Transportation Theme

During our Transportation Unit, we discovered the ways we travel, how vehicles move and what vehicles move. In anticipation of our upcoming Whole School Pittsburgh Theme, we also focused on vehicles around Pittsburgh.

We began our unit by defining transportation as “moving people or things from one place to another”. We discussed different ways to travel, including by land, air, water or rail. The children practiced identifying, sorting and exploring vehicles that travel on land, air, water or rail. Some of the books that enhanced our learning about the ways we travel included Things That Go by Anne Rockwell, Away We Go by Rebecca Kai Dotlich, Here Comes Grandma by Janet Lord and How Will We Get to the Beach by Brigitte Luciani. We enjoyed singing some classic songs, including “The Wheels on the Bus” and “Row, Row, Row your Boat”.

Next, we explored how vehicles move. Our discussions included wheels, propellers, wings, sails and people. Books that helped us learn about how vehicles move included, Wings, Wheels and Sails by Bobbie Kalman, That’s How by Christoph Niemann, What Do Wheels Do All Day by April Jones Prince, and Little Rat Sets Sail by Monika Bang-Campbell. We explored the speed of various vehicles by comparing which moves faster or slower. The children experimented with ramps, vehicles and wheels. Singing and acting out “The Airplane” song was a favorite movement activity.

Freight Trains by Peter Brady, Roadwork by Sally Sutton, Roaring Rockets by Tony Mitton and The Three Little Rigs by David Gordon described what vehicles move. Sorting and loading supplies into a freight train led to conversations about what trains move. Peter and Ellen Allard’s song, “The Great Machine”, reminded us of the various construction vehicles and what they move. Dramatic play opportunities in the fire engine and the airplane allowed us to think of occupations that use vehicles.

A memory match game that included photographs of transportation around Pittsburgh introduced the children to some vehicles specific to Pittsburgh, including the Incline, Gateway Clipper, and the “T”. Building a pulley system helped the children simulate the Incline climbing the Mt. Washington hillside.
Dramatic Play during our Transportation Theme

Our Dramatic play area was changed weekly to enhance our unit. The friends explored various vehicles to extend their learning.

**DMV**

The Children’s School Department of Motor Vehicles was open for business as the children were required to take a driver’s test around an outlined road and cones on the Green Room Floor. The friends stepped into their cars and drove them around cones, curves, bends and lines. As they successfully completed their test, they received their license photo and wrote their name on their license. As the week progressed, the friends would show their license to a teacher before driving a vehicle.

**Airplane**

A world map, keyboards, headphones and seats were added to our Dramatic Play area to transform the space into an airplane. Tickets were collected and destinations were discussed as the passengers boarded the plane. Co-pilots were responsible for transporting the passengers to their destination. Some of the favorite destinations included New York, Japan, and Florida. This experience offered the opportunity to discuss occupations that require vehicles such as firefighters, police officers, garbage collectors, and construction workers.

**Mechanic’s Shop**

In an effort to repair the “broken” tricycles from our playground, we opened the Mechanics Shop in the Green Room Dramatic Play Area. The children worked together to explore the parts of the tricycle and used tools to repair them. A closer look at the wheels and various parts of the vehicle enhanced our learning.
Transportation Activities

Included in our month were transportation activities that supported our skill development. The Parking Lot game reinforced number recognition. Creative writing stories about vehicles and matching vehicle names with their picture enhanced our communication skills. Exploring cars and ramps and experimenting with sink or float helped build cognitive skills of discovery and exploration. Physical skills were reinforced when using tools in Woodworking to build an airplane and sailboat, as well as while tracing vehicle stencils and writing vehicle names. Creating vehicles using various shapes allowed the children to use their creativity, imaginations and practice shape recognition.

It was a busy month filled with cars, trains, planes, boats, learning and FUN!
Jacob watches his rocket blast off.

Avery predicts while playing Sink or Float.

Miyako uses the drill to create her sailboat.

Asher tests his sailboat in water.

Camryn shows her sharing bag item.

Ryan follows the road to unload his dump truck.

Roxie takes her drivers test.

Emma sequences numbers on her number train.

Maeve uses a drill to create her sailboat.

Asher and Mira sign their name on their driver’s licenses.

Mattias explores gears in the Science Center.

Sara is excited to share her item in the Sharing Bag.

Ethan traces vehicles.

Charlotte answers questions about her sharing bag item.
Birthday Celebrations and Special Visitors

We celebrated Saatwik’s birthday with his parents. Saatwik and his friends prepared a special chocolate chip muffin birthday snack.

Rhys’ parents and brother Tiernan visited and shared a story with his circle time friends.

Miss Debbie, from the Carnegie Library, visited and shared transportation stories and songs.