Transportation Theme

During our Transportation Unit, we discovered the ways we travel, how vehicles move and what vehicles move. We also discussed transportation specific to Pittsburgh and CMU. Come along for the ride and read about the learning and fun that contributed to our unit!

We began our unit by defining Transportation as “moving people or things from one place to another”. During the first week, we identified the various vehicles we use to travel and the ways we travel. Sorting vehicles by those that travel by land, air, water and rails allowed us to begin thinking about transportation all around us. Things that Go by Anne Rockwell and How Will We Get to the Beach by Bridgette Luciani were books that reminded us of the different ways people travel. On the Go by Ann Morris described ways people travel all around the world.
After discovering the different ways to travel and the various vehicles, we asked, “How do vehicles move?” During the week, the children explored wheels, propellers, sails and wind. Wings, Wheels, and Sails by Bobbie Kalman helped us understand the ways vehicles move. Experiments with wheels and axles and play opportunities with vehicles with wheels allowed us to explore this simple machine. Reading What Do Wheels Do All Day by April Prince offered us the opportunity to discuss the many jobs wheels do and how they make work easier. During the week we also explored and experimented with building ramps.

Harris discovers wheels make work easier when moving heavy boxes.

Adler looks at a non-fiction book about how planes move.

Alisa uses a drill to form a hole for the mast of her sailboat.

Conor wonders what item will sink the boat, makes a prediction and then tests his prediction.

Jack builds a ramp using an assortment of items and then tests his ramp with a ball.

After discussing how wind moves a sailboat, Evren experimented with his “wind” to move various objects by blowing his air through a straw.

Chudi paints with wheels on an inclined surface.

Henry builds a propeller.
Next, we noticed that many of our conversations during our unit were about vehicles that help to do jobs. Garbage trucks, police cars, rocket ships, fire trucks, and mail trucks were some of the vehicles mentioned that are used when doing a job. Along with talking about occupations that use a vehicle, we also discovered the different items vehicles move. Some of the discoveries included: people, clothing, supplies, wood, dirt, garbage, freight etc. * Freight Trains by Peter Brandy and Dump Trucks by Aaron Frisch* helped start conversations about the items vehicles transport. Because there was a lot of interest in construction vehicles, we shared the You Tube video, “The Great Machine” by Peter and Ellen Allard which sang about the various construction vehicles and how they do their job. Space vehicles contributed to our learning during the week as well.

Eli and Avi work together to build a rocket ship using No Ends building pieces.

Maren and Isaiah play transportation bingo.

Aya, Lillian, Evren, Adrian and Maya discuss what a recycling truck transports as they sort recycled materials into the containers.

Addison, John and Josh work at the construction site building with blocks and shaving cream. Dump trucks delivered the shaving cream to the site.

Maya repairs a tricycle in the Green Room Mechanic Shop.

Colby and Conor count down as their rocket ship prepares to blast off.

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We ended our unit discussing and learning about the transportation around Pittsburgh and the CMU campus. Stories about rides on the Incline, the T, the PAT bus and the Gateway Clipper filled our classroom. A Pittsburgh transportation scavenger hunt, memory match game and campus walks supported and contributed to our learning. Building a pulley system helped us simulate the incline climbing the Mt. Washington hillside. The Green Room Department of Motor Vehicles was open for the friends to take their driver test and receive a driver’s license.

Colby and Maya play a Pittsburgh transportation memory match game.

Alisa explores magnets at the light table.

Connor builds an airplane using an assortment of shapes.

Max drives back to the DMV after passing his driver’s test.

Julia shares her transportation pattern with Mrs. Cherin.

Josie moves her incline up the hill using a pulley.

Colby takes a photo of a dump truck he identified during our campus walk to discover vehicles around CMU.

Adrian races his car to Point State Park.

Lillian and John drive their PAT bus filled with passengers.

Addison discovers a picture of Pittsburgh transportation while on the scavenger hunt.
During the month we explored sculpture with the children. Sculpture is three dimensional artwork created by shaping or combining materials. We began by offering a variety of wooden pieces. The children assembled their wooden sculptures by gluing the pieces together. A styrofoam based was used to anchor the sculpture. Once complete, the children painted their sculpture. The conversations and descriptions during the process were recorded and each child’s sculpture has a written description (the child’s words) attached to it. Next, we introduced clay. Initially, the children had the opportunity to freely explore the clay which helped promote their sensory development and motor skills. Clay tools were introduced and instruction was given for proper usage. Next, an assortment of natural materials were added to the experience such as twigs, acorns, pebbles, stones, and leaves. The children’s creativity and self expression were apparent in their finished sculptures.

Thanks for visiting!

Siobhan’s Mom shared a story with her circle time friends to celebrate Siobhan’s 4th birthday.

Mrs Hraber, our music teacher, shared instruments and transportation songs with us during the month.