

Two Little Trains

by Margaret Wise Brown

Full-color, side-by-side illustrations compare one new, streamlined train and one older, wooden toy train and prove that your imagination can take you places you never thought possible.



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *How fast do you think that train can go?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder what's in that train box?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words in *Two Little Trains*

- West: the part of a country that is towards the west
- streamlined: to build something with a smooth shape so that it moves without resistance
- steel: a strong alloy of iron and carbon
- mountainous: having many mountains
- puffed: short sudden rush of air or wind
- chugged: to make a repeated thudding sound
- gleaming: bright, healthy and new
- cross bars: a cross-shaped structure
- whistle: to make a shrill sound through pursed lips
- plain: a large and treeless piece of land

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- What direction were the two trains heading?
- Can you describe what the two trains looked like?
- What was the little toy train using for its tracks? The cave?
- What sorts of things did the two little trains pass by on their journey?
- One train went over a river, what did the other little train cross over?
- What toy followed the little train?
- What made the two little trains wet?
- What kinds of weather did the two little trains travel through?
- Where did the two trains travel?
- What made the dust? The mountains?
- Where did the trains stop their journey? How were the two places similar? Different?



Do

Draw-a-Train

Learning to draw a train is made simple by following the step-by-step directions provided by the book *Drawing Book of Trucks and Trains* by Ed Emberley. One simple design, from the book, is the log carrier on page 8. Simply draw each step on the whiteboard and have the children copy your drawings. The log carrier is made up of simple circles, squares and straight lines.