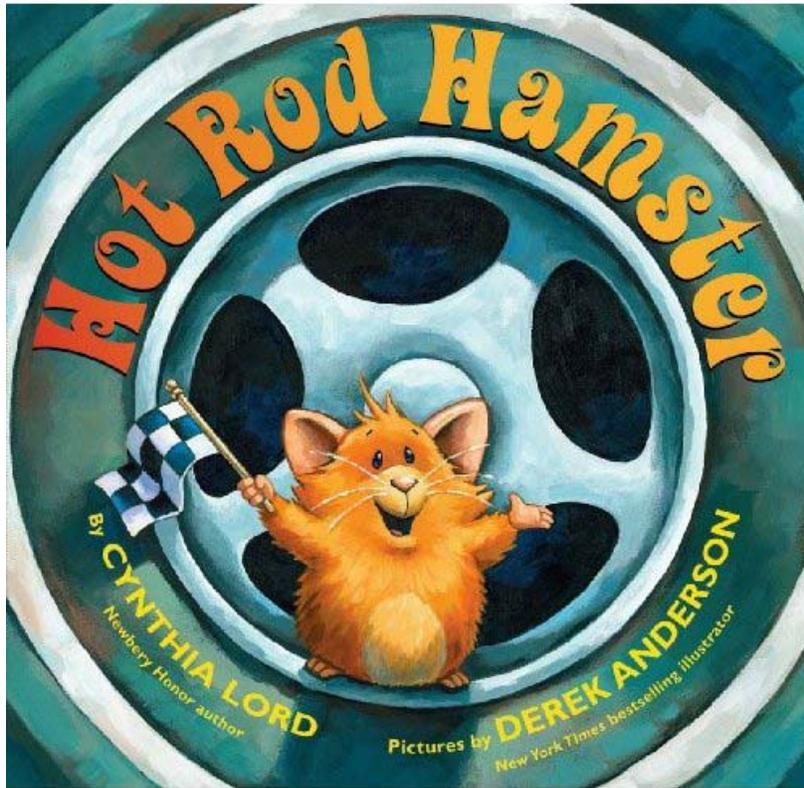


# Teachers' Guide



Copyright ©2010 Derek Anderson

## HOT ROD HAMSTER

Written by Cynthia Lord  
Illustrated by Derek Anderson  
Published by Scholastic Press  
ISBN 0545035309

**“A hot rod for a hamster? You’d need something very small.”**

*Old car, new car, shiny painted blue car  
Rust car, clean car, itty-bitty green car.  
Which would you choose?*

## About the Book

By Cynthia Lord



**A story starts with an idea.** Writing ideas can come from many places. My own story ideas often begin with something from my life.

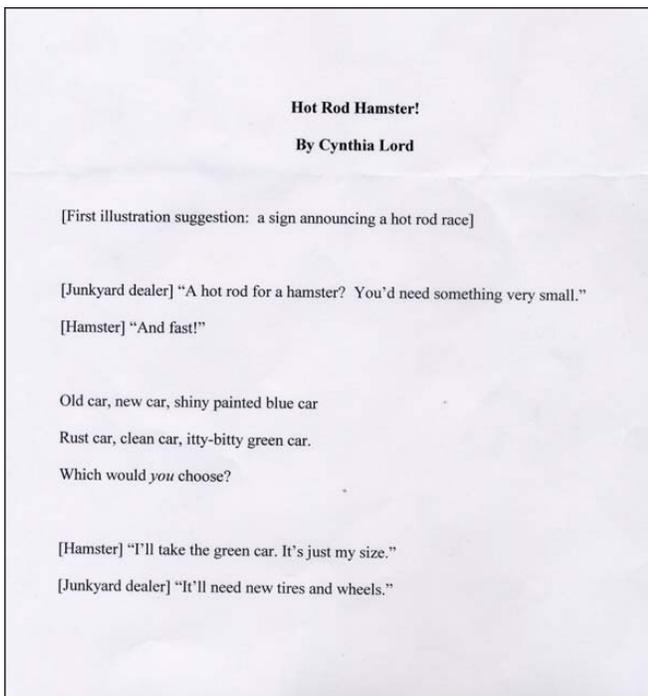
Over the years, we've had lots of pets at my house. We've had mice, guinea pigs, gerbils, fish, frogs, dogs, and a hamster. Our pet hamster was black and white. His name was Rocky.

