Storyland Classics

FREE STORY GUIDE

The original 1930 story, retold by Watty Piper



- ✦ Meet the Author
- ✦ The Big Idea & Try It
- ✦ Yes or No & ABC Order
- ✦ Read It With Voices
- ✦ Standards
- ✦ Story Map
- ✦ Word Match & Sort
- ✦ Put It in Order
- ✦ Handwriting
- ✦ Let's Talk
- ✦ Word Search
- ✦ Who Said It? & Feelings
- ✦ Answer Key

Ages 4–8 ✦ Pre-K to Grade 2 ✦ Aligned to Common Core

This cover is for your screen. Print from page 2 to save ink.

FOR GROWN-UPS

How to Use This Guide

This free guide goes with the Storyland Classics read-aloud of “The Little Engine That Could.” Every page is ready to print, and no sign-up is needed. Pick the pages that suit your child or class.

ABOUT THE STORY

A little train full of toys and good food for the children over the mountain breaks down. The toys ask a Shiny New Engine, a Big Strong Engine and a Rusty Old Engine for help, and each one says no. Then a Little Blue Engine comes along. She has never been over the mountain, but she says, “I think I can,” and she pulls the train all the way to the top.

SKILL FOCUS

Repetition and pattern: noticing what happens again and again, and how the ending is different

WATCH AND READ ALONG

Scan the code to watch the read-aloud and read the full story, or visit storylandclassics.com/engine-guide. Watty Piper, *The Little Engine That Could* (1930). Public domain in the United States.

A simple routine

1. **Day 1.** Watch the read-aloud together, then fill in the Story Map.
2. **Day 2.** Meet the author, then use Let’s Talk and The Big Idea.
3. **Day 3.** Learn the words with the word match, word sort and word search.
4. **Day 4.** Put the story in order, then perform it with voices.

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Standards

Every activity is aligned to the Common Core State Standards for kindergarten to grade 2. Codes appear at the bottom of each page, and the full table is on the last page.

Younger children

Children who aren’t writing yet can answer out loud or tell a grown-up what to write.

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Name _____ Date _____

MEET THE AUTHOR

Watty Piper

Pen name of Arnold Munk

"Watty Piper" was not a real person. It was a pen name used by Arnold Munk, who owned a New York company that made children's books, called Platt & Munk. The story of a little engine that tried hard was told by many people before the book came out. In 1930 Platt & Munk published *The Little Engine That Could*, "retold by Watty Piper," and it became one of the most famous children's books in America.

Questions About the Author

1. Was Watty Piper a real person? What was his real name?

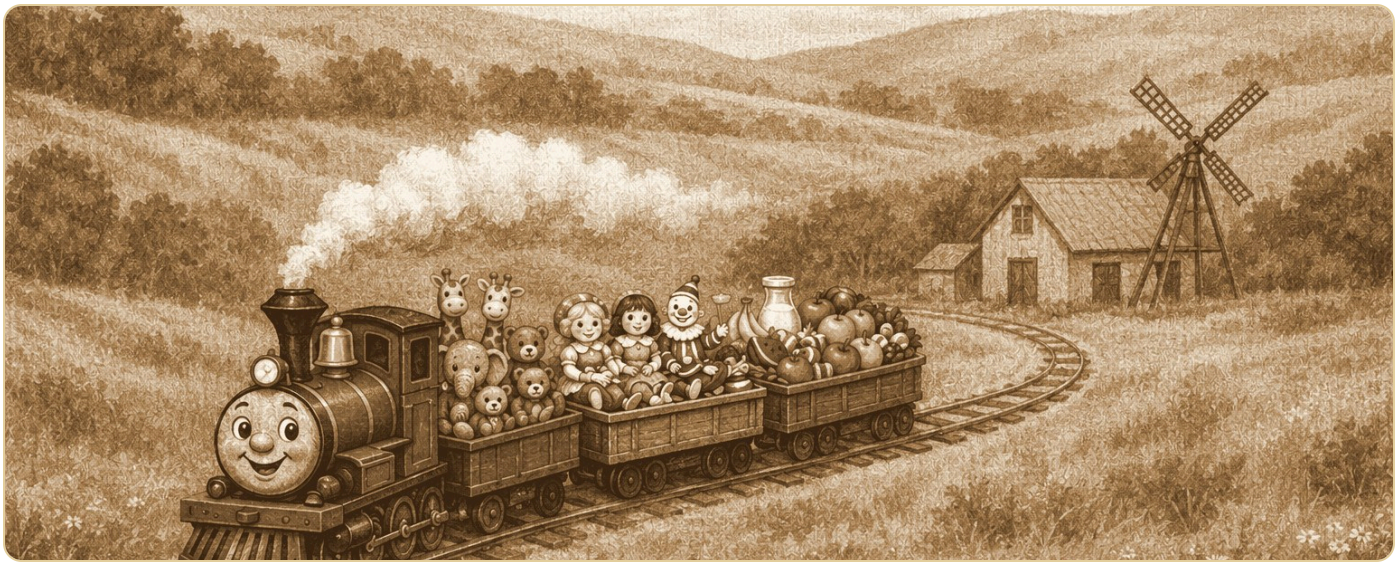
2. What did Arnold Munk's company make?

