

# Skill-Building Book Tips

## 7 Essential Life Skills

Read *No Talking* in a way that highlights Communicating, a Life Skill that promotes Executive Functions. This Life Skill is much more than understanding language, speaking, reading and writing. It's the skill of **determining what you want to communicate and realizing how our communications will be.**

### Tip

*No Talking* is based upon Dave's learning about Gandhi's experience of not talking one day a week to "bring order to his mind."

Ask your child:

- "How did not talking affect the children's thinking and learning? What are some specific examples of this?"
- "How did not talking affect the teachers' thinking and learning, especially the Principal, Mrs. Hiatt?"
- "If you were Mr. Burton and writing a paper on this experiment for a human development class, what would you write about? What would you conclude from this experiment?"

### Skill

Communicating includes being able to reflect on what you want to communicate. By talking with your child about what the children and adults learned, you are helping your child reflect on his or her experiences with this book. This back-and-forth interaction is what researchers call "**Take-Turns Talk.**" Like a game of ball, one of you says or does something and the other responds. The importance of these everyday interactions to brain building is a key finding from child development research.

### Tip

When they couldn't talk as they usually did and had to stick to a three- word limit, Dave, Lynsey and their classmates learned to use many new ways of Communicating. Ask your child how the children communicated without using words. You can talk about all of the different ways we communicate—such as by using facial expressions, body movements and signals. Ask your child why these are important.

### Skill

**Effective communication includes much more than talking.** When you talk with your child about other ways, it builds a deeper understanding of effective communication.

### No Talking By Andrew Clements

The fifth graders at Lakewood Elementary School are so noisy that they are known as "The Unshushables." When Dave learns that Mahatma Gandhi practiced silence one day a week to bring order to his mind, it triggers a clever two-day, no-talking contest between the boys and girls that results in many lessons learned for all.



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### Tip

Before their experiment, the children and the teachers used words as a way of being in control. But they learned that not talking actually required more self-control than talking all of the time. Ask your child why not talking helped them have more control than talking all of the time.

### Skill

Communicating requires **self control**, which develops over time and with practice and calls on **Executive Function** skills.

### Tip

The fifth grade boys think girls have “cooties,” and the girls think the boys have “cooties.” Dave and Lynsey are described as the king and queen of the “cootie-clingers”—they have zero tolerance for the other sex. At the end of the book, there is a “new normal” in their feelings about each other. Ask your child to talk about what led to these changed views.

### Skill

The skill of Communicating requires an understanding of the other person; it means **moving beyond stereotypes to be able to figure out what someone else might think and feel.**

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