Rocky was smart. He learned how to open his cage. Sometimes, he would escape! I'd go on "a hamster hunt" through our house. I'd look under the couch, behind the stove, and around every corner to find him. One day, Rocky went under the bathroom cupboard. I couldn't reach him, and he would not come out. Finally, I put a plate of salad on the floor. He came out to eat!

Rocky liked to run fast. He ran in his hamster wheel in his cage. He ran in his hamster ball around our house. My daughter and I joked that he should be in a race.

When I sat down to write a story, I thought about Rocky. I decided to write about a brave hamster that likes to go fast—just like Rocky. That's where the idea for *Hot Rod Hamster* began.

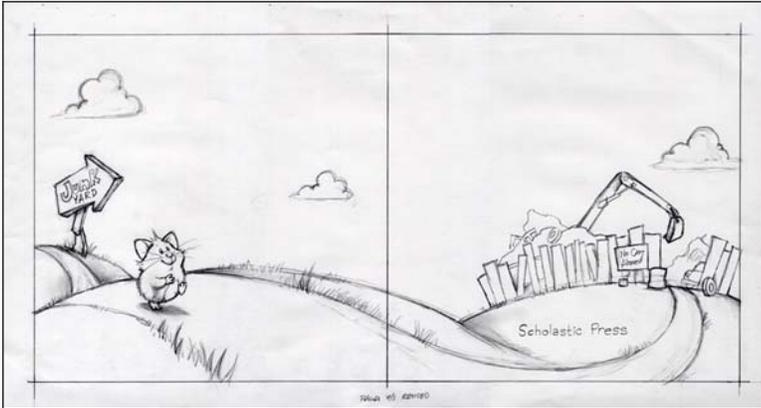
**An author writes the words.** When I wrote *Hot Rod Hamster*, it was just words. Here's what the first page looked like.



My story didn't have any pictures. It looks too plain without pictures, doesn't it? But who would draw those pictures? Not me! I can write a story, but I can't draw well.

**An illustrator creates the art.** My publisher picked just the right illustrator for *Hot Rod Hamster*. His name is Derek Anderson.

It's exciting to see a book come to life with art. This is the first sketch I ever saw for *Hot Rod Hamster*.



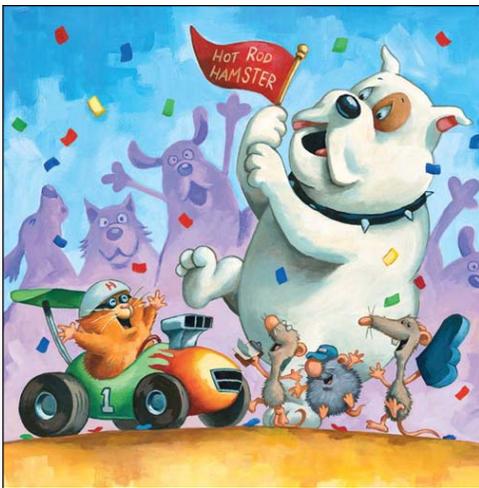
Copyright ©2010 Derek Anderson

I smiled when I saw this sketch. The hamster looks so happy and ready for a big adventure—just like I had imagined him.

**Everyone works together to make the story into a book.** Derek and I added our own ideas to the book. Derek added the three mice. He decided the junkyard dealer would be a bulldog. It was my idea to have the hamster drive away with all the prizes at the end of the book. Our editor and art director at the publisher gave their ideas to *Hot Rod Hamster*, too.

We also made changes. I wrote some new words and changed other words. Derek tried different things with the art. After all those changes, Derek started painting the final pictures.

One day, a package arrived at my house. Inside was a color copy of the book. I was so excited. My hands were shaking as I turned the pages. I felt just like the hamster does on this page!



Copyright ©2010 Derek Anderson

I bet Rocky would've liked *Hot Rod Hamster*.