3. Why do you think so many people liked this story?

Name _____ Date _____

STORY MAP

The Little Engine That Could



Look at the picture from the read-aloud. Who do you see? Then fill in the story map.

Characters

Who is in the story?

Setting

Where and when does it happen?

Problem

What goes wrong?

Solution

How is it fixed? How does it end?

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Name _____ Date _____

LET'S TALK

The Little Engine That Could

Young children can answer out loud. Older children can write their answers.

REMEMBER

1. What was the little train carrying?

2. Which engines would not help? What did each one say?

3. What did the Little Blue Engine say as she climbed?

THINK

4. Why did the Little Blue Engine help, even though she had never been over the mountain?

5. How were the first three engines alike?

CONNECT

6. Tell about a time you said "I think I can" and kept trying.

NARRATION

Close the book and tell the story back in your own words. Who asked for help, who said no, and who said yes?

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Name _____ Date _____

THE BIG IDEA

What Does the Story Teach?

THE LITTLE BLUE ENGINE SAYS

"I think I can. I think I can. I think I can." Believing in yourself, and helping others, can carry you over the mountain.

What does this mean to you? Tell or write about a time it was true in your life.

Try It

SKILL FOCUS

Repetition and pattern: noticing what happens again and again, and how the ending is different

Draw yourself doing something hard. Write "I think I can" in a speech bubble.

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Name _____ Date _____

WORDS TO KNOW

Word Match

Draw a line from each word to what it means.

engine	a person who rides a train
mountain	good for you
roundhouse	the part of a train that pulls the cars
passenger	old, with red-brown rust
freight	a building where engines rest
rusty	low land between hills
wholesome	a very big, tall hill
valley	things carried on a train

Word Sort: Toys or Food?

Write each word in the right box.

giraffe · oranges · teddy bear · apples · doll · milk · clown · lollipops

Toys	Food

Name _____ Date _____

WORD SEARCH

The Little Engine That Could

Find the words from the story. Words go across (left to right) and down (top to bottom). Circle each word, then check it off.

T	Y	U	D	W	T	O	Y	S	A
D	O	L	L	S	C	S	P	B	F
I	A	H	E	S	G	C	B	C	V
T	O	F	J	B	L	B	O	W	N
R	E	N	G	I	N	E	V	Y	T
A	P	D	C	W	C	B	K	Y	R
C	M	K	M	L	L	L	G	B	A
K	D	E	C	K	O	U	O	M	I
I	C	K	L	F	W	E	O	T	N
B	F	J	A	Y	N	H	I	L	L

WORD BANK

- [ ] ENGINE
- [ ] TRAIN
- [ ] CLOWN
- [ ] DOLLS
- [ ] TOYS
- [ ] HILL
- [ ] BLUE
- [ ] TRACK

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Name _____ Date _____

CHECK YOUR READING

Yes or No?

Read each sentence about the story. Circle **Yes** if it is true. Circle **No** if it is not.

