



The Train Ride to Bubby

Ages 6-9
A story and 9 activities

The Train Ride to Bubby

Penina has never been on a train by herself.

She has been on a train with her parents, many times. But this time, they are putting her on the train at the station in the city, and Bubby will meet her at the other end, two hours away. A conductor will check on her. It is all arranged.

"I'll be right there," says Totty, walking her down the platform. "Look, here's your seat. By the window."

Penina sits down. Her backpack is on her lap. Her stomach feels like a box of jumping beans.

"What if I miss my stop?"

"The conductor will tell you. And Bubby's waiting right at the station."

"What if I can't find her?"

"She'll be standing under the big clock. She's wearing her purple scarf."

"What if the train breaks down?"

"Then they'll fix it, and you'll have an adventure."

Penina takes a long breath. The whistle blows. A voice says, "All aboard!"

"Okay," she says quietly.

Totty kisses her forehead. "I love you. Have a wonderful time."

He steps off. The doors slide shut. The train gives a little lurch, and the platform begins to slide past the window. Penina watches Totty wave until he is a small dot.

For a minute, she feels the lump come back. Then she remembers what Mommy has said: pack a few comforts and a plan.

She unzips her backpack. Inside is a small plastic bag with her favorite snack, apple slices and pretzels. A little notebook and her colored pencils. A stuffed rabbit, Mr. Hop, tucked in the corner. And an index card in Mommy's handwriting.

The card says:

1. Look out the window.
2. Eat a snack.
3. Draw what you see.
4. Count the stations.
5. When you get to Bubby's stop, stand by the door.

Penina smiles. A plan. She can do a plan.

She presses her nose to the window. Fields roll by, green and gold. A red barn. Cows grazing. A river sparkling in the sun. She takes out her notebook and starts to draw.

"Tickets, please," says a friendly voice.

The conductor, a tall man with a gray mustache, stands beside her. Penina hands him her ticket.

"Going to see your grandmother?"

"Yes."

"Lucky grandmother," he says, and punches a tiny hole. "I'll tell you when your stop is coming. Don't worry."

Penina relaxes a little. She eats her apple slices. She counts the stations: one, two, three. A little girl across the aisle waves at Mr. Hop. Penina waves back.

By the fourth station, she's drawn the barn, the river, and a cow wearing sunglasses. She adds the sunglasses just to be funny.

"That's a good cow," says the little girl, leaning over.

"Thank you. His name is Moo-sha."

The girl giggles.

The conductor's voice comes over the speaker. "Next stop, Maple Falls."

"That's me," whispers Penina.

She packs her bag and stands by the door, as the card says. The train slows and hisses to a stop. The doors open.

On the platform, under the big clock, stands a woman in a purple scarf, waving with both arms.

"Bubby!" Penina runs, and Bubby catches her in a giant hug.

"You did it," says Bubby. "My brave girl."

"It was an adventure," says Penina, out of breath. "I drew a cow in sunglasses."

"Show me everything."

On the ride back that Sunday, Penina sits by the window, feeling like an old pro. She's even saved the index card, just in case.



Activity 1 of 9

Remember the story

1. How long is the train ride?

2. What color is Bubby's scarf?

3. What is the stuffed rabbit's name?

4. What does Penina draw?



Activity 2 of 9

Fact or guess? (circle one)

1. Mommy writes a plan on an index card. Fact / Guess
2. Penina is scared the whole trip. Fact / Guess
3. The conductor punches a hole in her ticket. Fact / Guess
4. Bubby is waiting under the big clock. Fact / Guess



Activity 3 of 9

Think and write

1. What helps Penina feel calmer on the train?

2. What comforts would you pack for a trip?

3. What new thing would you like to try?

Activity 4 of 9

Word search (find all 6)

Words: TRAIN, STATION, WINDOW, CONDUCTOR, TICKET, BUBBY

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



Activity 5 of 9

Scrambled words (from the story)

1. ANRIT = _____

2. WOWNDI = _____

3. CIKETT = _____

4. ARCSF = _____

5. ARBBIT = _____



Activity 6 of 9

Say it out loud

Practice each line in a calm, steady voice:

"I have a plan."

"I can do this."

"Thank you for waiting for me."



Activity 7 of 9

My chart

My Travel Plan

#	What I'll pack	My plan	How it went
Trip 1			
Trip 2			
Trip 3			



Activity 8 of 9

Draw it

Draw the cow in sunglasses looking out over a green field from the train window.





Activity 9 of 9

Answers

Remember the story:

1. Two hours
2. Purple
3. Mr. Hop
4. A barn, a river, and a cow in sunglasses

Fact or guess: 1 Fact; 2 Guess; 3 Fact; 4 Fact

Scrambled words: TRAIN, WINDOW, TICKET, SCARF, RABBIT

Think and write: answers will vary; talk them over together.