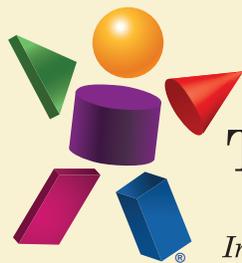




THE BOXCAR[®] D CHILDREN

Introduction to Lesson



The Children's Museum
OF THE UPSTATE

In association with the Smithsonian Institution.

TCMUPSTATE.ORG

Lesson Introduction

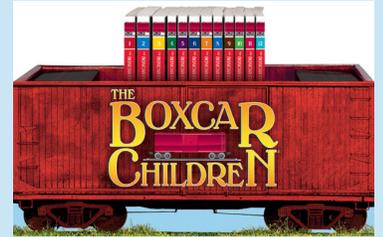
The Boxcar Children is a children's literary franchise originally created and written by American first-grade school teacher Gertrude Chandler Warner. Now, many years after her passing, the series includes over 150 titles many written by ghost authors still crediting Ms. Warner as the series creator.

The first book in *The Boxcar Children* series tells the story of four orphaned children, Henry, Jessie, Violet, and Benny. Through their own resourcefulness and courage, the children create a home for themselves in an abandoned boxcar in the forest. They eventually meet their grandfather, who is a wealthy and kind man (although the children had believed him to be cruel). The children decide to live with their grandfather, who moves the beloved boxcar to his backyard so the children can use it as a playhouse.



Gertrude Chandler Warner

In celebration of the 75th anniversary of the original publication of the popular series, The Children's Museum of the Upstate invites you and your students to immerse yourselves in the world of *The Boxcar Children*. Visit a nearly life-size reproduction of the primary locations inhabited by the characters in the story. Your students will step into the abandoned boxcar, and find the necessary objects to make it into a home. They will visit the bakery where the children found shelter for a night, and even pick vegetables at Dr. Moore's house. Most importantly, your students will be inspired to read a tale that has captured the imagination of readers around the globe.



Themes & Messages

Book 1 of *The Boxcar Children* teaches many lessons that keep children absorbed in the story. The book's key themes and messages, include:

- Taking responsibility for oneself and others, as exemplified by how Henry and Jessie take charge of their younger siblings and figure out how to make a comfortable home in the boxcar
- How a family is defined and how families come in different configurations and sizes, as we meet families of different sizes in the book
- What constitutes a home and differences in homes around the world
- Resourcefulness and survival: the Alden children made do with surrounding resources to create things in order to survive
- Empathy: learning to feel empathy and to care for others, as Jessie cares for Watch's hurt paw, and Dr. Moore cares for Violet when she is sick
- Overcoming prejudices: the Alden children are initially afraid of their grandfather under the mistaken assumption that he is mean.

Lesson Introduction

Because of the simplicity of the text, the book can be used in the classroom in a variety of ways; as a read aloud, whole group reading, small group reading, guided reading or independent reading.

- Interest Level: Grades K - 5
- Grade Level Equivalent: 2.6
- Lexile Measure: 300L (between 2nd. and 3rd. Grades)
- DRA: 16
- Guided Reading: J
- Accelerated Reader Quiz
- Scholastic Reading Counts! Quiz



This lesson plan is divided into different sections.

- Making a lapbook
- Cross-curricular activities and websites
- Connections to The Boxcar Children exhibit at The Children's Museum of the Upstate



Program made possible by

