

Steam Train, Dream Train

First Reading: Illustrations

There are so many directions from Ms Rinker on how to read her text that it's almost like reading a play script. She uses several different types of special text (bold, italics, and CAPITALS), several different punctuation marks (ellipses, exclamation marks, and dashes), and a rhyming pattern that sounds like a train chugging down the track.

*Read the pages before you begin discussion.

There are pages that you'll enjoy rereading to get the proper rhythm.

Page 1:

- Ms. Rinker uses onomatopoeia (words that are created to represent sounds). Find the words on the page that represent sounds. (clickety-clack, huffing, chuffing)
- Point out the ellipses (. . .) as a direction from the author to make a long pause, longer than a comma. Ms. Rinker wants the listener to "hear" the train coming.

Pages 2 - 3:

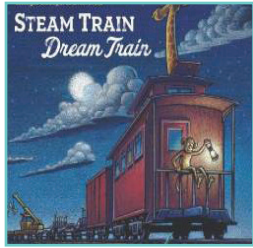
- There are quite a few directions from the author. Read with special emphasis given to the special type (bold, italics, and CAPITALS) and the punctuation marks (dash and exclamation marks).
- Find the tender car. What might the tender car's job be?

Pages 4 - 5:

- crew: a group of people working together. Who makes up the train's crew?
- freight: objects that are being transported. Think about the illustrations viewed during the First Reading. Recall the different types of freight that the crew was loading.
- stowed: to put objects in their proper places. Is stowing freight a hard job? Discuss your answers.

Pages 6 - 9:

- Why do you think this type of train car might be called a boxcar?
- On page 6, cargo: the freight in a train.
- Do the monkeys and rabbits do a good job of stowing the cargo? How do you know?



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Pages 10 - 11:

- What's the purpose of the hopper car?
- Hops and hopper are words that look alike but have different meanings. What does hopper mean in this text? (a special type of train car) What does hops mean? (gets right to work)
- Find something else in the illustration that could be called a hopper. (the kangaroos)
- What does "they get to work and have a ball!" mean? (They have so much fun while they are working.)

Pages 12 - 13:

- What is a tanker car?
- convoy: a group of vehicles traveling together. What else could the convoy of tanker cars carry?

Pages 14 - 15:

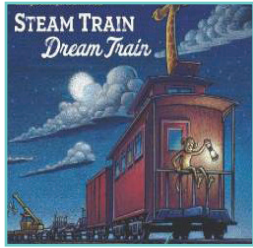
- What kind of car is used as a reefer car? (boxcar)
- Chilly and chills are words that look alike, but have different meanings. What does chilly mean here? (cold) What does "chills out" mean here? (relaxes)

Pages 16 - 17:

- What is a gondola car's job?
- How is a gondola car like a hopper car?
- galore: in great amounts. Where might the prairie dogs be getting sand galore?

Pages 18 - 19:

- What is an autorack car's job?
- track: a certain kind of route or course. How is the track for a race car different from a train track?
- private: belonging to a particular person. Discuss things that are private to your child.



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Pages 20 - 21:

- What is a well car's job?
- A well car has a lower middle that sits close to the rails so that tall cargo has clearance under bridges and overpasses. Why might dinosaurs need to ride on a well car?

Pages 22 - 25:

- How might the flat car be different from the well car?
- weary: tired. Why might the crew be weary?

Pages 26 - 27:

- Does the author tell us where the train is going?
- On page 26, what three words are made up to represent sounds? (hiss, puffing, chuffing)

Pages 28 - 29:

- Is the train that has been loaded by the animals a real train or a dream? Discuss the title.