


CONQUERING KINDERGARTEN STORYTIME SIDEKICK

Books are a great way to teach reading and social-emotional learning (SEL) skills.

Here is how you can support children as you read books together:

1. Ask open-ended questions about the SEL skill in the book.
2. Respond to children’s answers and build on them to start a conversation.
3. Connect the SEL skill in the book to real experiences in children’s lives.

Try the strategy above with the story *The Little Engine That Could*. In this book, children see the value of the SEL skill Demonstrates Consistent Effort, as they hear about the Little Blue Engine who is able to climb a big hill. After reading the story, follow the steps below.

GUIDE	 ASK A QUESTION	 RESPOND AND EXTEND	 CONNECT TO EXPERIENCE
	EXAMPLE	<p>You say:</p> <p><i>Why do you think the Little Blue Engine was the only one to get up the hill?</i></p>	<p>Child says:</p> <p><i>She tried really hard.</i></p> <p>You say:</p> <p><i>That’s right. She tried really hard and believed in herself.</i></p>



Want more examples of this strategy?

	★ 1 ASK A QUESTION	★ 2 RESPOND AND EXTEND	★ 3 CONNECT TO EXPERIENCE
EXAMPLE 1	You say: <i>How do you think the Blue Engine felt when she made it to the top of the hill?</i>	Child says: <i>Happy.</i> You say: <i>I think so too! I think she also probably felt very proud of herself.</i>	You say: <i>Do you remember when you finally learned to jump rope? How did that make you feel?</i>
EXAMPLE 2	You say: <i>What did the Rusty Old Engine say that was different from what the Little Blue Engine said?</i>	Child says: <i>He said he couldn't do it.</i> You say: <i>Exactly! The old engine said, "I can not" and the blue engine said, "I think I can!"</i>	You say: <i>The blue engine had <u>confidence</u> that she could get up the hill. Confidence is when you believe in yourself and think you can do something even when it's hard. Can you think of a time when you had confidence?</i>



What else can you do to teach the skill in this book?

Teach Children to Monitor Their Effort: Young children are not yet able to monitor themselves to make sure they are trying their hardest. You can introduce children to this idea by encouraging them to think about how much *effort* they put into a task. Help them reflect on a task they've completed by asking them questions like: "How do you feel when you look at this? Do you feel proud? Are you happy with it or do you want to try again?" If children don't feel proud or want to share what they've done, ask them why. If they think that they can do better, encourage them to try again until they feel like they've done their best.

Want to learn more about this strategy?

Research shows that reading and talking with children about books helps them build both reading and SEL skills. To get the most out of each book, read it again to support children's understanding.

It is also helpful to make real-time connections between children's experiences and the books they know. Point out when you see something in your real life that reminds you of a book.

Conquering Kindergarten aims to help families and teachers support children's development of 14 key SEL skills through evidence-based tools. For more tips, book recommendations, and reading guides, **visit CKPhilly.org**.



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