



## Two Little Trains

*Margaret Wise Brown , Leo Dillon (Illustrator) , Diane Dillon (Illustrator)*

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**Two Little Trains** Margaret Wise Brown , Leo Dillon (Illustrator) , Diane Dillon (Illustrator)  
From two-time Caldecott Medal-winning artists Leo and Diane Dillon and beloved children's book author Margaret Wise Brown comes *Two Little Trains*.

With simple, bouncy text and soft, beautiful illustrations, this story is perfect for fans of things that go!

“Sure to delight.” (*Kirkus*, starred review)

*Two little trains went down the track, Two little trains went West. Puff, Puff, Puff and Chug, Chug, Chug, Two little trains to the west.*

## Two Little Trains Details

Date : Published September 23rd 2003 by HarperCollins (first published 1949)

ISBN : 9780064435680

Author : Margaret Wise Brown , Leo Dillon (Illustrator) , Diane Dillon (Illustrator)

Format : Paperback 32 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Railways, Trains, Transport

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**Download and Read Free Online Two Little Trains Margaret Wise Brown , Leo Dillon (Illustrator) , Diane Dillon (Illustrator)**

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## From Reader Review Two Little Trains for online ebook

### ah says

i was mesmerized.

great moments of fantasy or children's play that came to realize as a book.

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### Connie says

This is a re-illustrated version of a largely forgotten Margaret Wise Brown book. If you google you can find one or two of the original images floating around, if you're curious.

In THIS version, the second little train (as you can see on the cover) is a toy train. The writing is simply repetitive, just right for little children, and the connection between what the real train is doing and what the toy train is doing is sweet and imaginative.

Two things bugged me, one very minor and one a little more seriously.

Firstly, although the trains are going "to the west", if you were to look at a map, with North at the top (as is typical), west is to the left... not the right. Never Eat Shredded Wheat, as I taught my nieces, and the compass rose says "WE". Not, heaven forbid, "EW!" So I keep looking at the pictures thinking "But... surely that's EAST!"

I'm aware that this is a stupid thing to complain about, I know it's silly, and I haven't taken off any stars for it or anything. It just bugged me and I had to let it out. Please forgive me :)

The other, slightly more serious bit, is in this line: "The moon shone down on a gleaming track / And the two little trains going West; / And they hurried along and heard the song / Of a black man singing in the West."

The illustration is of the toy train resting by a radio, and opposite it is an image of the (black) man in the moon singing.

Now, you see the bit of the problem? Nowadays it's a bit... awkward to just randomly mention somebody's race unless it's, well, necessary. "Which one of those guys in the picture is Bob, your boyfriend?" "Oh... well, the black one, everybody else is white." It's just kinda weird... it's not like I'd randomly say "The red-haired man singing" or anything like that.

As it happens, I have a few different thoughts about this, and they don't all agree.

1. The text of this book was written in a different era. While I normally find the argument "We can't judge books by our modern standards" to be tiresome (unless you have a time machine, you're not giving the book to a child 50 years ago, so why is it wrong to take modern standards and sensibilities into account when purchasing?), but the text and (modern) illustration here aren't especially offensive. They mention the man's race, they don't demonize or mock it in any way.

2. I'm very interested in the research which says that children pick up racist attitudes more quickly if we do

NOT talk about it.

Apparently, since children aren't actually stupid, when they see that other people have skin a different color than their own, they wonder about it. But when their questions are met with embarrassment and attempts to quiet them, and when no explanation is ever given, they come to their own conclusions about skin color... often conclusions we'd rather they hadn't reached. We try not to talk about race in order to be polite, but instead we may send the message that there's something shameful or wrong about being not-like-us... especially if we have few friends outside our own ethnic group. There have actually been a few compelling studies among this line suggesting that the best thing to do IS to talk about race, but in a matter-of-fact way that's not, well, racist.

Which doesn't mean going around pointing to people and going "Look! She's BLACK! Wow!", but it does mean that maybe skipping over that one word and hoping your kid doesn't learn to read quicker than they can ask you why you skip that one word is the best bet.

3. On the third hand... it's just kinda weird to mention randomly that somebody is black! Perhaps in the context it was understood that he was singing a type of music that was primarily part of black culture? I don't know.

So, as you see, I'm mostly on the side of "In this particular instance, it's no big deal", but I appreciate that some people will have reservations about it, and I understand that.

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### **Shannon says**

A cute and imaginative comparison between the travels of a real-life train heading west and a toy train traveling through the house until it finds its child.

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### **Heather says**

Solid book but a bit sleepy. I like the contrast of the child imagining where the trains are and the depiction of how they're playing pretend. I find it a little too repetitive to want to read aloud. Recommended ages 2-4.

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### **Luisa Knight says**

A picture book showing two trains going West. One is a real train and one is a toy train. Cleverly told and illustrated.

