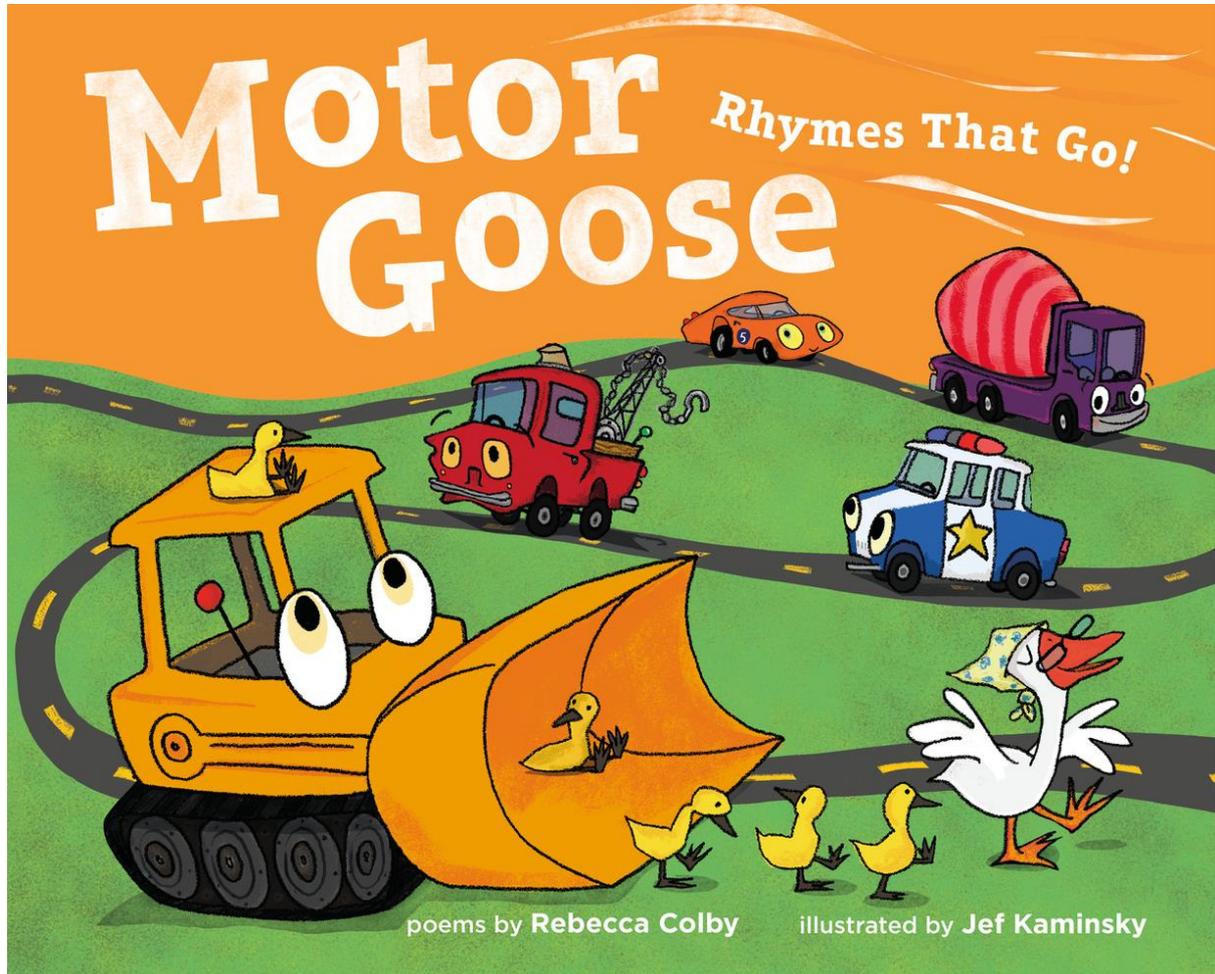


# A Teacher's Guide to



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This guide is intended for children in Kindergarten and First Grade (or children in Reception through Year 2).  
It can also be adapted for pre-school children.



## Motor Goose

Motor Goose is a collection of Mother Goose-inspired poems featuring various vehicles—from diggers, garbage trucks, and cement mixers to rockets, police cars, submarines, and everything in between.