1. The little train was carrying toys and food. Yes No
2. The Shiny New Engine helped right away. Yes No
3. The little clown waved a flag. Yes No
4. The Rusty Old Engine said, “I cannot.” Yes No
5. The Little Blue Engine had been over the mountain many times. Yes No
6. The train got to the top of the mountain. Yes No

ABC Order

Write these words from the story in ABC order.

train clown engine mountain dolls

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

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Name _____ Date _____

PUT IT IN ORDER

What Happens First?

Read each sentence. Write 1 in the circle next to what happens first, 2 next to what happens next, and so on up to 6.

- ◯ The Freight Engine will not help.
- ◯ The little train breaks down.
- ◯ The Little Blue Engine pulls the train to the top.
- ◯ The Shiny New Engine will not help.
- ◯ The Rusty Old Engine says, “I cannot.”
- ◯ The Little Blue Engine says, “I think I can.”

Retell the Story

Use the order words to tell the story in your own words. Say it out loud, or write it.

First, _____

Next, _____

Then, _____

Last, _____

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Name _____ Date _____

CHARACTERS

Who Said It?

Read each line from the story. Write who said it. Use the name bank to help.

the Big Strong Engine | the Little Blue Engine | the Rusty Old Engine | the Shiny New Engine | the little clown

"Let us ask him to help us." _____

"I am a Passenger Engine." _____

"I am a Freight Engine." _____

"I am so tired. I must rest my weary wheels." _____

"I think I can. I think I can." _____

How Did the toys Feel?

Write a feeling word for each part of the story. Use the word bank, or choose your own.

happy | sad | worried | hopeful | excited | proud | thankful

When...	the toys felt...
the train was rolling along	
the train broke down	
the Shiny New Engine said no	
the Rusty Old Engine said no	
the Little Blue Engine said yes	
they reached the top	

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Name _____ Date _____

PERFORM IT

Read It With Voices

Five readers take the parts. Everyone can join in on "I think I can!" Chug your arms like wheels as you say it.

TOYS	"Please, Shiny New Engine, do carry our train over the mountain."
SHINY NEW ENGINE	"I pull you? I am a Passenger Engine. Indeed not!"
TOYS	"Please, Big Engine! Do pull our train over the mountain."
FREIGHT ENGINE	"I am a very important engine indeed. I won't carry the likes of you!"
RUSTY OLD ENGINE	"I am so tired. I cannot. I cannot. I cannot."
LITTLE BLUE ENGINE	"I'm not very big. But I think I can. I think I can. I think I can."
EVERYONE	"I thought I could. I thought I could."

My Favorite Part

My favorite part is _____

_____

because _____

_____

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Name _____ Date _____

HANDWRITING PRACTICE

The Little Engine That Could

Trace the gray words, then write them on your own on the empty lines. Tall letters touch the top line; small letters reach the dotted line.

I think I can.

I think I can.

I think I can.

I thought I could.

I thought I could.

I thought I could.

☐ I started with a capital letter. ☐ I left spaces between words. ☐ I copied the end mark.

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FOR GROWN-UPS

Answer Key & Ideas

Story Map

Characters: the little train, the little clown, the dolls and toys, the Shiny New Engine, the Freight Engine, the Rusty Old Engine, the Little Blue Engine. Setting: the railroad tracks at the foot of a mountain. Problem: the little train breaks down and the big engines won't help. Solution: the Little Blue Engine believes she can and pulls the train over the mountain.

Let's Talk

1. Toys and good food for the children over the mountain. 2. The Shiny New Engine (too grand), the Freight Engine (too important) and the Rusty Old Engine (too tired). 3. "I think I can." 4–6. Answers will vary (she wanted to help the children; the big engines all said no and made excuses).