Ages: 3 - 6

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### **Janet says**

What a gem with Margaret Wise Brown as the text author and Leo and Diane Dillon as the illustrators. Loved the illustration concept of on the left side of the double page spread is the sleek train heading west and on the right hand side is the depiction that a young child is playing with their train and the same things are occurring to both trains. It was a delight to find this title as I straightened library book shelves yesterday after a busy summer reading day.

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### **Lisa says**

I liked the conceit of the book - parallel journeys of a real train and a toy train, and the retro-ish illustrations were interesting. I felt like the text was close to flowing, but not there. The single mention of race seemed out of place to me.

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### **Rosa Cline says**

If you have a train fanatic in your household, (or just enjoy them) you must own or at least read this book. It was a very nice train book! It's a basic text so beginning readers could learn to read by it, many lines was repeatative so it wouldn't take a beginning reader long to earn self confedince in it.

The illustrations are great, one page the left side is scenes about a streamline train with 'realistic' scenes and the right page is of a 'little old train' which is a toy train. As the text describes scenes the streamline shows 'real' and the old train shows the toy train throughout the house where a child would play with it, (Running it through a book for a tunnel, running it along the bathtub to be beside a lake etc) I really enjoyed reading this out loud to my adult special needs son. He enjoyed the great illustrations.

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### **Sarah's Storytime says**

I just I thought it was going to be about two full sized trains that were friends - I have no idea where I got that idea from though haha.

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### **Amy Oelschlaeger says**

I chose Two Little Trains because of the author Margaret Wise Brown. She also wrote The Goodnight Moon Room, so I knew this one would stand out too. I enjoyed the comparing and contrasting of the two trains, one old and one new. The illustrations were calm and did not distract from the text. Alliteration is also used quite often through the book.

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### **Laura says**

Brown's simple poem about trains traveling west is beautifully re-illustrated by the Dillons, who show the parallels between the two trains on the recto and verso pages: one a silver bullet train zooming through the countryside, the other tiny toy train chugging through a quiet house. The poem's rhythm is a bit awkward in places but overall reflects the chug-a-chug rhythm of a train hurtling down the tracks. This book is suitable primarily for preschoolers and kindergarteners, who will have fun with the rhyme and making connections between the two trains.

CIP: "Two little trains, one streamlined, the other old-fashioned, puff, puff, puff, and chug, chug, chug, on their way West."

Favorably reviewed in Hornbook, SLJ, and Kirkus; all three reviews focused on the high quality of the rich illustrations as a counterpoint to Brown's original poem.

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### **Hannah says**

Loved the repetitive texts! But was a little confusing for a toddler.

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### **Anna says**

I'm not sure why, and I'm pretty sure it's not supposed to, but this one brings me near tears every time.

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### **Inhabiting Books says**

This is a poem of two little trains, a "streamlined train" and a "little old train", "going west."

The marvelous illustrations transform this rather dull poem into a story, and tell the story pictorially far better than the text does.

The pictures tell the story of two trains, one a sleek passenger train, the other a toy train. The movement of the real train is echoed in the imaginary scenarios featuring the toy train being played with at home. For example, when the "two little trains [come] to a hill, a mountainous hill to the West", the "streamlined train" passes through a tunnel in a hill and the toy train is shown passing through a tunnel formed by a book "mountain."

My older daughters (6 and 7) liked the illustrations and liked pointing out the contrasting elements between the two trains. They have looked at the pictures more than once since we brought it home from the library, but were underwhelmed by the text. "Boring", was their response. My 3 year old didn't "get" this book at all, and wandered away in the middle. None of them have asked me to re-read it.

??That's not to say, of course, that it won't be loved by other children. And it was worth checking out for the pictures alone.

I realize I am opening myself up for all kinds of criticism, but I just don't see the appeal of Margaret Wise Brown's stories. I find her writing insipid and flat. My children have never gravitated to her books, and the few times we have checked her books out of the library, they never ask for them to be re-read, which is a relief to me.

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### **Sarah Sammis says**

According to the Boolynite review, the 1949 version of Two Little Trains by Margaret Wise Brown had a boy driven train (streamlined and blue) and a girl driven train (smaller and pink). For the 2003 re-issue, new artwork was commissioned.

Although the artwork is new it is done in a retro style reminiscent of the late 1940s. The streamlined train depicted is the short of engine you'd see pulling trains across the country back then. The toy train is a clearly a wooden toy which in itself is timeless. It travels through a house full of things that could easily be from the late 1940s.

I checked out the updated version for Harriet. The streamlined train is now a train going cross-country while the "chug chug" train is a toy train going through a house. Their parallel journeys are shown side by side.

I read the book to myself before I read it to Harriet. I thought the parallel structure might be over her head but she not only understood the book but loved it. She declared it was the "best book" I've ever checked out from the library for her.

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