Record how far each car goes. Discuss different reasons why some cars may go faster and farther than others. Adjust the height of the tube to see if that makes a difference on how far the cars will go. **Target: cause and effect**

Traffic Light

Twinkle, twinkle traffic light
Round the corner shining bright
Red means stop.
Green means go.
Yellow means very, very slow.
Twinkle, twinkle traffic light,
Round the corner shining bright.

Target: labelling

WE'RE RIDING ON THE BUS

Tune: "If You're Happy and You Know It"

Oh, we're riding on the bus, on the bus.

Oh, we're riding on the bus, on the bus.

Oh, we're riding on the bus,

Come and ride along with us.

Oh, we're riding on the bus, on the bus.

Repeat, each time substituting a word such as "singing" or "clapping" for "riding."

Target: repetition

DOWN AT THE BUS STOP

Tune: "Down at the Station"

Down at the bus stop

Early in the morning,

See the little children

Lined up in a row.

See the yellow school bus

Pick up all the children.

Vroom, vroom, vroom, vroom,

Off they go!

Target: vocabulary

MOTORBOAT

Tune: "Jingle Bells"

Motorboat, motorboat,

Going round the bay.

Motorboat, oh, motorboat,

This is what you say,

Putt-putt-putt, putt-putt-putt,

Putt-putt all the way.

Motorboat, oh, motorboat,

You putt-putt-putt all day!

Target: repetition

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CHUG, CHUG, CHUG

Tune: "Jingle Bells"

Chug, chug, chug; chug, chug, chug,
Chugging down the track.

See our little choo-choo train

Chugging down and back.

We are cars – all lined up,

Chugging just like so.

Hear our whistle toot-toot-toot

As down and back we go.

Target: repetition

DOWN BY THE STATION

Tune: "Down By The Station"

Down by the station

Early in the morning.

See the little puffers

Standing in a row.

See the station master

Turn a little handle.

Chug, chug, chug, chug,

Off they go! **Target: vocabulary**

WE ARE FLYING

Tune: "Frere Jacques"

We are flying, we are flying

Up so high, up so high.

See the fluffy white clouds,

See the sparkly sunshine

In the sky, in the sky.

We are flying, we are flying

Round and round, round and round.

See the tiny houses,

See the tiny people

On the ground, on the ground. **Target: repetition**

Color Runways

Have your children use blocks to set up an airport on the floor. Select toy airplanes of several different colors. Make runways for the planes by taping pieces of matching colored paper to the floor. Then let the children "fly" the planes in and out of their airport using the matching colored paper. **Target: matching**

What Has Wheels?

Materials Needed: Large piece of unlined chart paper and a marker.

Draw a large circle on the paper. Tell the children "This is a wheel. What types of transportation vehicles have a wheel or wheels?" List all their answers inside the wheel. **Extension:** Write down exactly what they say in the wheel surrounded by quotes and then list their name next to it. Example: "My bike has 3 wheels" Post the chart for families to see! **Extension:** Post the list

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near the art area or writing table and encourage children to paint, draw or sculpt (with playdough or clay) the item they listed! **Target: matching**

Water, Sky, Land

Materials Needed: Large piece of paper with blue paper glued on top, green paper glued on bottom (leave middle white) and a darker blue circle shape glued somewhere on the green. The top blue is for SKY, the green for LAND and the darker blue for WATER; transportation theme items and vehicles (small toy cars, horses, airplanes, hot air balloons). Pass out one transportation theme items to each child to hold. Give each child a turn to tell what item she has and where it is used (Water, Sky or Land) and ask them to place the item where it should go on the paper. Variation- you can give the children a variety of transportation stickers and have them place them on the paper where they think they should go. Display the picture in your center.

Target: matching

Ramp It Up!

Materials Needed: Triangular blocks, flat blocks, books, small pieces of flat wood and transportation theme vehicles with wheels. Show the children how to make different types of ramps for their vehicles. Discuss the distance they go on each ramp. Ask questions to get them thinking such as "I wonder why this car went this far on this ramp but only this far on the other ramp". "I wonder how we can make the car go further? faster? slower?".