I hope you like it, too. 😊

## About the Author



My name is Cynthia Lord. I am the author of *Hot Rod Hamster*. I live in Maine with my husband and my two children.

When I was a child, I loved books. I also liked telling stories. I think that's where I started to become a writer. I would imagine exciting or funny things. Sometimes, I wrote down my stories and shared them with my friends. Other times, I just thought them in my head.

Now I do most of my writing in a shed in my backyard. Here's my shed from the outside and on the inside.



When I go to work, my little dog comes with me. His name is Milo.

Milo often naps while I write. When he wants me to stop working, he drops his ball on my foot. Then he looks up at me with sad eyes.

"Okay," I'll say and stop to play for a few minutes. Milo makes sure I don't work *too* hard!



Milo loves to chase his ball.

Want to see a surprise? Look on the title page of *Hot Rod Hamster*. Can you find Milo's name?

If you want to know more about me and my books, you can visit my website:  
[www.cynthialord.com](http://www.cynthialord.com)

## About the Illustrator

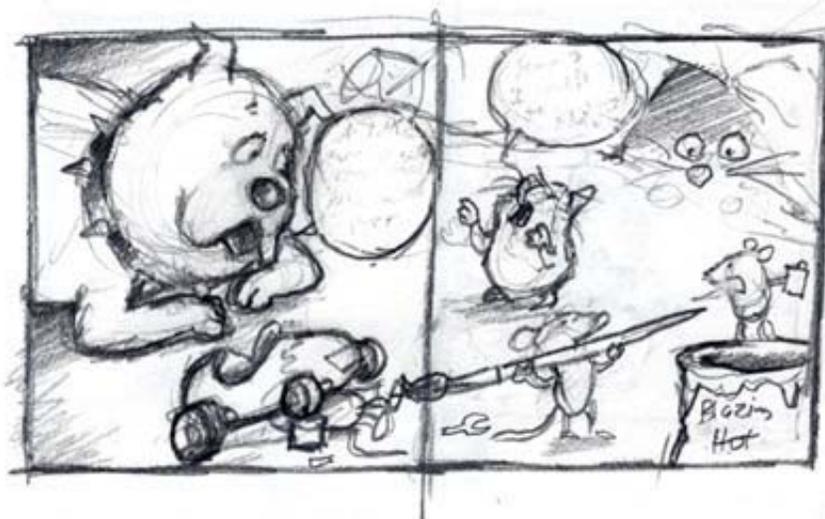
Hello! My name is Derek Anderson. I am the illustrator of *Hot Rod Hamster*. I live in Minnesota where it's very cold. I'm married and I have a dog. His name is Friday.

When I was in kindergarten, I drew the very first picture I can remember drawing. I drew the Easter Bunny. I was so proud of my picture that I gave it to my school principal. He hung it on the wall of his office for the rest of the school year. From then on, I knew I would be an artist.

Now I'm all grown up, and I still draw and paint pictures every day. This is where I work on the art for my books.



*Hot Rod Hamster* was a fun book to illustrate. My job was to bring Cynthia's words to life in pictures. When I make books, I make lots of mistakes. But that's okay. When I make mistakes, I learn from them. Sometimes I do several drawings before I get everything just right.



All illustrations are copyright ©2010 Derek Anderson



I love to hide things in my books. In *Hot Rod Hamster*, my dog is driving one of the cars! My dog, Friday, had his thirteenth birthday while I was painting the picture. So I made his car #13. Here is a picture of Friday.



You can learn a lot more about me by visiting my website:  
[www.derekanderson.net](http://www.derekanderson.net)

## Enrichment Activities for *Hot Rod Hamster*



**Hamster Hunt.** Have the children make simple hamsters from construction paper. While the children are away, hide those hamsters in your classroom or home. As you hide each one, write a clue to that hamster's location on a piece of paper. When the children return, each child can read or have a clue read to him ("I ran under the big chair." "Look behind the door." "I'm hiding on something green.") and go on a hamster hunt.

**Which would you choose?** Have students record their own choices from one of the choice pages in *Hot Rod Hamster* and then graph the class results. "How many students chose the itty-bitty green car?"

