Building With Dad by Carol Nevius

“Let’s go for a ride,” my dad says to me,

“I’ll show you the spot where your new school will be.

Would you like to help? You can visit the site.

We’ll check the construction to make sure it’s right.”

We wait till the groundbreaking work has begun.

Watch bulldozers ROAR. Pushing dirt, diesels run.

We ride in the dump truck that’s bringing in fill.

I push the red button to make the rocks spill!

I help Dad’s mechanic. We count all her wrenches,

and watch as the backhoe digs long pipeline trenches.

At noon, horns TOOT-TOOT! The crew needs to eat.

Dad lets me climb up in the earthmover’s seat!

Dad’s giant grader smoothes over the ground.

His steamroller follows to crush the dirt down.

Cement mixer turns out gray glop by the yard.

The foundation forms. It sets up and dries hard.

Cranes are like arms, lifting girders and brick.

Crews bolt, nut, and mortar them, solid and thick.

Zip-zap! The power tools fasten the ply.

The new roof is waterproof. School will be dry.

The team works inside, welding pipes using fire,

sealing windows and tile, running cables and wire.

The teachers have meetings. Dad’s last workers rush.

Our waxed floors are gleaming. The toilets all flush.

The bucket truck lifts us to check the new sign.

I spell out each letter. I’m proud this school’s mine!

Construction is finished. Dad packs his last tool.

The children arrive. It’s the first day of school!

Lesson 1 Vocabulary

site-the area of land where something is being built

construction-the process of building something

groundbreaking-when the first scoop of dirt is dug out of the ground to start to build a building. Sometimes people are so excited to get started that they have a ceremony.

bulldozer-truck with a flat blade on the front that pushes dirt

diesel-a diesel engine is simpler than a gasoline engine. They might both be considered internal combustion engines. Instead of spark plugs it has a glow plug. The diesel fuel is less refined than gas for cars. It used to cost less than gas but the government increased the taxes on it to make the truck drivers pay more. When the glow plug fires the diesel fuel the result is more power. It gives more power but it also gives more pollution.

dump truck-a truck with a large container for hauling stuff. The container tips to dump out the stuff.

fill-rocks and dirt used to fill in a hole

mechanic-someone with the job of fixing machines

wrench-a tool for turning bolts

backhoe-machine with a mechanical arm with a scoop on the end of it

pipeline-underground pipes for water and waste to flow through

trench-a long narrow hole

noon-12:00, midday

crew-a team of workers

earthmover-large machine for moving dirt

grader-machine with a blade that makes earth flat

steamroller-machine with a heavy cylinder that rolls to smooth the dirt

cement mixer-a truck that carries concrete and spins to mix it

foundation-the cement slab that a building is built on

crane-machine with a very tall arm for lifting things

girders-steel beams

brick-rectangular stone, often red

bolt-a cylinder with screw thread used with a nut

nut-metal piece with a hole to screw on a bolt

mortar-the substance between bricks that holds them together

solid-strong and well made

ply-a layer, sheet or thickness of something such as wood or metal

roof-the highest layer of a building, the cover

waterproof-will not let water through

frame-boards or beams that will be the insides of the walls

rib bones-a row of bone in the chest protecting the lungs

skeleton-bones

outlining-showing the shape of something

welding-making metal stick together by melting it

sealing-filling a crack so air and water cannot get through

tile-hard thin shapes for floors or walls

cable-very thick wire or a bundle of wires

wire-strand of metal for electricity to travel through

meeting-getting together to talk about something

waxed-rubbed with wax to make it shine

gleaming-shiny and bright

bucket truck-truck with an arm with a basket for lifting workers on the end of it