

# WHOSE BIG RIG?

## Teaching Guide

### INTRODUCTION

Kids are endlessly interested in what adults DO in the world. As a result, the professions of the people in a community and the resources they need to practice their professions are especially interesting to preschool and primary grade children. That's why so many units of study involve community helpers!

In addition to using these **Guess-the-Job Books** as part of your community helper unit, you'll find **Whose Big Rig? Whose Boat?, Whose Truck?,** and **Whose Tools?** useful as springboards to critical thinking, social studies, mathematics, science, and engineering explorations. Of course, you'll also find many language arts activities to explore in this guide for **Whose Big Rig?** as well.

### ABOUT THE BOOKS

**The Guess-the-Job Series:** With lyrical (and factual!) rhyming text and expertly stylized art, the answer to each inquiring refrain is revealed under a gatefold, engaging the reader in an informative guessing game about vehicles or tools and the professionals who operate them. These sturdily constructed board books are perfect for curious and playful young readers.

**Whose Big Rig?**, the fourth in the Guess-the-Job series features six kinds of specialized rigs used to construct a light-rail system—a tunnel borer, an excavator, a bulldozer, a tamping machine, and a bucket truck with five different parts of each properly labeled.

**Whose Boat?**, the third in the Guess-the-Job series, features six kinds of workers and their boats—a patrol boat, a tugboat, a car ferry, a lobster boat, a lifeboat, and a fireboat—with important parts properly labeled.

**Whose Truck?**, the second in the Guess-the-Job series features six kinds of trucks—a utility truck, a fire truck, a snowplow, an ambulance, a crane, and a broadcasting truck—with five different parts of each truck properly labeled.

**Whose Tools?**, the first in the Guess-the-Job series, is a nonfiction ode to building a house from the ground up featuring six kinds of craftsmen and the 24 tools they use, accurately labeled.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATORS

Toni Buzzeo is the author of the 2013 Caldecott Honor Book and *New York Times* bestseller *One Cool Friend*. She lives in both Arlington, Massachusetts and Sarasota, Florida.

**Jim Datz** is an illustrator and designer known for his screen prints, decorated apparel, and illustrated home goods. He lives in Brooklyn.

**Tom Froese** is a commercial artist. His work can be seen in retail stores and publications including *Monocle*, *Harvard Business Review*, and *Wired UK*. He lives in Canada.

**Ramon Olivera** is a children's book illustrator whose work has been exhibited in the New York Society of Illustrators. He lives in Kansas City, Missouri.

# ACTIVITIES FOR *WHOSE BIG RIG?*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

After reading *Whose Big Rig?* aloud to children, ask a series of critical thinking discussion questions to ensure comprehension (Note: There may be more than one answer to a question):

- What is a light-rail?
- What are light-rails good for?
- Are light-rails complicated to build?
- What special rigs are needed to build a light-rail?
- What are culverts and whose job is it to dig them?
- Who flattens the rocks for the rail track?
- Which rig is most like a creature from a fantasy story?
- Who operates that fantastic rig?
- What is the job of a tamping machine?
- Whose rig lifts them up in the air to complete their job?
- Which jobs could humans do without rigs? What tools would they need instead?
- If you could operate any of the six rigs, which would you choose and why?

## WHICH BIG RIG WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

Language Arts: Speaking Activity

Language Arts: Writing Activity

Mathematics Concept: Visual Representation of Numbers Activity

Materials needed: *Whose Big Rig?* book  
White board or chart paper on which to record responses  
Which Big Rig Would You Choose? Activity Sheet

**Speaking Activity:** After reading *Whose Big Rig?*, invite children to think about which of the six rigs featured in the book they would most like to operate. Give each child an opportunity to name his or her choice orally. Then return to each child and encourage them to name the reason for their selection.

**Mathematics Activity:** Create a six-column bar graph by recording each choice on a white board or chart with the names of each child on the y-axis and the name of each rig on the x-axis.

**Writing Activity:** After completing the activity above, invite children—using drawing, dictation, and writing—to depict their chosen rig and explain why they chose as they did. Use the **Which Big Rig Would You Choose? Activity Sheet**.

## I CAN BE A BIG RIG!

Physical Education: Gross Motor Movement Activity

Language Arts: Vocabulary

Mathematics: Sequencing

After reading and discussing *Whose Big Rig?* with students and perhaps after completing the **Which Rig Would You Choose?** activity above, challenge students to consider which of the big rigs they would most like to become and enact.

Begin by discussing the motions and sounds of each big rig as it engages in building a light-rail. Then ask various students to model how they might use their bodies to *become* these rigs. Remind them that they are not to be the operators of the rigs, but the rigs themselves.

Once all students have settled on a rig to become, “build” a light-rail in the classroom or in a larger outdoor space by following the steps of building the rail line, rig by rig, in turn.

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**STEAM ACTIVITIES** [an educational approach to learning that uses Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking]

### **WE CAN BUILD ONE TOO!**

Materials needed: *Whose Big Rig?* book  
Large outdoor sandbox  
Assorted cardboard tubes (boring), spoons/shovels (excavation), cardboard sheets (flattening), foam craft sticks (rail ties), small cardboard boxes (tamping), string (wire)

After you’ve read and discussed *Whose Big Rig?* with students and feel confident that they understand the six steps (and their attendant rigs) for creating a light-rail, invite them to imagine that they are the professionals building a light-rail in your school sandbox.

In sand deep enough to tunnel under and through, start at one corner “boring” through the imagined rock, digging channels, flattening “rock,” lifting and placing “ties,” “tamping” the rails, and stringing wires.

### **WHAT MATERIAL DOES THIS RIG MOVE?**

Materials needed: *Whose Big Rig?* book  
Big Rig Matching Game Cards 1 (Use the **Which Big Rig Would You Choose? Activity Sheet** to print, cut apart, and create this set of cards.)  
Big Rig Matching Game Cards 2 (Use this sheet to print, cut apart, and create this second set of cards)

After reading and discussing *Whose Big Rig?* with students, ask them to focus in on the materials that each rig handles in its work. Consider:

- The **tunnel borer** cuts through rock
- The **excavator** digs through dirt
- The **bulldozer** flattens crushed rock
- The **tie dragon** places rail ties into their final positions
- The **bucket truck** carries and strings electrical lines

After this discussion, invite students to play a memory card game using **Big Rig Matching Game Cards 1** and **Big Rig Matching Game Cards 2**. To play, using either one or two full decks, ask a group of students to place all cards face down on a table. Then, taking turns, flip up two cards on the table, looking for a match between rig and materials. If a match is not found, play passes on to the next student. If a match is found, the pair is removed from the table.

This guide was prepared by the author, Toni Buzzeo, with extensive help from Brenna Banister, preschool educator at Belmont (Massachusetts) Cooperative Nursery School.