

# HOW TO USE: THE ROLLER COASTER RIDE

## Discussion Ideas

Have you been to the seaside? Did you go there by car, train or coach?

Is the coach ride having an effect on Vincent's fantasies?

Hint: As the coach approaches a roundabout, Vincent thinks about a merry-go-round.

The sign says that the amusement park is closed for repairs - do you think that Vincent and Grandma should go straight home?

Can you remember a time when things didn't go as planned? What made you feel better?

Which ice cream would you choose?

What do you think Vincent's 'super deluxe magnifico' tastes like?

Can you guess the flavours from the colour of each scoop?

What's your favourite thing to do when you visit a play area?

What do you think Vincent will remember when he looks back on that day?

## Adapting to Disappointing Situations

Vincent and his grandma overcome their disappointment by trying out all the equipment in a play area. Vincent finds the experience just as fulfilling as he thought the amusement park would be. This shows children that although our expectations aren't always met, we can handle disappointing situations by thinking about what parts we were most looking forward to and adjusting our standards.

Write a list of things that make riding a roller coaster so much fun.

Here are some examples:

- Feeling the wind on your face.
- Travelling at a high-speed.
- Getting a great view of the rest of the amusement park.

For each aspect, try to think of an alternative activity that achieves a similar result:

- Riding a bike downhill can feel just as exhilarating as rushing along a roller coaster track and you don't have to spend ages queueing.
- Climbing a hill or an observation deck gives you an opportunity to look down on a town and you'll have longer to enjoy the view than you would during a rollercoaster's climb!
- You can watch first-person views of rollercoasters online - don't forget to sway with the bends!

The ability to adapt to unexpected circumstances is a useful skill to learn at a young age!

## Unfortunately/Fortunately Game

This popular drama game encourages players to think creatively while practising their improvisation and storytelling skills. Detailed instructions can be found online, but the basic aim is to create a plot by taking it in turns to add an obstacle (an 'unfortunately') or a solution (a 'fortunately'). You can use the events of the book as an example: 'Vincent and Grandma went to an amusement park. *Unfortunately*, it was closed!' '*Fortunately*, Grandma took Vincent to a play area instead.' '*Unfortunately*, someone was already playing on the swings.' '*Fortunately*, the zipline was free, so Vincent had a go on that.'

The story you create together can be about anything that interests the children (and it may change genre and setting multiple times!) The game has the potential to encourage a resilient outlook because the players need to think of new ways to overcome problems. Try to ensure it ends happily with a 'Fortunately' sentence!

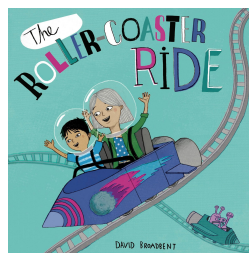
## Make Your Own Map

The endpapers show a map of the coach journey. Talk about the labelled landmarks and whether you've seen any of those places on your own trips. You could ask children to draw their own maps for their route to school or another journey they take regularly. They'll have a unique point of view and they may have noticed something interesting that you haven't! Remind them to include important buildings that would help a visitor recognise the area. They could even add some sensory information, like the smell coming from a restaurant or the sound of traffic. If you make the map on paper, show them how to fold it up like a traditional map. If you create it on a computer, demonstrate zooming in and out on areas of the map and explain why those tools are useful.

## If You Liked 'THE ROLLER COASTER RIDE' You May Also Enjoy:

TILLY'S AT HOME HOLIDAY by Gillian Hibbs - Tilly's mum can't afford an exotic family holiday, so she arranges a day of creative activities based around their hometown. Like THE ROLLER COASTER RIDE, the book shows that we can use our imaginations to make any activity special!

LITTLE HOME BIRD by Jo Empson - When Little Bird has to migrate, he tries to take all of his favourite things with him. Things don't work out as he'd hoped, but the book's reassuring themes complement those found in THE ROLLER COASTER RIDE.



Activities based on 'The Roller Coaster Ride' by David Broadbent  
Words by Amy Griffiths  
[www.childs-play.com](http://www.childs-play.com)