

**Overview:** *Train and the Whateveritwas* is specifically designed to introduce the key safety messages about trains and train tracks to young children in an engaging and relatable way. As you read with your students, this resource guide will help you bring the characters and their safety messages to life in a fun and meaningful way.



**Grade:** Pre-Kindergarten 3 -Kindergarten 5

**Time Allotment:** 30-45 Minutes

**Subject Matter:** Community Safety/Following Directions

**Key Learning Objectives:**

Upon Completion, Students should be able to identify:

1. Tracks are for Trains.
2. Stay away from Train Tracks
3. Do Not Walk—trespass—on Trains and Tracks.
4. Putting things on Trains and Tracks is dangerous.

Students will practice things to do to stay safe around tracks and trains.

**Materials Required:** Copy of *Trains and Tracks* by Operation Lifesaver; Space for game play

**Preparation:**

- Review changes to song lyrics (listed below)
- Print pictures of tracks and/or places in your community where trains and train tracks may be close by.
- OPTIONAL FOR EMERGING READERS: Print Simple chants from *Trains and Tracks* on Smartboard/Flip Chart

**Active Learning:**

**Introductory Activity:** Have your students make a “train” throughout their classroom as they are cleaning up and/or moving from one activity into another. The **engineer** (line leader) should initiate a train horn at each new station. All other students can copy! Once they get to circle time area move on to...

**Follow Up Movement and Song Integration:** Ask if students know the song, *Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes*. Hum the song as a reminder. Tell the students that throughout the story you are going to read, Train describes different attributes of herself. Ask students to show you gestures that describe being:

*Big, Strong, Heavy*

Once you have settled on gestures, set to the tune of *Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*:

Lyrics:

*Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*

*Knees and Toes*

*Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*

*Knees and Toes*

*And Eyes and Ears and*

*Mouth and Knows*

*Head Shoulders, Knees and Toes*

*Knees and Toes!*

Trains and Tracks:

*Big, Strong, very Heavy*

*Very Heavy*

*Big, Strong, very Heavy*

*Very Heavy*

*Be careful all around*

*Trains and Tracks,*

*They are big, strong, and heavy*

*Very Heavy!*

**Prepare Students for Reading:** When students are settled, show them *Trains and Tracks*. Ask students to make *inferences* about the story:

### Sample Questions to Ask

1. Where do you think that Train might be going?
2. What types of things do you think train might be carrying?
3. Have you ever seen train tracks in our town? Where?
  - a. OPTIONAL: Show pictures of places in your town where trains and train tracks may be found.
  - b. OPTIONAL: Point out in these places where they should be extra careful.

**Guided Reading or OPTIONAL VIDEO:** Stop and ask questions throughout the reading at instructor's discretion. Throughout the book, there are several chants that Train likes to say while moving along track. In these sections, create a simple rhythm and dance. Some ideas might be:

*Clickety Clack, Train on Track.* Create a simple rhythm of hitting on legs.

*Train or Track? Just stay back!* Add hands up and out away from the body to indicate "stay back"

### Reading Wrap-Up

Words to remember: trespassing

### Class Play: Simon Says Variation

Have students spread out across the playing space. Model the following:

1. When I say **TRAIN** tiptoe around the room while whispering "*shh...shh...*" across the playing space (IF SPACE ALLOWS)
2. When I say **TRACK** push hands away from track, jump while saying "**STAY BACK**"
3. When I say **TRACK OBJECTS** imagine you're putting something on the track while saying "Oh no!"
4. When I say **WALK ON TRACKS**, jump side to side, "*Stay off those tracks!*"

As you progress, feel free to speed up as you would while playing **Simon Says** .

### Wrap Up:

As you transition out of your reading time and space, have the students get back into their train line. Choose another **engineer** to lead to the next activity by calling, “All Aboard” and then leading others to speak/sing the chant your students have created as they move into their next activity. For more Rail Safety ideas, visit [www.oli.org](http://www.oli.org)

#### Additional Cross-Curricular Activities

1. **Art:** Create a train popsicle-stick puppet for use with “Strong, Big, and Heavy”
2. **Letter Recognition:** Make a class list of words that start with the Letter T such as *Train* and *Track*.
3. **Letter Recognition:** If using a copied chant, use a marker to have students underline all of the “T”s that they find in Trains favorite chants.
4. **Community Geography:** Create a map of your town with your school at the center. Make a map of tracks that exist in your area, tracing a route to all of the places in your community where you might encounter trains and train tracks. Discuss safe places where you could stand to avoid being too close.

*Operation Lifesaver is a nonprofit public safety education and awareness organization dedicated to reducing collisions, fatalities and injuries at highway-rail crossings and preventing trespassing on or near railroad tracks. Visit [OLI.org](http://OLI.org) for more information.*