

How do we make it go?

Lesson at a glance

Hold up a wind-up toy, let it run down, and ask how to make it go again. Children try a sealed battery torch as a class, then visit winding, push-car and pinwheel stations noticing what they do to start each one. Gather on the carpet and sort the four real objects into labelled hoops: winding with a key, battery, push, and wind/blow. Each child draws one or two things beside the matching hoop picture, then a short make-sense talk names what made each go.

Learning objectives

- Try different ways of making a toy or object go
- Sort objects by what makes them go: winding, battery, push or wind
- Say what makes at least one object go

Before the bell – prep

Day before: set three trays (chunky wind-up toys, plain push cars only, pinwheels) and sketch four picture-word hoop labels (key, battery shape, hand, puff of air). Tug-test every wind-up for loose keys or parts; set shaky ones aside. Check both torches are screwed shut—no coin cells; spare batteries stay with you, never on a tray.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
chunky wind-up toys	4	class	school kit	one wind-up toy shared at a teacher-led station while other groups use a kitchen timer you wind
battery torch with sealed screwed-shut battery compartment	2	class	school kit	one teacher-held sealed torch the class takes turns switching on the carpet
plain push toy cars (no pull-back mechanism)	4	class	classroom	small balls children push along a taped lane
pinwheels	6	class	supermarket	paper fans children wave, or strips of tissue blown gently
sorting hoops or trays with picture-and-word labels (winding/key, battery, push, wind/blow)	4	class	classroom	four sheets of paper on the floor as group mats with the same sketched picture cues
masking tape for a short car lane	1	class	classroom	use the edge of a rug as the lane
plain paper for drawing	1	pupil	classroom	the back of scrap paper or a whiteboard and wipe after sharing at the hoop

Safety watch-point

Torches stay sealed and screwed shut—no button or coin cells; spare batteries with you only. Tug-test wind-ups for loose parts. No running with pinwheel sticks near faces.

Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Wind one toy once, let it stop fully, then ask how we make it go again. Take two or three ideas only. Keep the other station toys and the four go-type names hidden.
- **Look and wonder:** Show wind-up, sealed torch, push car and pinwheel one by one. Thumbs-up guesses only—do not write go-type words on the board yet or children will read labels instead of thinking about the object in your hand.
- **Try making them go:** Part A: hold a sealed torch and say once ‘The switch lets it go. A battery inside gives it the go. We do not open it,’ then pass two torches so every child presses on and off. Part B: quick model of wind, push and gentle blow, then free-flow at three stations. Put the winding tray nearest you; circulate asking ‘What did you do to make it go?’
- **Sort what makes them go:** Lay four hoops with your picture labels. Say the pair once so they do not blur: winding with a key versus the wind, a puff of air we blow. Hold each object for the class to call the group. Before the torch goes in, point switch then closed battery end and lock in ‘battery, not switch’ as the class choruses the word.
- **Draw your sort:** Plain paper only—no four-box journal. Children draw one or two things tried, walk the paper to the matching hoop picture, and place it. Scribe a word if asked; stem ‘This one goes by...’. Full four-group completeness is not required.
- **Make-sense talk:** Whole-class oral only. Revoice: we wind with a key, this needs a battery, we push this, our breath spins this. If someone says only a switch or electricity makes things go, point back to the pinwheel and push car.

What it should show

Most children will place wind-up under winding (key), push car under push, pinwheel under wind/blow, and torch under battery once you lock that in. A common wobble is calling the torch ‘switch’ or ‘light’—revoice that the switch lets it go and the battery inside gives the go. Affirm naming the action, not only the object.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **‘The torch goes because of the switch’ (or ‘because it lights’)—children name the part they touched, not what gives the go.** — Hold the sealed torch, point to the switch then tap the closed battery end: ‘You pressed the switch; a battery inside gives it the go.’ Chorus battery as it goes in the hoop.
- **‘Batteries are magic’ or ‘big things always need more go.’** — Keep it simple: each thing needs the right kind of go. If size comes up, counter: ‘Size is not the rule. A tiny pinwheel and a big push car can both go.’
- **Children blur winding with a key and wind as a puff of air because both sound like ‘wind’.** — Say the pair once while pointing at the two labels and objects: winding with a key versus the wind, a puff of air we blow.

**Differentiation**

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Stay at one station with you and practise naming the single action (wind, push or blow); guarantee a firm torch switch turn with you before the sort.	• Visit all three stations and whisper to a partner what each one needed before joining the carpet sort.	• After drawing, add one more classroom thing (a door you push, a fan) and place it by the hoop it would join—oral and drawn only, no new sheet.

Cross-curricular hook

Oral language: partner exit ticket—each child tells one way something can go using the four sort words.