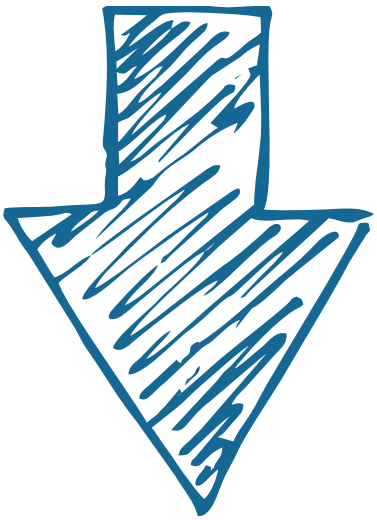
A Community of Transportation Professionals

# STEM Transportation Gift Guide

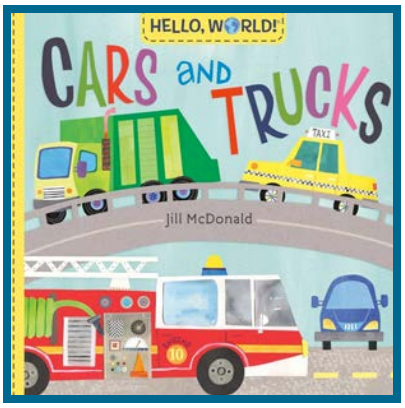
**Looking for a gift that's fun to open and actually gets used?** This guide highlights transportation-themed STEM gifts for every age, from first board books and building sets to games, engineering kits and coding projects. Each one helps kids explore how vehicles, roads, bridges and cities work while building creativity, critical thinking and a love of learning.

*Prices and availability were current as of November 2026 and may change, so check the retailer before you buy.*





# Toddlers + Preschool




## Hello, World! Cars and Trucks by Jill McDonald

**Price: $8.99 | Ages 0–3 |** Link

This board book gives babies and toddlers their first facts about the vehicles they see every day, with bright pictures and fun sound words like “Zap!” for an electric car. Each page has prompts that help parents talk through what’s happening. It’s sturdy, inexpensive and an easy add-on to any gift.

## Learning Resources 1-2-3 Build It! Rocket-Train-Helicopter

**Price: $25.99 | Ages 2+ |** Link




Toddlers can build a rocket, a train engine or a helicopter, all from the

same 17 chunky, mix-and-match parts. A kid-sized play wrench lets them “tighten” each piece like a real mechanic, which builds fine motor skills and an early feel for tools. Because they can take it apart and rebuild it as something new, it’s an early introduction to engineering that holds their attention.



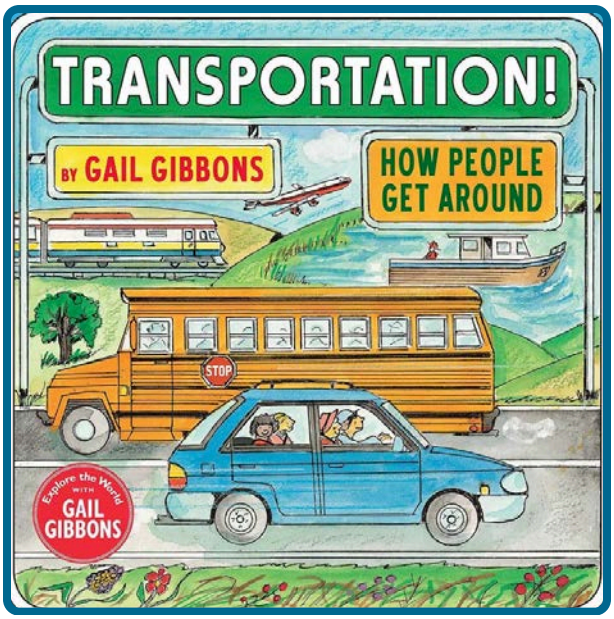



## Ravensburger Big City Builders

**Price: $24.99 | Ages 3+ | Link**

This first board game has kids drive trucks along roads they build, delivering materials to construction sites. It builds color matching, turn taking and early planning skills. It can be played solo or together, so it grows with your child.

