



HOT ROD HAMSTER

AUTHOR: CYNTHIA LORD

ILLUSTRATOR: DEREK ANDERSON & GREG PAPROCKI

See a video of the book read aloud here: [Hot Rod Hamster](#)

**** REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! ****

OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE BOOK

Hot Rod Hamster loves to drive super fast. And today he's building a box car from scratch to race downhill in the Wacky Whatever Race. He needs to pick out a box, wheels, and paint color for his car.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cynthia Lord was born in [New Hampshire](#) and her [debut novel Rules](#) was a 2007 [Newbery Honor](#) book and winner of the [Schneider Family Book Award](#). She has written a number of books in the Hot Rod Hamster and Shelter Pet Squad series.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Derek Anderson is a children's book writer and illustrator who worked as a designer and sculptor of Warner Brothers and Disney figurines. His awards include the American Library Association Children's Choice Award, National Parenting Publication Gold Award, and National Parenting Publication Gold Award.

Greg Paprocki works full-time as an illustrator and book designer. He's illustrated several Curious George books, as well as The Big Book of Superheroes for Gibbs Smith. He began his career as an advertising art director after studying fine art and graphic design at the University of Nebraska.

THE READ ALOUD

BEFORE READING

Use these before reading the story to help students activate background knowledge and make predictions:

- What clues on the cover tell you if this story is a fiction or non-fiction?
- I wonder why the author would want to write about a hamster?
- Have you ever had a race with one of your friends?

DURING THE STORY

Use these while reading the story to help students interpret the action and content.

- (p.3) How will the rules of the race be difficult for Hot Rod Hamster?
- (p. 11) Whisper to your neighbor which wheels you would choose and why?

HOT ROD HAMSTER

TOPICS & THEMES:

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Tips for every book!

POWER PHRASES:

I WONDER...

I NOTICE...

TELL ME MORE...

DIGGING DEEPER:

"Tell me more, why do you think that?"

"How do you know that?"

"Why do you think they feel like that?"

"Interesting, did you notice anything else?"

- (p.19) Why are the mice pushing the car from the back?
- (p.25) I wonder what happened to Hot Rod Hamster's car?
- (p.30) Were you surprised how Hot Rod Hamster won the race? Did he follow the rules?

AFTER READING

Use these after reading the story to help students understand what they just read.

- Did Hot Rod Hamster make all of the decisions about building his car? Why or why not?
- How did his friends support his decisions?

BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE!

- Did Hot Rod Hamster learn anything new about his friends during this story.
- What character would you want to be in this story and why?

COOPERATIVE LEARNING

- Share other ways that Hot Rod Hamster could have crossed the finish line.

SMALL-GROUP IDEAS

1. DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

- Conduct a picture walk and let each child find their favorite page and tell why
- How did the two illustrators work together to make this story exciting?
- Sequence the story by having each child add an event

Suggested Optional Activity:

- Draw a picture of the car you would build and all of its designs

2. WRITING ACTIVITY

Write a new ending to the story including all of the characters.

3. EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Design an award to give to the winner of the car race.