## About Rebecca Colby

Rebecca has driven cars, trucks, vans, mopeds, and snowmobiles. She's also flown a plane. However, she hasn't owned a motorized vehicle in over 15 years and she usually travels by foot, by bicycle, or on public transport. She's even been known to borrow her children's toy scooters.

Before writing for children, Rebecca worked for a Russian comedian, taught English in Taiwan, traveled the world as a tour director, worked as a librarian, and taught school as a primary teacher. Although born in America, she now lives in England. You can learn more about Rebecca at [www.rebeccacolbybooks.com](http://www.rebeccacolbybooks.com)



## About Jef Kaminsky

Jef Kaminsky is the illustrator of the picture book *Monstergarten*, by Daniel J. Mahoney. A former kindergarten teacher, he lives with his family in Brooklyn, New York.

To learn more about Jef, visit his website at: [www.jefkaminsky.com/](http://www.jefkaminsky.com/)

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## English Language Arts (ELA)

### Getting from Here to There (pre-reading activity)

Children will sit in a circle. Ask them how they normally travel to school. Show the children pictures of different modes of transportation. Discuss where they might be going if they were traveling via the mode of transportation pictured.

### Book Walk

Explore the book's cover.

- What is the title of this book?
- Who wrote the book?
- What is this person called?
- Who drew the pictures?
- What is this person called?
- Tell me more about the illustrations. Are they photographs? What do you think the illustrator used? Crayons? Colored pencils? Paint?
- What kind of vehicles do you see on the cover?
- What else is on the cover? Why do you think there is a goose?



Read the back cover of the book.

- What kind of vehicles do you see on the back of the book?
- Have you ridden in any vehicles like these?
- Which one would you want to ride in? Why?
- Have you heard of another rhyme that starts with "Little Jack...?"

Now read the book. After each rhyme, ask children if they can guess the original Mother Goose rhyme that it is based on.

- Which rhyme was your favorite? Why?
- Which rhyme was your least favorite? Why?
- What are the vehicles doing on the last page?

### Nursery Rhyme Swap Shop

- Choose a popular nursery rhyme and share it with the class.
- Then share an alternate version of the nursery rhyme from Motor Goose.
- Compare the two and pinpoint where they're the same and different.
- Then ask children to choose a nursery rhyme and decide which things they'd like to write about it. Will the nursery rhyme be on a certain theme, say pirates, monsters, etc? If so, ask them to think up related vocabulary to insert into the nursery rhyme. For example, if they wish to write about pirates, some related vocabulary words they might come up with are: ship, deck, treasure, parrot, crew, sea, gold, etc.
- Write a new nursery rhyme as a class. The children can choose the substitute words to swap into their rhyme from another poem, from the dictionary, or they can just make them up.

# Mathematics

## Motor Math Word Problems

1. A truck beeped its horn 4 times. Then it beeped its horn 2 more times. How many times did the truck beep its horn in total?
2. A bus picked up 3 people. Then it stopped again and picked up 6 more people. How many people boarded the bus in total?
3. There were 8 cars in a parking lot, but then 4 left. How many cars still remained in the parking lot?
4. There were 10 motorcycles in a race but 7 motorcycles dropped out. How many motorcycles finished the race?

## Keep On Truckin'

- Explain to children that they will be measuring pictures of trucks of varying lengths. Ask them what they should measure with.
- If they haven't yet learned how to use rulers, then introduce non-standard units of measure, such as math cubes to measure. Ask the children to estimate how many cubes it would take to measure an eraser. Then measure it with cubes. Repeat this by asking children to estimate and then measure the length of a pencil, a chair, table, etc.
- Then, in groups or individually, children can complete the Keep On Truckin' worksheet on page 12.



## Double the Fun

- Ask children how many wheels are on a bicycle.
- Two bicycles? Three bicycles? Four bicycles? Five bicycles?
- Explain that the number of wheels can be calculated by doubling the number of bicycles involved.
- Once children understand doubling items, introduce halving.

## Science

### Downhill Roll

Demonstrate how to construct a ramp from books and blocks. Place a toy car at the top of the book ramp and let it go. Ask children to estimate how far it traveled. Discuss how the angle of the ramp and the material used for the ramp might affect how far the toy car travels. Use various materials like carpet and wood. Ask children to guess which material the car will travel faster down, and why. Place children in small groups and ask them to do their own experiments, measuring how far the cars travel on different materials and at different angles.