To build a fun class graph on a bulletin board, give each child a piece of paper on which to draw his/her choice. Then list the different choices on the bottom of the bulletin board (Old Car. New Car. etc), a page length apart. Children can attach their drawing above their choice in a rising line, building a big bar graph.

**Racing to the Finish.** If the child has a goal he/she is working toward, create a paper raceway and a car. With each task accomplished, the child can move the car a space ahead. The goal is achieved at the finish line.

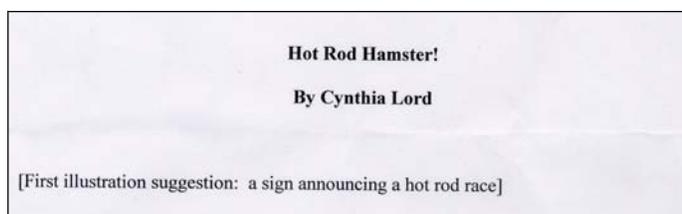
**Toy Cars.** There are many fun ways to use little vehicles to teach skills. Students can build ramps and then have a race, using various sizes and styles of vehicles to see which one went fastest and the longest distance. Before you say, "Go," have students predict which vehicle they think will be fastest or go the longest distance.

**Opposites.** *Hot Rod Hamster* is full of opposites. Have students find the opposites in the art: old, new, rust, clean, fat, thin, round, straight, etc. Find examples of those opposites in your home or classroom, too.

**Ready to ROLL!** On every page of *Hot Rod Hamster*, you can find at least one thing that is round. See how many round items you can find on each page.

**Nocturnal Animals.** Hamsters are nocturnal (most active at night). Have students make a list of other animals that are also most active at night. What might be some advantages and disadvantages for nocturnal animals?

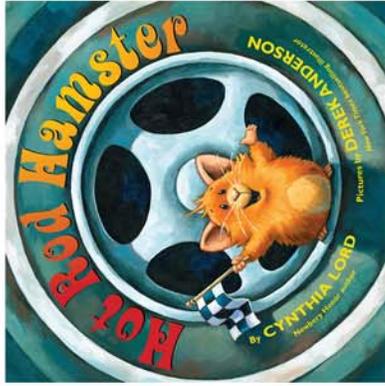
**Posters.** In my original text for *Hot Rod Hamster*, this is was my opening suggestion.



Ask children if they had been the illustrator for *Hot Rod Hamster*, what would they have drawn for this page? Let them create their own posters announcing the hot rod race.

**Dogs and Cats.** In Derek Anderson's early sketches for *Hot Rod Hamster*, he had a cat in the story. Have children look at the first sketch in the "About the Illustrator" section (Page 5) of this Teachers' Guide and see if they can find the cat. How might the story have been different if there had been a cat hiding in the junkyard?

**Video and More!** Scholastic created a page for *Hot Rod Hamster* that includes a wonderful book video. <http://www.scholastic.com/hotrodhamster>



# Hot Rod Hamster Needs A New RACE CAR

Can You Draw One for Him?



---

Your Name & Age

## Reading *Hot Rod Hamster* With a Group



*Hot Rod Hamster* can be read with a large group of children by coupling the choice pages with actions. That way, every child can express his/her choice without slowing down the reading too much.

**Here's one way to do that:**

**Car choices.** After reading the rhyme on the first choice page (*Old car, new car. . .*), say to the children, "When I touch the car you would choose, lift your hands up like you're gripping a steering wheel."

Demonstrate the action and then touch each of the cars on the page. "Who would drive this car?" "Who would get behind the wheel of this one?"

When you've touched all the cars, say, "And now everyone turn your steering wheel as I turn the page!"

**Wheels.** On the page of wheel choices, say, "Think in your head which wheel you would choose." Pause to allow the children to pick their favorite. "Now think about the *color* of your wheel. When I say that color name, raise your hand."

"Raise your hand if you picked a black wheel." "Who picked a gray wheel?" "Who liked a purple wheel best?" "Who chose a blue wheel?"

When all the colors have been named, say, "When I turn the page, make your wheel squeal!  
*Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!*"

**Parts.** For the page of parts, point to a few different parts and ask children, "What *sound* do you think this part would make?"

