

The **BIG** Adventures of a Little Cabin Car

Welcome to The Colebrookdale Railroad Collection of books for children!

This lesson plan is intended as a general guide for parents and homeschool families, offering a structured way to explore themes in the stories through topics for discussion and creative activities.

Starting The Discussion

- Do you like trains?
- Do you have a favorite train car?
- Did you ever ride in a cabin car or caboose?
- Why do you think children like them?

Digging Deeper

- Why is the cabin car happy at the beginning of the story? What makes him sad? Does it make you sad when you can't do what you want to do?
- Why do you think John took the cabin car home and fixed it?
- Why did so many people help John fix the cabin car?
- Have you had a time in your life when you needed people to help you? When they did help you, how did you feel?
- When have you helped someone else? How did helping them make you feel?
- Did John like having his friends visit him in the cabin car? Why did he decide to give it away? What kind of person do you think he was?
- How did the cabin car feel when it was on a train again?
- What was the cabin car "meant" to do?
- Do you know what you are meant to do?

Where In The World?

- Where is Pennsylvania? Can you find it on a map? Have you ever been there?
- The Colebrookdale Railroad is in Boyertown. Can you find that on a map?

The Words We Use

- Who is telling this story? Do you think it would be different if John told it?
- Words to know:
 - Cabin car
 - Brakeman
 - Conductor
 - Cupola
 - Wood stove
 - Excursion train
 - Railroad siding

Doing The Math

- How many wheels are on the cabin car?
- What are the numbers on the cabin car?
- What are the numbers on the Colebrookdale Railroad's engine?

Social Studies

- What jobs do trains do?
- Do you have a train in your town? If not, do you think having a train there would change your town? How would it change?
- Is there a train, a museum, or a model display near you that you can visit?

The Science

- What is a tornado?
- Why did the cabin car get rusty?

Turning Ideas Into Art

- When you look at the cover of this book what do you think the story is about?
- Can you look at the cabin car's face throughout this story and understand how it feels in each picture? How do you know?
- When you see the words of the story "inside" the tornado, how does that make you feel?
- Do any of you have toy or model trains? How do you set them up or play with them?
- Make train cars out of felt, paper, cardboard – even tubes from paper towels or toilet tissue rolls – then arrange them into a full train.
- Use paper or cardboard to make your own train ticket.
- Make a memory game. Collect pictures of train cars and other train-related items (bell, station, ticket, etc.). Mount the pictures on durable index cards and play a train memory game!
- Take pictures of all of the activities you do today, then write about them to make a book of your own. You can laminate it to save it.

Music To Our Ears

- What sounds do trains make?
- In the story, the train goes “clackety-clack” down the track. What makes that sound?
- Think of all the sounds *around* the train. What does the conductor say? Is there a bell on the engine? What is the sound when the conductor punches your ticket?
- Do you know any train songs?
- Can you take all of the sounds from trains and put them together to make a song?

Get Up and Move It, Move It

- Make a train by everyone lining up, one behind the other, and then make train sounds as you move about the room. One person can be the engineer, one can be the conductor, and so on.