## Geography



### Direction Game

Stand at the north side of your classroom, then ask your students to face you. Explain that they are now facing North. Teach the students South, East, and West. Once they know their directions, shout out random directions, asking them to face the correct direction in each instance. If they face the wrong direction, they are out of the game and must sit down. To make the game more difficult, shout the directions quicker, and/or add the directions: NE, NW, SE, and SW.

**Note:** This game may also be played with “left” and “right” directions only, as opposed to compass points.

## Physical Education

### Traffic Lights

Explain to the children that they are going to be cars and that they must follow the traffic lights.

- When the teacher holds a red light up, they must stop.
- When a yellow light is held up, they should jog slowly in one space.
- When a green light is held up, they may jog around the room.

Vary the actions as well as the speed. For example, initially they may be asked to jog. Then later, they may be asked to skip, hop, jump, etc.

## Fetch a Pail of Water

This is an outdoor relay race game, best played in warmer weather.

Equipment:

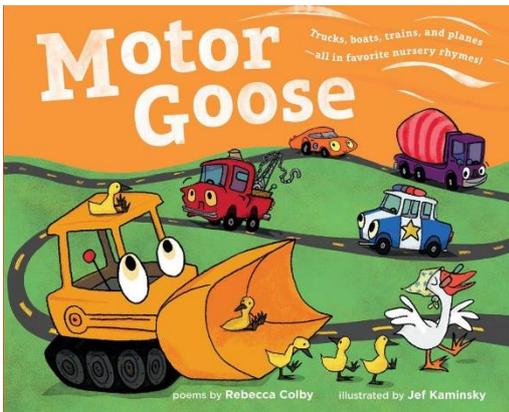
- 4 empty pails
- 4 empty, large bowls or tubs
- 1 large basin filled with water

Break the class into 4 teams, giving each team a pail and an empty tub. Ask the children to line up in their teams. At the other side of the field (or on top of a hill, if you have one in your schoolyard), place the basin filled with water. Ask students to collect water in their pails from the large basin in relay race fashion. The first team to fill their large bowls or tubs wins.

## ICT

### Poetry Poster

For this activity, students will create their own posters.



- Look at the cover for *Motor Goose* again.
- Ask the students what they notice about the text size and color.
- Using a word processing program, model to children how to change font size and color.
- Demonstrate how to add clip art to a page.
- Ask students to type out the class nursery rhyme.
- Then ask them to add appropriate clip art.
- Print and laminate the children's work.

## Music

### Traffic Conductor

Give each student an instrument. One student will be the conductor and will be given two signs instead of an instrument: a sign that's green for "GO" and another one that's red for "STOP." The conductor will signal the other children when to play their instruments and when to stop playing them. Ask the conductor to vary the amount of time between starting and stopping the music.

## The Wheels on the Bus

Ask students to sing *The Wheels on the Bus* song. Once finished, ask the students to make up their own version of the song, using one of the vehicles found in *Motor Goose*.

For example, make up verses to any of the following:

The Whistle on the Train  
The Wings on the Plane  
The Siren on the Cruiser  
The Engine on the Rocket

## Art, Food, and Design

### Banana Boats

**Note:** Be aware of any food allergies, particularly nut allergies.



#### Ingredients:

- 4 medium unpeeled ripe bananas
- 4 tablespoons chocolate chips
- 4 tablespoons of miniature marshmallows
- Optional: chopped nuts, shredded coconut, crumbled graham crackers (or digestive biscuits in the UK)

1. Cut banana peel lengthwise about 1/2 in. deep, leaving 1/2 in. at both ends. Open peel wider to form a pocket.
2. Fill each banana with 1 tablespoon chocolate chips, 1 tablespoon marshmallows, and any further optional ingredients.
3. Grill the banana boats under medium heat until the marshmallows melt and are golden brown—approximately 5-10 minutes.

## Traffic Light Fruit Kebabs

**Note:** Be aware of any food allergies, as well as the use of toothpicks around any young children.

Ingredients:

- Strawberries or raspberries
- Orange segments or banana slices
- Green grapes or kiwi slices
- Toothpicks

To make a traffic light kebab, put a toothpick through one red-colored fruit, one yellow or orange-colored fruit, and one green-colored fruit.