After a few children have given their ideas, say, "Now let's make our engine roar! Everyone choose a part on this page and imagine what sound it would make. When I pretend to turn the car's ignition key, make the sound your part would make. And when I turn the key off, everyone will turn off your part and end quietly."

Hold your fist out like you're gripping a key. As you swing your fist to the right, the kids will make their sound. After a few seconds, turn your fist back to the left and end with your index finger up in a "Shhhh" motion.

**Flames.** On the flames page, hold up your palm toward the children and flicker your fingers like flames. "When I point to the flames you would choose, show me your flicker-flame fingers." Then point to the various flames, one by one. "Flicker your flames, if you picked this one!"

When you've pointed to all the choices, say, "Now let's blow out our flames." Blow on the tips of your flickering fingers and curl your fingers down to put your flames out.

**Faces.** For the page of expressions (*Stare face, scowl face. . .*) have the children make all the faces. "Everyone show me a stare face." "Now make a scowl face." "What would a frowning, grouchy growl face look like?"

After making all the faces, say, "Show me your favorite face as I turn the page."

**Prizes.** On the final choice page, have children applaud for their favorite prize as you touch each one.

"Clap if you picked this prize." "Clap if you chose this one."

By coupling the choice pages with actions, *Hot Rod Hamster* can be great fun for even the largest groups of children.

## More About Hamsters

(these links can also be found on my website [http://www.cynthialord.com/hrh\\_links.html](http://www.cynthialord.com/hrh_links.html))

### Pet Hamsters

*How to Care for Hamsters* (from the Humane Society Website):

[http://www.hsus.org/pets/pet\\_care/rabbit\\_horse\\_and\\_other\\_pet\\_care/how\\_to\\_care\\_for\\_hamsters.html](http://www.hsus.org/pets/pet_care/rabbit_horse_and_other_pet_care/how_to_care_for_hamsters.html)

*Hamster Care* from the ASPCA website: <http://www.aspca.org/pet-care/small-pet-care/hamster-care.html>

*Having Fun with Hamsters* from PetPlace <http://www.petplace.com/small-mammals/having-fun-with-your-hamster/page1.aspx>

Hamster Information at Hamster Bungalow: <http://www.hamsterbungalow.com/index.html>

### Lesson Plans

Hamster webquest for first grade: <http://courses.ttu.edu/thomas/classpet/1999/hamster/student.htm>

Hamster webquest for third grade (or younger children with assistance):

<http://www.fangtaro.com/WebQuest/index.shtml>

### Fun and Games

Author and illustrator Peggy Rathmann has lots of fun hamster activities on her website:

<http://www.hamstertours.com/>

Hamster online memory game [http://www.hamster-club.com/game\\_memory.asp](http://www.hamster-club.com/game_memory.asp)

Hamster paper craft: <http://www.dltk-kids.com/animals/mpaperhamster.htm>

### Downloadable pdf worksheets

*Pet Pointers: Hamsters* [http://www.kindnews.org/teacher\\_zone/PDF/Online%20worksheets%2008-09/Oct08PDF/pet-pointers.pdf](http://www.kindnews.org/teacher_zone/PDF/Online%20worksheets%2008-09/Oct08PDF/pet-pointers.pdf)

Cartoon hamster coloring page:

[http://www.ocls.info/Children/KidsConnect/AlphabetBites/H/hamster\\_coloring.asp](http://www.ocls.info/Children/KidsConnect/AlphabetBites/H/hamster_coloring.asp)



## Hamster Books

### Picture Book and Early Readers

*10 Minutes Till Bedtime*, written and illustrated by Peggy Rathmann

*Hamster Chase*, written by Anastasia Suen, illustrated by Allen Eitzen (based on the characters of Ezra Jack Keats)

*Hamsters to the Rescue*, written and illustrated by Ellen Stoll Walsh

*Hannah Mae O'Hannigan's Wild West Show*, written and illustrated by Lisa Campbell Ernst

*My Pet Hamster (Let's-Read-and-Find... Science 1)*, written by Anne Rockwell, illustrated by Bernice Lum

