FLYING FROM THE ROCKFORD AIRPORT (RFD)



I Am Going on an Airplane

A social story to read before and during the trip

This story is about me: _____

My trip is on: _____

Magic Bean Travel Co.

Written by Bonnie Nofsinger, IBCCES Certified Autism Travel Professional and mom of two kids on the spectrum. Free to print, edit and share with families.

1



Photo idea: The outside of the Rockford airport · glue or tape your photo here

I am going on a trip. We will fly on an airplane from the Rockford airport.

2



Photo idea: Our car in the parking lot, or the front doors · glue or tape your photo here

We will park the car and walk inside with our bags.

3



Photo idea: The ticket counter · glue or tape your photo here

A person at the counter may take our big suitcase. It will ride under the plane, and we will get it back later.

4



Photo idea: The security line · glue or tape your photo here

Next we go to security. We wait in a line. Lots of people wait in this line.

5



Photo idea: A gray bin with a backpack in it · glue or tape your photo here

I put my backpack and my jacket in a gray bin. The bin goes through a machine. The machine looks at my things, and then I get them back.

6



Photo idea: The security doorway · glue or tape your photo here

I walk through a doorway when the officer tells me. The officers' job is to keep everyone safe.

7



Photo idea: The gate chairs and windows · glue or tape your photo here

Then we go to our gate. The gate has chairs and big windows. I can watch the airplanes while we wait.

8



Photo idea: The hallway to the plane (jet bridge) · glue or tape your photo here

When it is our turn, we walk through a hallway to the plane.

9

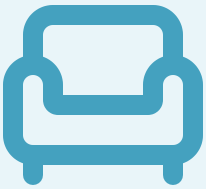


Photo idea: A plane seat and seat belt · glue or tape your photo here

I find my seat and buckle my seat belt.

10



Photo idea: My headphones and a snack · glue or tape your photo here

The engines get loud when the plane goes fast. I can wear my headphones. My ears might feel funny when we go up. Chewing or drinking can help.

11



Photo idea: My tablet or a favorite book · glue or tape your photo here

On the plane, I can watch my tablet, read, or rest.

12



Photo idea: Where we are going · glue or tape your photo here

When the plane lands, we wait until it is our turn to stand up. Then we walk off the plane, and our trip begins!

For grown-ups

This story is written in the first person, in a calm, matter-of-fact tone. It names the hard parts honestly and pairs each one with something that helps. Words like “might” and “usually” leave room for real-life changes.

How to use this story

Start one to three weeks before the trip.
Read it daily at first, then less often once your child knows it. Some kids get anxious hearing about a trip too far ahead. You know your child best.

Add real photos.
Glue or tape a photo over each frame. A photo of the real place beats a drawing. The icons are there if you can't get a photo.

Edit freely.
Cross out and write in your own names, ship, hotel and comfort items. A story that matches your real trip works better.

Bring it with you.
Read it again in the moment, like in the security line or while you wait for the parade. That's when it does the most good.

Before you print: RFD notes

- **Check step 8.** RFD's terminal has jet bridges, but not every flight is guaranteed to use one. Ask the airline, or look out the gate window on travel day. If your child will walk outside to the plane, use the swap-in page at the back: “We walk outside and up some stairs into the plane.”
- **Call TSA Cares** at (855) 787-2227 at least 72 hours before your flight to request a Passenger Support Specialist.
- **Take your photos ahead.** Get the outside and the ticket counter area on a quiet day before your trip. Get the security and gate photos on travel day if you need them for next time.
- **Want a visit first?** RFD's airfield tours are for school and community groups. For a family visit, call the airport at 815-969-4000 and ask what's possible.

Photo checklist

- [ ] 1. The outside of the Rockford airport
- [ ] 2. Our car in the parking lot, or the front doors
- [ ] 3. The ticket counter
- [ ] 4. The security line
- [ ] 5. A gray bin with a backpack in it
- [ ] 6. The security doorway
- [ ] 7. The gate chairs and windows
- [ ] 8. The hallway to the plane (jet bridge)
- [ ] 9. A plane seat and seat belt
- [ ] 10. My headphones and a snack
- [ ] 11. My tablet or a favorite book
- [ ] 12. Where we are going



Want help filling in your real details?

I'm Bonnie Nofsinger, a Rockford mom of two kids on the spectrum and an IBCCES Certified Autism Travel Professional. I help families plan the trip and the accommodations behind the story. Planning is free to you. **Call or text (815) 904-9755** or visit **magicbeantravel.com**.

Not every flight from RFD uses a jet bridge. If yours doesn't, cut out this step and glue it over step 8.

8



Photo idea: Stairs up to the plane · glue or tape your photo here

When it is our turn, we walk outside and up some stairs into the plane.