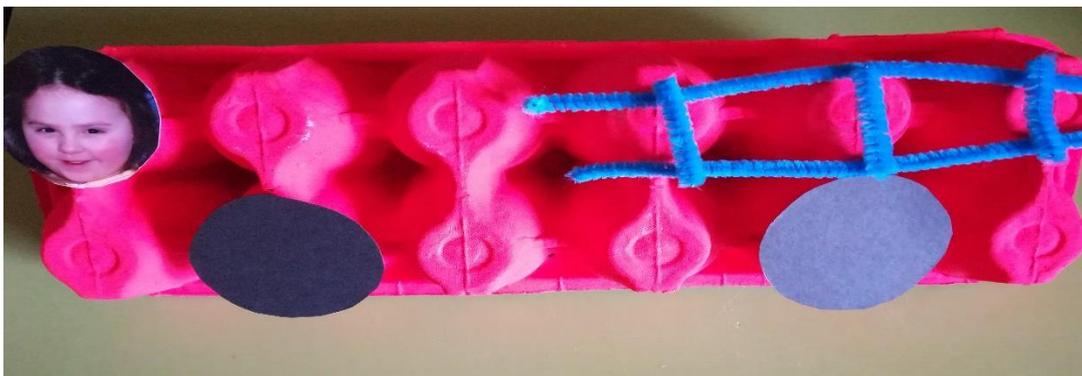
## Egg Carton Fire Engines

Supplies:

- One half of a cardboard egg carton
- Red paint
- Black paper
- Pre-cut colored pipe cleaners (two 4" pieces and three 1" pieces all in the same color)
- A small portrait picture of each student in your class
- Safety scissors
- Glue

Instructions:

- Cut an egg carton in half and paint one half of it red.
- As the paint dries, cut out two circles from the black paper. (Students may wish to trace around a small jar lid or quarter before cutting out their circles.)
- Make a ladder out of the pipe cleaner pieces, using glue to affix them together.
- When the paint is dry, glue the wheels on the bottom of the truck, and picture on the upper left-hand side of the carton.
- Glue the ladder to the upper right-hand side of the carton.



## An Interview with Rebecca Colby

### How did you come up with the idea for *Motor Goose*?

I had long-wanted to write my own version of the Mother Goose nursery rhymes playing my game of Nursery Rhyme Swap Shop. However, it took me a couple of years to find a subject to write about. I decided on transportation as I knew it would appeal to both boys and girls. Also, I wanted the title to be as close to the original as possible, and as “motor” is a two-syllable word beginning with the letter M, it seemed perfect.



### When did you first start writing poetry?

At the end of first grade, my school presented me with a poetry book as an award. I read it over and over and fell in love with rhyming poetry. As I didn't own many books or toys as a child, I had to find other ways to entertain myself. Writing poems become one of the things I chose to do in my free time.

### What are some of your favorite poems?

Not surprisingly, I am a big fan of the Mother Goose rhymes. I also love Dr. Seuss' books, which are effectively just long poems. But my favorite poems will always be the ones found in the book I was gifted from my school, *The Big Golden Book of Poetry*, edited by Jane Werner. It contains classic children's poems like: *The Owl and the Pussycat* by Edward Lear, *A Children's Garden of Verses* by Robert Louis Stevenson, and *Wynken, Blynken, and Nod* by Eugene Field.

### What advice would you give an aspiring young poet?

Read as many poems as you can get your hands on. This way you'll have an ear for rhythm, rhyme, and word play. Also, always be sure to have someone else read your poems aloud. It's not difficult to write a rhyming poem, but it is difficult to ensure it flows smoothly. Often when we read our own poems aloud, we will make the rhythm fit—even when it doesn't. That's why it is important to find someone else to read your work to you.

### What is your favorite way to travel?

Dare I say, I love traveling by foot. If I can walk somewhere, I will. When I do travel by transportation, I like to go by train. It's a good way to see the countryside and meet new people. I once took a vacation by train, traveling across the US, stopping to see New Orleans, the Grand Canyon, and San Diego.

