



Mama Car

by Lucy Catchpole

Illustrated by Karen George



Teaching
Tips

This book can act both as a “window” and a “mirror,” normalizing disability for children without personal experience and allowing those with their own close relationship to disability to feel seen and represented. The mother in the story is, first and foremost, just “Mama,” and children should be encouraged to draw parallels to their own life.

Vehicles to get around

Mama Car begins with a list of three vehicles: a child’s tricycle, a family car and a wheelchair. In the narrator’s eyes, they’re all just vehicles: no negative emotions attached, no stigma. Here are some questions for young readers that can be applied to all **three vehicles**, to help support this.



How many wheels? Are they all the same?



How do you get in and out?



What kind of seat?



Do you have one? Or does anyone you know have one?

Tools that help us

There are lots of tools in *Mama Car*, beyond the three vehicles. Some are specific to disability, and many are not. The story helps to normalize disability by normalizing the tools associated with it. Ask children to spot any helpful tools used by the characters.



The parents use a bucket, sponges and cloths to wash the car



The father uses crutches to walk and a bag to carry things (cake!)



The mother and child use pencil and paper to make a list



The child uses the wheelchair for cuddles on wheels!



The mother uses a grabber tool to pick up a toy



The child uses a stool to reach the table, then a bowl and cup for food and drink



The mother uses a transfer board to get from her wheelchair to the bed and car





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Mobility aids are just tools disabled people use to make their lives easier.

“What tools do **you** use every day to make **your** lives easier?”

Extension: Challenge the class to think of an everyday problem in **their own** lives, like the ones in the story, and a new tool or invention that might solve it.

Take it further...

Accessibility: Watch the video: [A Wheelchair Journey Around London](#)



Make a list of all the different challenges Hannah faces, getting around.



Who knows best: Hannah, or the people who work at the station?



Are the access problems Hannah faces all to do with things? Or with people, too?



Extension:

Go on a walk and see what hazards you can spot (consider: dropped curbs, tactile paving, obstacles, poor surfaces, accessible crossings).

See also

[Mama Car coloring sheet](#)

Lucy & James's list: Children's books by disabled authors : [Children's & YA](#)

Educator guides for [What Happened to You?](#), [You're So Amazing!](#) and [Owning It - our disabled childhoods in our own words](#)

These learning resources were written by Lucy & James Catchpole with Katie Allison Renker, a teacher and wheelchair user. Lucy is a wheelchair user too, and the author of *Mama Car*. She also co-wrote the picture book *You're SO Amazing!* with her husband James Catchpole, author of *What Happened to You?*

Find more on all their books at:

[Books by Lucy and James Catchpole](#)