# Grades K-2




## Transportation! How People Get Around by Gail Gibbons

**Price: $9.99 | Ages 4–8 | Link**



## Ticket to Ride: First Journey

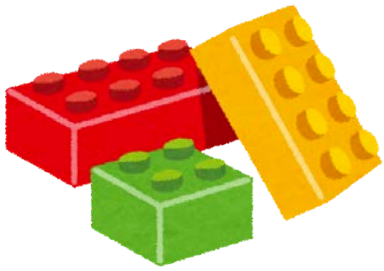
**Price: $29.99 | Ages 6+ | Link**

This kid-friendly version of the award-winning Ticket to Ride has players collect train cards, claim routes, and connect cities across a map of the

This picture book shows young readers how people get around by land, sea and air, using Gail Gibbons' clear, colorful illustrations. It explains many kinds of vehicles and also covers ideas like carpooling and commuting, which most kids' vehicle books skip. It's a great pick for curious kids who always ask "how does that work?"

United States. The routes are shorter and the rules simpler than the original, and picture icons on the map mean kids don't need to read city names. Games take 15 to 30 minutes for 2 to 4 players, which makes it a great family game night pick that teaches route planning and strategy.





# Learning Resources STEM Force and Motion Activity Set

**Price: $27.99 | Ages 5+ | Link**

Kids race toy cars down adjustable ramps to see how gravity, friction and inertia change how fast and far a vehicle goes. The set comes with two cars, double-sided tracks (smooth and bumpy), weighted blocks, a pendulum ball, and 10 activity cards that walk kids through predicting, testing and recording results. It turns a favorite kind of play into a first real science experiment, so kids think like engineers without realizing they're learning.

# Grades 3-5




## ThinkFun Rush Hour

**Price: $21.99 | Ages 8+ | Link**

In this classic traffic jam puzzle, kids slide cars and trucks around a gridlocked board to clear a path for the red car to escape. Its 40 challenges go from beginner to expert, so the game grows with them and keeps building logic, planning and problem-solving skills. It's compact, needs no batteries, and the cards store right in the board, which makes it perfect for road trips and quiet time.

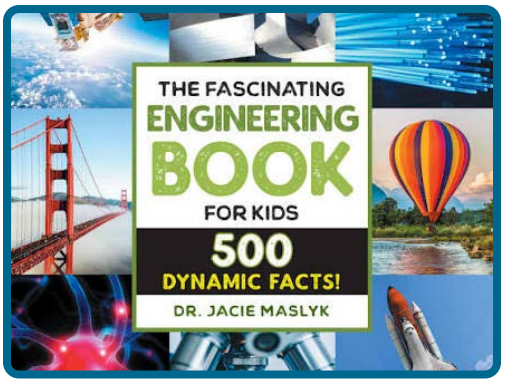
## CrunchLabs Build Box by Mark Rober

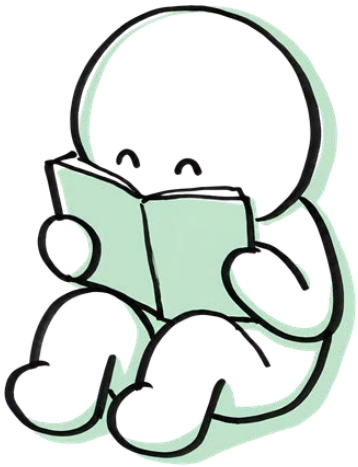
**Price: $32.95/month | Ages 8+ | Link**

Each month, kids get a new build-it-yourself toy designed by Mark Rober and the CrunchLabs



team, plus a video in which he explains the science behind it. Every box comes with everything needed to complete the build. It’s a gift that keeps arriving all year, turning engineering into something kids look forward to every month.



## The Fascinating Engineering Book for Kids: 500 Dynamic Facts! by Dr. Jacie Maslyk

**Price: $6.49 | Ages 8-12 | Link**

This colorful book has 500 facts covering every branch of engineering, from the bridges and roads civil engineers design to underwater machines and spaceships. It also profiles famous engineers and shows how engineering shapes the things kids see every day. It’s an easy book to pick up and flip through, and a great way to show curious kids how many directions an engineering career can go.

# Grades 6-8



## Mini Motorways (Nintendo Switch)

**Price: $14.99 | Ages 8+ | Link**

Players draw the roads for a growing city and try to keep traffic flowing as new homes and businesses appear. Upgrades like highways and roundabouts force real network design choices, and maps are inspired by cities around the world. It's easy to pick up, works on both the Switch and Switch 2, and gives kids a feel for what transportation engineers do every day.

