

Little learners get hands on, minds on at Tinkering for Tots, a program designed for curious preschoolers to develop an innovative mindset and make connections through storytelling, play, artifact exploration and a take-home STEAM activity kit.

What connections are we making?

Highlighted Habit



STAY CURIOUS

Description: Keep asking questions such as how and why, ask how you can help solve a problem, what is a new way to do something?

Story

Title: *Wheels*

Author: Sally Sutton

Why we picked this book: *Wheels* gives our littlest learners a chance to imagine what might be coming, based on the clues from the description of the wheels and what they are doing. This book invites children to put together the clues and make their best guesses.

Artifact Spotlight

Name: Blue Bird School Bus

Location: Driving America

To learn more about the story behind this artifact, please see the artifact spotlight on Page 2.

Open Exploration

Description: Staying curious while exploring with gears.

Skills your young learner is practicing: Using their imagination, looking for connections, making predictions, testing ideas, collaborating, learning from failure, persistence.

Questions to Ask Your Young Learner

How did you know that the wheels in the story belonged to a big truck? How did you know the wheels belonged to a motorcycle? What can wheels tell us about the kind of vehicle they are attached to? Why don't all wheels look the same? Do you ride a school bus? How is the Blue Bird Bus like your school bus? How is the Blue Bird Bus different from your school bus? What do you think it would have been like to ride this bus? What would it have been like to ride this bus on very bumpy roads?

Take-Home Activity

Title: Clothespin Car

Materials:

- Clothespin
- Twisty ties
- Buttons
- Straw pieces
- White glue



Artifact Spotlight



1927 Blue Bird School Bus: In 1925, Albert L. Luce, Sr. owned two Ford dealerships in Georgia when a customer came in and ordered a bus to carry his workers. Mr. Luce bought a wooden bus body and put it on a Ford Model TT truck. But the body began rattling apart before the customer could even finish paying for the bus. Mr. Luce was sure he could make a better bus body and within two years, he built the school bus you see here. The key to success was a strong steel body under the wood and it was one of the first uses of steel in a school bus body. Within a few years Mr. Luce sold his Ford dealerships and began making school buses full-time. This is Blue Bird school bus Number 1. When Mr. Luce began building school bus bodies, he chose Blue Bird as the name for his new company. Blue Bird is now owned by a larger company but is still one of the major school bus makers.



Unlike a school bus today, this bus does not have any of the safety features we expect to see on a bus. Students climbed on the bus through the door in the back. There are no windows, just vinyl covers that can be rolled down in case of rain or snow. Dust would have been coming into the bus much of the time. Students sat along the sides of the bus, facing each other, on long bench seats without much padding. There were no high seat backs or seat belts to protect students when riding. The bus driver was sitting in a seat much like a regular chair and had students sitting on both sides of them. The bus has no flashing lights or stop signs that extend out from the bus to warn other cars that the bus was stopping to pick up or drop off students.



What about this early bus that is like a school bus today? The yellow color! Today school buses are a very specific shade of yellow, National School Bus Glossy Yellow.



Take-Home Activity



Clothespin Car Materials:

- Clothespin
- 2 twisty ties
- 4 buttons
- 2 straw pieces
- White glue



1.

1. Thread a button with one of the twisty ties. Pull about an inch of twisty tie through, then thread it back through a different hole. Twist the tie so it stays.



2.

2. Thread a straw piece onto the twisty tie.

3. Thread another button onto the open end of the twisty tie, then thread through another hole just like in Step 1 to create an axle.

4. Repeat Steps 1-3 with a new button pair and twisty tie to create a second axle.

5. Open the clothespin and put one of the axles in the opening. Use some white glue to secure the second axle just behind the spring on the back of the clothespin.



5.



6.

6. Once the glue dries, your clothespin car is ready to race.

Coloring Sheet