Variation: Make two or three different ramps that have different heights (declines). Ask a child to let his vehicle go down the first ramp. Mark where it stops with a piece of tape (masking or painters tape) on the floor/carpet. Then ask same child to let the same vehicle go down the next ramp and mark where it lands. Discuss results. Try this with different vehicles. **Target: cause and effect**

CAN FLY, CAN'T FLY

Have your children "fly" around the room as you name things that can fly and things that can't fly, such as planes, butterflies, birds, boats, houses, and dogs. Whenever the children hear the name of something that can't fly, have them slow down and gently "land" on the ground. Continue as long as you wish. **Variation-** hold up pictures of different animals that can and can't fly. If you hold up an animal that can fly the children pretend to fly. If the picture you hold up is of an animal that can't fly then the children have to land. **Variation-** have the children take turns pulling the pictures out of a container. **Target: labelling**

Color Boat Games

Cut simple boat shapes and sail shapes out of different colors of felt. Use the shapes to play the following flannel board games with your children.

- Place the boats on the board and add a matching colored sail to each one.
- Give directions such as these: "Put the blue sail on the red boat. Put the green sail on the yellow boat."
- Ask such questions as, "Can you line up a red boat, a blue boat, and a yellow boat? An orange boat, a purple boat, and a green boat?" **Target: sequencing**
For younger children just discuss the colors that they have chosen. Use this activity as a labelling activity.

Floating Experiences

Set out an assortment of objects, such as a sponge, a leaf, a cork, a metal spoon, a rock,

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and a bar of soap. Have your children predict if the objects will float or sink before placing the objects in water.

Float a clean plastic-foam food tray "boat" in water and let your children add such items as plastic blocks, or small rocks for cargo. How much cargo can the boat hold before it capsizes? **Target: cause and effect**

CREATIVE

Train Whistles:

Supply each child with an empty plastic soda bottle. Invite the children to decorate the bottle however they wish. With stickers or glue on paper etc. To make the whistle sound, blow across the bottle's opening. Have the children blow all at once and pretend to be a train. **Target: decision making**

Vehicles That Color

Materials Needed: crayons, masking tape, small toy vehicles such as cars, paper
Tape 2-3 crayons to the front or back of a toy car. Tape so that the points of the crayons are slightly lower than the bottom of the car. Encourage the children to "drive" the vehicles on paper. Have many of these made in advance...this is a big hit with preschoolers!
This can also be done with markers and chalk! **Target: creativity**

EMOTIONAL

Boat Building Fun

Set out a variety of materials for "boat building," such as paper and plastic plates, small plastic tubs, paper, cardboard, clean plastic-foam food trays, sponges, cardboard tubes, paper cups, and pieces of wood. Include plastic straws and paper squares for making masts and sails, and provide tape, glue, string, and yarn. Let your children experiment with using the materials to make boats. When they have finished, encourage them to float their creations in water. Which materials made the best boats? Why? **Target: independence**

Painting

Materials Needed: Paint and brushes. Instructions: NONE!

That's right, none! Remember that just because we have a set transportation theme, does not mean that ALL activities have to revolve around it! Children at this age are beginning to experiment with representational pictures, but are not quite there yet! Be sure to allow activities where they can just explore and use materials such as painting just to paint and cutting paper just to cut paper! **Target: self expression**

COOKING

Cooking with children helps develop their math skills and helps them to learn how to follow directions. It also allows for some great conversation! Ask many questions while cooking with your children to encourage conversation! Be sure to ask specific transportation theme questions while making these fun snacks!

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AIRPLANE SNACKS

Form an "airplane cabin" using lined-up chairs and invite your children to sit in them. Then have "flight attendants" take orders for boxed juices and simple finger foods to serve to the "passengers." **Target: imagination**

Rice Krispie Traffic Light

Make rice krispie squares and add a red, yellow and green smartie or M&M to create a traffic light. Have the children take turns adding the ingredients and mixing the ingredients.

INGREDIENTS

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 package (10 oz., about 40) JET-PUFFED Marshmallows
- OR
- 4 cups JET-PUFFED Miniature Marshmallows
- 6 cups Kellogg's® Rice Krispies® cereal

DIRECTIONS

1. In large saucepan melt butter over low heat. Add marshmallows and stir until completely melted. Remove from heat. 2. Add KELLOGG'S RICE KRISPIES cereal. Stir until well coated. 3. Using buttered spatula or wax paper evenly press mixture into 13 x 9 x 2-inch pan coated with cooking spray. Cool. Cut into 2-inch squares. Add a red, yellow and green smartie or M&M to create the stop light. Best if served the same day.

MICROWAVE DIRECTIONS:

In microwave-safe bowl heat butter and marshmallows on HIGH for 3 minutes, stirring after 2 minutes. Stir until smooth. Follow steps 2 and 3 above. Microwave cooking times may vary.

Target: sequencing

Apple Boat

Ingredients and Items needed: Apple, slice of cheese, mini pretzel stick.

