

## The Cozy Caboose

Wintertime in Saskatchewan means cold winds and deep snow. Before cars and trucks and good all-weather roads, travelling in this weather was hard. Horse-drawn wagons and buggies were cold to travel in. Plus, their wheels didn't go through snow very well. Even early cars and trucks had trouble in the snow.

Prairie settlers were creative and resourceful. They built warm winter vehicles to help them travel, including horse-drawn cabooses.

A caboose is a sleigh with walls and a roof for shelter. Many cabooses also had a small stove inside for warmth. The driver sat inside where it was warm, so there was an opening in the front for the horse's reins. To get through the snow, instead of wheels cabooses had runners on the bottom. They look a little bit like skis. These runners help the caboose glide across the snow.

Because they were homemade, their owners could make their caboose just how they wanted them. Some families worked together to build a shared caboose.

Cabooses were often used as school busses, taking students to and from rural schools. Just like school busses today, often that meant picking up students from different houses so students got to ride to school together. Cabooses were also used by doctors and others who needed to travel when roads were covered in snow.



Homemade caboose on the Barton farm, Floral, SK, 1936.

Western Development Museum  
Barton Collection 04086.



EDUCATION  
PROGRAMS



The Reed, Baker and Barton cabooses on the Baker farm,  
Victor district south of Saskatoon, SK, 1939.  
Western Development Museum Barton Collection 01166.



WDM-1973-S-1067



WDM-1976-S-232

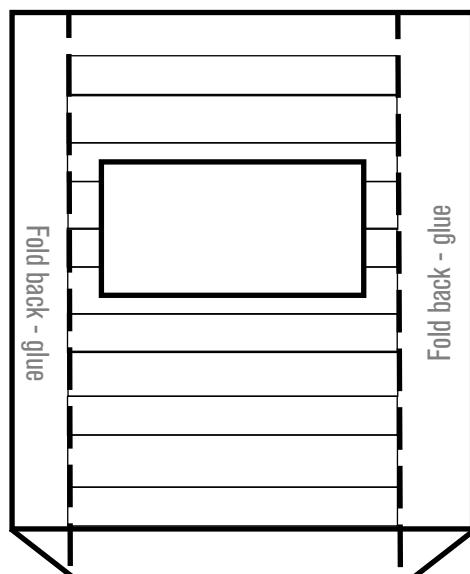
These two cabooses are on display at WDM Moose Jaw. Both have sliding glass windows at the front and stovepipes for their wood or coal-burning stoves. The caboose on the right was built in 1934 by a blacksmith from Colonsay.