## Smithsonian Motor-Works Kit

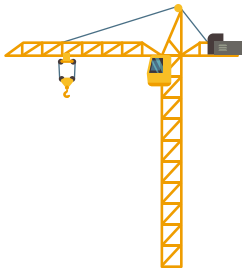
**Price: $69.99 | Ages 8+ | Link**

Kids build a working, battery-powered model of a four-cylinder engine from more than 100 screw-together parts. The clear body lets them watch the



pistons pump, the valves open and close, and the spark plugs fire, showing what really happens under the hood of a car. It’s a hands-on way to see how the engines that power our roads work, and a great project to build together.



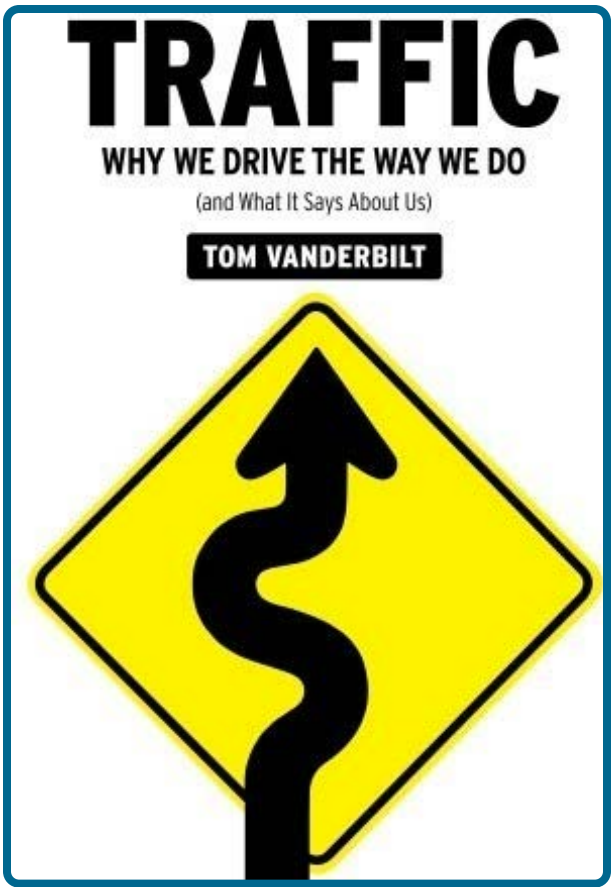
# Engino Discovering STEM Structures: Buildings & Bridges

**Price: $42.99 | Ages 8+ | Link**

Kids build nine working models, including beam, arch, truss, cable-stayed and suspension bridges, and test how each one carries weight. The included booklet explains the forces at work, like how triangles add strength and how cable tension holds up a bridge deck, then checks what they learned with quizzes. It’s a great introduction to the structural engineering behind the bridges kids cross every day.

# Grades 9-12

## Traffic: Why We Drive the Way We Do (and What It Says About Us) by Tom Vanderbilt




**Price: $14.99 | Ages 14+ | Link**

This New York Times Notable Book explains why traffic jams form, why the other lane always seems faster, and how driver psychology shapes safety on the road. It also covers why roundabouts, which can feel chaotic, actually make roads safer and keep traffic moving. Written for a general audience rather than engineers, it's an engaging read for a teen curious about the "why" behind the roads they're about to start driving on.



# Cities: Skylines II (PC, Steam)

**Price: $49.99 | Ages 8+ | Link**

In this city-building game, teens lay out roads, interchanges, public transit and zoning, then watch how traffic and a growing population respond to every decision. They have to balance a budget, keep residents happy and adapt as the city changes. It's about as close as a game gets to real-world transportation planning, which makes it a great fit for teens curious about engineering or urban planning careers. Requires a gaming PC. Consider Cities: Skylines I for Xbox and PlayStation.

# ELEGOO Smart Robot Car Kit V4.0

**Price: $59.99 | Ages 13+ | Link**

Teens build a robot car from scratch and program it to follow lines, avoid obstacles, and drive by infrared remote or a phone app. It's built on the Arduino platform, with step-by-step assembly instructions and all the code included, so the skills carry over to real-world electronics projects. It's a hands-on introduction to the sensors and logic behind self-driving vehicles.

