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Opening extract from

Robert Crowther's Amazing Pop-Up Big Machines

Written by

Robert Crowther

Published by

Walker Books Ltd

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Tower Crane

THE TALLEST MACHINES on the building site are the tower cranes. They have long arms, called jibs, which can swing right over the site and they are used to lift heavy objects, such as girders, into place.

Because they lift heavy objects, cranes need to be bolted to the ground to stop them falling over. Even with the bolts, the cranes would still fall over with a heavy weight at the end of the jib. To stop this there are concrete blocks behind the operator's cab which help to keep the crane balanced while it is working.

You need a head for heights if you want to work a crane. You've also got to be fit – the only way to get to the operator's cab at the top is by climbing! A series of ladders zigzag up inside the tower with a platform to rest on every few metres. At least the view from the top is great.

Fact File



Some modern cranes are now so advanced that crane drivers can operate them by remote control.

Average Hook Height: 110 m

Average Jib Length: ....100 m

Average Weight Lifted: .....70 tonnes

Building Machinery



Hook the concrete block onto the tower crane and haul it up.