*Ready, Freddy: Stop That Hamster*, written by Abby Klein, illustrated by John Mckinley

*The Great Texas Hamster Drive*, by Eric Kimmel, illustrated by Bruce Whatley

### Chapter Books and Novels

*I, Freddy (Book One in The Golden Hamster Saga)*, written by Dietlof Reiche, illustrated by Joe Cepeda (a series of chapter books about Freddy the hamster)

*I, Houdini: The Amazing Story of An Escape-artist Hamster*, written by Lynne Reid Banks

*Song Lee and The Hamster Hunt (from the "Horrible Harry" series)*, written by Suzy Kline, illustrated by Frank Remkiewicz

*The Case of Hermie the Missing Hamster (Jigsaw Jones Mystery, No. 1)*, written by James Preller, illustrated by R. W. Alley

*The Hamster of the Baskervilles: From the Tattered Casebook of Chet Gecko, Private Eye*, written by Bruce Hale

*The World According to Humphrey*, by Betty G. Birney (a series of chapter books about Humphrey the hamster)

### Nonfiction

To find great children's nonfiction titles about hamsters, look in the nonfiction section of the children's department of your local library. Hamster books can be found under the Dewey Decimal System number: **636.9**

## More About Cars

### Learning about Hot Rods

Photos of real hot rods from *How Stuff Works*: <http://auto.howstuffworks.com/hot-rods.htm>

### Lesson Plans and Learning Activities

NASCAR webquest (for older elementary students or younger children with assistance): [http://www.naias.com/media/45313/showtalk\\_kids\\_RaceWebquest.pdf](http://www.naias.com/media/45313/showtalk_kids_RaceWebquest.pdf)

Transportation webquest for kindergarteners:  
<http://www.lessonplanspage.com/printables/PSSMDOTransportationUnitK.htm>

Car unit for kindergarteners: <http://www.brighthub.com/education/k-12/articles/11137.aspx>

*Transportation Teaching Ideas* from Scholastic:  
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/lessonrepro/lessonplans/profbooks/transportation.htm>

Sorting Cars Activity: <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/preschool/activity/38834.html>

Playing and experimenting with ramps activity: [http://kids-educational-activities.suite101.com/article.cfm/preschool\\_car\\_play\\_with\\_ramps](http://kids-educational-activities.suite101.com/article.cfm/preschool_car_play_with_ramps)

### Fun and Crafts

Easy cars to make: <http://jas.familyfun.go.com/arts-and-crafts?page=CraftDisplay&craftid=11416>

Painting activity with toy cars: <http://familycrafts.about.com/cs/printmaking/a/blprintcars.htm>

Simple box car craft: <http://crafts.kaboose.com/race-car.html>



## Car Books

### Picture Books and Early Readers

*ABC Drive! A Car Trip Alphabet*, written and illustrated by Naomi Howland

*Cars! Cars! Cars!* written by Grace MacCarone, illustrated by David A. Carter

*Cars*, written and illustrated by Anne Rockwell

*Cool Cars (Amazing Machines)*, by Tony Mitton and Ant Parker

*Go, Dog, Go!* written and illustrated by P.D. Eastman

*If I Built a Car*, written and illustrated by Chris Van Dusen

*Miss Spider's New Car*, written and illustrated by David Kirk

*My Car*, written and illustrated by Byron Barton

*My Race Car*, written and illustrated by Michael Rex

*NASCAR 1-2-3s*, written by Paul DuBois Jacobs and Jennifer Swender, illustrated by Aaron Zenz

*NASCAR ABCs*, written by Paul DuBois Jacobs and Jennifer Swender, illustrated by Aaron Zenz

*R is for Race: A Stock Car Alphabet*, written and illustrated by Brad Herzog

*The Racecar Alphabet*, written and illustrated by Brian Floca

*Wheels On The Race Car*, written by Alex Zane and illustrated by James Warhola

### Nonfiction

*Car Science: An Under-the-hood, Behind-the-dash Look at How Cars Work*, written by Richard Hammond

To find more great children's nonfiction titles about cars, look in the nonfiction section of the children's department of your local library. Car books can be found under the Dewey Decimal System number: **629.2**