Core the apple, do not slice. Slice the apple into 4 quarters. Slice cheese into 4 triangles.

Have children place a pretzel stick into the apple quarter. Wrap a cheese triangle around the top of the pretzel for a sail. **Target: independence**

Traffic Lights

Ingredients & Items needed: Graham crackers, cheese spread or cream cheese, apples (red, yellow and green), plastic knives.

Cut apples so that you cut 4 sides off of the core. Then cut into circle shapes. Give each child a whole graham cracker (rectangle) for the traffic light post.

Supervise them as they spread cheese onto cracker.

Give each child one red, yellow and green apple circle to place on the cheese in the order of traffic lights. **Target: creativity**

Banana Boats

4 medium unpeeled ripe bananas, 4 teaspoons miniature chocolate chips, 4 tablespoons miniature marshmallows

Cut banana peel lengthwise about 1/2 in. deep, leaving 1/2 in. at both ends. Open peel wider to form a pocket. Fill each with 1 teaspoon chocolate chips and 1 tablespoon marshmallows.

Crimp and shape four pieces of heavy-duty foil (about 12 in. square) around bananas, forming

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boats. Bake covered at 350 degrees for 5-10 minutes or until marshmallows melt and are golden brown. **Yield:** 4 servings. Let the children assist in the preparation. After the banana boats have cooled give the children a spoon to scoop the banana, marshmallows and chocolate chips from the banana peel. **Target: independence**



Travel Trail Mix

Ingredients and Items needed: cheerios, raisins, pretzels and other healthy snacks each in their own bowls; a spoon in each bowl; plastic baggies. Be aware of allergies within your center. Children place one spoonful of each item into their Travel Snack Baggies. **Target: making choices**

Snack Train

- Cut a clean empty egg cartons in-half lengthwise.
- Give one half section to each child for a train.
- Set out snack “cargo” in bowls, such as; raisins, mini-marshmallows, tiny crackers, cereals, plus serving spoons.
- Have children run their trains along in front of the snack bowls and fill up their freight trains with “cargo”. **Target: self selections**

Dramatic Play Area

Gas Station

Materials Needed: Different sized boxes; toy tools (wrenches, hammers, etc.); cash register and money; assortment of transportation theme vehicles including toy cars and trucks; pads of paper and markers. To do: Make some of the boxes into items for your gas station and/or mechanics garage. Make things such as a gas pump, mechanics tool box, etc. Have a cash register and paper and pencils/markers to write up repair orders or receipts. Use your toy cars from the classroom to have them repaired in the shop!

Vacation Station

Materials needed: Chairs for an airplane, bus, boat or train; pretend food and trays, backpacks, suitcases, extra clothing; paper and markers to make tickets; hole punchers to punch tickets as passengers board.

Travel Agency

Obtain travel brochures from local travel agencies. Also look for maps and other items for your Transportation Theme dramatic play area! While you're at it, ask the travel agency manager if they have a staff member that would come to your preschool group to talk about their job and bring brochures, etc. If you are willing to send some information home from the agent, they should be willing to donate their time! Set up your area with a table for a desk, clipboards, pictures, pens, pencils, paper, perhaps a keyboard that someone is not using for them to "type"

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into. Also provide paper and markers/crayons for the children to make tickets and their own brochures!



Laundry basket sailboat

Book Suggestions for the Library

Altoona Baboona by Janie Bynum

Barney's Big Balloon by Barney

Bears On Wheels by Jan and Stan Berenstain

The Boat Book by Samantha Berger & Pamela Chanko

Bumper to Bumper by Annie Owen

Cars! Cars! Cars! by Grace Maccarone

Down By the Station by Will Hillenbrand

Engine Engine Number Nine by Stephanie Calmenson

Finding the Titanic by Robert Ballard

Go Dog, Go by P.D. Eastman

Ghost Liners by Robert Ballard

Into The Sky by Ryan Ann Hunter

I've Been Working on the Railroad by Nadine Westcott

The Little Engine that Could by Watty Piper

The Little Old Train by Margaret Otto

Little Red Caboose adapted by Steve Metzger

Machines That Work by Usborne Books

Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel by Virginia Lee

Railroad Toad by Susan Schade and Jon Buller

Sailaway Home by Bruce Degen

Scuttle The Stowaway Mouse by Jean and Nancy Soule

Thomas The Tank Engine Stories by Christopher Awdry

Thomas The Tank Engine's Big Yellow Treasury by Christopher Awdry

Trains by Gail Gibbons

<http://www.printablesigns.net/category/traffic> (traffic signs)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nj2DRsdhn80> (cartoon about road safety)

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