### If you could drive any vehicle you wanted, what would you drive and why?

I'd like to drive a jet ski. I've driven snowmobiles, and I think driving a jet ski would be equally exhilarating, while at the same time more challenging and requiring even better balancing skills.

## An Interview with Jef Kaminsky

### **When did you decide to become an illustrator?**

I'm not sure of the exact moment when I decided to become an Illustrator. It might have been when I was in the 5th Grade (and my classmates gathered around to watch me draw a mascot for our class). Or it could have been when I was in my senior year of college (that's when I decided to write and illustrate a kids' book about sandwiches). I'm not sure I ever made a hard/fast decision, I just know that I've always loved drawing.



### **What other illustration projects have you worked on?**

I've illustrated a lot of projects. Around 11 or 12 children's books over the years. I've drawn pictures from a few websites and newspapers. I've made lots and lots of silly holiday cards, thank you cards, and birthday cards. Plus, I've done some character and prop designs for animated television shows. Some of the books I've illustrated are Monstergarten, Poppy & Ella, and Dear Santasaurus.

### **Which media do you prefer to work in and why?**

When I was young, before everyone started using computers for everything, I loved using real watercolors and paint. They're wonderfully messy! And they're not so easy to use. So I ended up throwing away a TON of pictures because I'd always make mistakes. But eventually, I got the hang of using paint. Then one day I bought an Apple computer and a drawing tablet, plus Photoshop and Illustrator, too (those are two image creation/editing programs made by Adobe). And I starting teaching myself how to draw and paint using digital tools. Those tools are what I still use today. The trick is learning how to use a Stylus (digital pen) and finding digital brushes that you like to use. I've tried hundreds of different digital brushes over the years, but now I've settled on just a handful of them. Not kidding, I have about five digital brushes that I love using. I've found that it helps to keep things simple. But up in my attic I still have all of my tubes, jars, and bottles of real watercolor and gouache paints — just in case!

### **What advice would you give an aspiring young illustrator?**

I'm a huge believer in "practice, practice, practice." When I first tried to get into a painting class in college, the professor looked at my drawings and said that I was just terrible at drawing. I would not be allowed to take the course. But instead of giving up, I searched for a beginning drawing class and enrolled in it. I worked hard, and by the end of that school year, I had gotten a bit better at drawing. I went back to the painting professor, shared some of my new pictures, and was allowed to take the class. I still struggle with how to draw certain things. But I just roll up my sleeves, sketch them a few times (okay, sometimes it takes me hundreds of tries to draw certain things) until I like the way they look.

**Side note:** I like to think that this same "practice, practice, practice" philosophy works for just about anything. For example, I've been trying to learn how to play a musical instrument over the past two years. It's slow going, but I seem to get a little bit better each week or two. And it's fun trying to learn a challenging, new skill.

### **What is your favorite way to travel?**

I am nuts about bicycles. When I was young, I loved the freedom that my bike gave me. On a bicycle, you can stop to take a closer look at whatever catches your eye, or you can just zip from Point A to Point B. Either way, it's fun. And it feels amazing to be outside on a bike.

That said, I also love driving cars. My dad is as nutty for cars as I am for bicycles. He had an English convertible from the early 60's that never quite worked. It just sat in our garage smelling of oil. But when I was little I would climb into the driver's seat and pretend to go go go. Now that I'm a grown-up, I'm pretty practical. My wife and I have a station wagon. (You can't miss it – it's got bike racks on top!)

### **If you could drive any vehicle you wanted, what would you drive and why?**

Well, I never got a chance to drive my dad's sports car... He sold it when I was still young. So driving a car like that one was definitely on my list. Recently I visited the southern coast of France, and I rented a little red sports car for a day. It was fantastic. Not because I went fast. Just the opposite. I took it easy. I was just happy to wind along the beautiful seaside coast with the top down. It felt every bit as good as I had imagined it would, way back when I was daydreaming in my dad's garage.

# Keep On Truckin'

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

What unit of measurement did you use? \_\_\_\_\_



My estimate \_\_\_\_\_ My measurement \_\_\_\_\_



My estimate \_\_\_\_\_ My measurement \_\_\_\_\_



My estimate \_\_\_\_\_ My measurement \_\_\_\_\_



My estimate \_\_\_\_\_ My measurement \_\_\_\_\_