Word Search

T	Y	U	D	W	**T**	**O**	**Y**	**S**	A
D	**O**	**L**	**L**	**S**	C	S	P	B	F
I	A	H	E	S	G	C	B	C	V
T	O	F	J	B	L	B	O	W	N
R	**E**	**N**	**G**	**I**	**N**	**E**	V	Y	**T**
A	P	D	C	W	**C**	**B**	K	Y	**R**
C	M	K	M	L	**L**	**L**	G	B	**A**
K	D	E	C	K	**O**	**U**	O	M	**I**
I	C	K	L	F	**W**	**E**	O	T	**N**
B	F	J	A	Y	**N**	**H**	**I**	**L**	**L**

Word Match & Sort

engine: the part of a train that pulls the cars · mountain: a very big, tall hill · roundhouse: a building where engines rest · passenger: a person who rides a train · freight: things carried on a train · rusty: old, with red-brown rust · wholesome: good for you · valley: low land between hills. Sort: Toys: giraffe, teddy bear, doll, clown. Food: oranges, apples, milk, lollipops.

Yes or No? & ABC Order

1. Yes · 2. No · 3. Yes · 4. Yes · 5. No · 6. Yes. ABC order: clown, dolls, engine, mountain, train.

Put It in Order

the little train breaks down → the Shiny New Engine says no → the Freight Engine says no → the Rusty Old Engine says "I cannot" → the Little Blue Engine says "I think I can" → she pulls the train to the top.

Who Said It?

1. the little clown · 2. the Shiny New Engine · 3. the Big Strong Engine · 4. the Rusty Old Engine · 5. the Little Blue Engine

Ideas to extend the lesson

- Make an "I think I can" chart of things your child is learning and color a star for each try.
- Build a train from boxes and pull it up a pillow mountain.
- Read it with "The Steadfast Tin Soldier" and compare two brave toys.

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FOR TEACHERS

Standards Alignment

The Little Engine That Could ✦ Common Core State Standards, kindergarten to grade 2

STANDARDS	WHAT CHILDREN PRACTICE	WHERE IN THIS GUIDE
RL.K.1 RL.1.1 RL.2.1	Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	Let's Talk and Yes or No?; Let's Talk
RL.K.2 RL.1.2 RL.2.2	Retell stories and poems, including key details, and show understanding of their message.	Put It in Order and Retell; Put It in Order and Retell; The Big Idea; The Big Idea
RL.K.3 RL.1.3 RL.2.3	Identify and describe characters, settings and major events.	Story Map and Character Feelings; Character Feelings
RL.K.4	Understand words and phrases, including rhyme, rhythm and words that appeal to the senses.	Word Match
RL.K.6 RL.1.6 RL.2.6	Identify who is speaking and use a different voice for each character when reading aloud.	Meet the Author; Who Said It?; Read It With Voices
RL.K.7 RL.1.7	Use illustrations and words together to describe characters, setting and events.	Story Map picture
RL.K.10 RL.1.10	Engage in group reading of poems and stories with purpose and understanding.	Reading the story together
RF.K.1b RF.K.1d	Understand the organization of print (left to right, top to bottom).	Word Search; ABC Order
RF.K.3c RF.1.3	Read common high-frequency words by sight.	Word Search
RF.1.4b RF.2.4b	Read aloud with accuracy, appropriate rate and expression.	Read It With Voices
SL.K.1 SL.1.1	Take part in conversations about the text with classmates and adults.	Let's Talk (discussion)
SL.K.2	Ask and answer questions about a text read aloud or presented through media.	Read-aloud video (QR code)
SL.K.5	Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail.	Try It (drawing to add detail)
SL.K.6	Speak audibly and express ideas clearly.	Read It With Voices
L.K.1a L.1.1 L.1.1a	Print upper- and lowercase letters and use common position words.	Handwriting Practice; ABC Order
L.K.2a	Use capital letters and end punctuation.	Handwriting checklist
L.K.4 L.1.4	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown words and phrases.	Word Match
L.K.5a	Sort words into categories, connect words to real life and act out shades of meaning.	Word Sort
W.K.1 W.1.1	Use drawing and writing to share an opinion and give a reason.	My Favorite Part
W.K.2	Use a combination of drawing, dictating and writing to compose informative texts.	Try It
W.1.8	With guidance and support, recall information from experiences or gather information to answer a question.	Try It

Codes are Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts. Find free read-alouds and guides at storylandclassics.com.

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