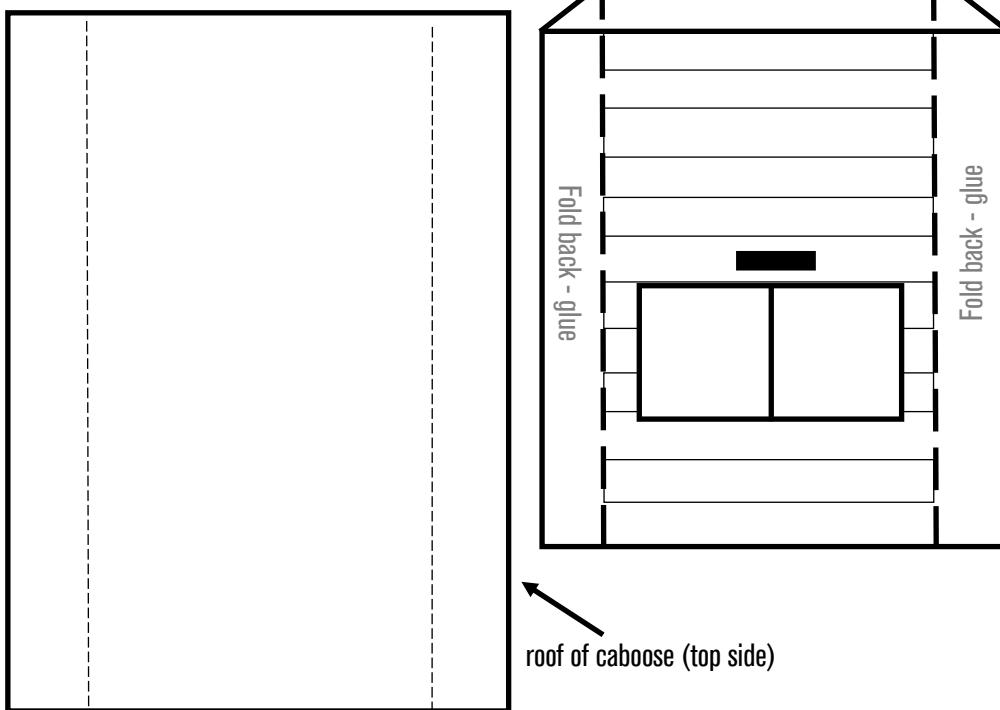
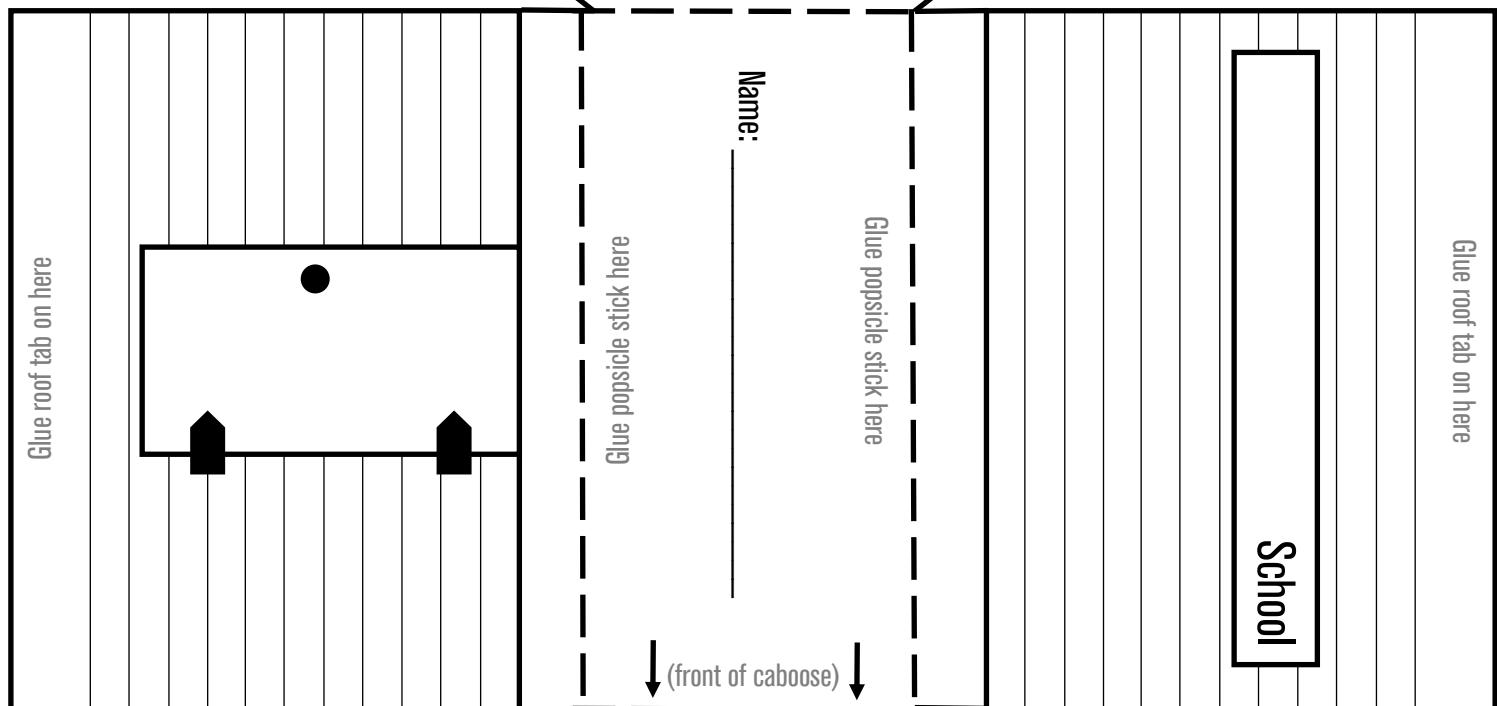
## Caboose Craft

### What you will need:

- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Crayons, pencil crayons or markers
- 2 popsicle sticks
- Help from a grownup



Completed Caboose Craft - just add a horse!



### Instructions:

1. Colour and decorate the caboose body and roof. Be sure you add the name of your school to the side!
2. Cut out the body and roof on the thick, solid outer lines.
3. Fold along the dashed lines. Set the body of the caboose upside down on a flat surface and fold the sides up. Fold the smaller side tabs back.
4. Glue the side tabs to the inside of the caboose body to close it up.
5. Glue on the popsicle stick "runners".
6. Put glue on the undersides of the roof tabs and attach onto the outside of the caboose body.