

The Early Years Count **Literacy** Connection



Sleep Train

Written by Jonathan
London, illustrated by
Lauren Eldridge

Infant/Toddler edition

Overview of Book

Count and name ten cars on this sleepy train. It's time to get under the covers, get cozy, and catch the sleepy train.

Genre: Picture/Concept (counting)

Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some from *Sleep Train* to introduce in your classroom:

cardinal numbers (one, two...)
train car names (tender, box...)
moonbeam moonlit
coach dream

Each time you read the book, highlight 2 or 3 words.

Use age-appropriate definitions and/or refer to the illustrations to help children understand each word's meaning.

Use the new words throughout the day, reminding children, "That's a word from our story!"

Connecting with HighScope Curriculum

COR Advantage 1.5

Language, Literacy
and Communication
Item M (Listening and
comprehension)

Item N
(Phonological awareness)

Item Q
(Book knowledge)

Mathematics
Item S
(Number and counting)

Reading Tips

Read before rest time to help everyone relax and get sleepy. Read with a soft tone and get to a whisper by the end. Point out how the little boy in the story is getting quieter and sleepier as the book continues. Show the children the very first page spread and talk about where he is (in his bed in an apartment). "Look in his hand—he's holding...this book! Is the little boy pretending to be on the train or is he dreaming?" Count the train cars several times.

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. During each reading the adult can introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

Throughout the Routine

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

At **Choice Time**, model counting objects as children play. "You have 10 blocks and there were 10 train cars in the story! One, two, three..."

At **Mealtimes**, as you pass food or utensils, pretend you are the train in the story. "Clickety-clack, here comes the peas!"

Play "train" at **Outside Time**. Encourage the children to form a line, hold on to the child in front, and "jiggle down the track" and "chug down that line."

Around the Room

Highlight the book's content and build on the children's excitement in a variety of locations.

Post laminated photo of trains and train cars in the Bodily Care/bathroom area for children to look at and talk about.

Gather trains and track for the **Block Area**. As you play with the children, say, "Clickety-clack" and "Chug-chug" like the train in the story.

Add other train/counting books to the **Book Area**. Examples include *Freight Train* by Donald Crew, *The Little Engine That Could* by Watty Piper, and *Trains* by Byron Barton.

Open-ended Questions

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These "wondering aloud" questions support children's developing focus and attention as they encourage young children's capacity to make connections and see possibilities.

Here are some questions you might ask for *this book*:

How do you get cozy and sleepy?

If you could be on one of the train cars, which one would you choose? Why?

Do you hear trains sometimes? How do you feel when you hear them?

For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact
The Family Connection:

website—
www.famconn.org

Facebook—
[@famconnsjc](https://www.facebook.com/famconnsjc)

phone—
574-237-9740

@ Home

Since many children in our county will have this book at home, use it to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *Sleep Train* with their children. Here's a sample message you can send:

Sleep Train is a wonderful book to share with your child before bedtime. There are many details in the pictures to look at, compare, and talk about. Take time to explore the full-page picture of the boy's bedroom, especially his toys on the floor and on his shelves. While reading, count the train cars over and over. When you are out in the community with your child, you may have to wait for a train. Take the opportunity to recall the story with your child by counting the cars or trying to identify some of the train cars. Ask open-ended questions like, "Where do you think this train is going?" or "What do you think this train is carrying?" Imitate the train sounds from the story together.