

Skill-Building Book Tips

7 Essential Life Skills

Explore *Penguin* 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

Act out what Ben is doing in the book. Take turns making faces and copying Ben's gestures with your child.

Skill

When you act out the ways Ben is communicating, you're helping your child **make connections between words and actions.** This will help her learn new words and understand how others communicate.

Tip

Ask your child what Penguin is doing:

- "Why is Penguin not responding at first? Do you think Ben could have done anything to get Penguin to respond? Why or why not?"

Skill

The skill of Communicating involves helping your child learn **what he or she wants to communicate and how to communicate so others will understand.** When you talk about why Penguin doesn't respond to Ben at first, it helps your child think about what Penguin is trying to tell Ben by turning away. Your child has to put aside what she thinks to truly understand the perspective of Penguin, which calls on **Executive Function** skills. Giving your child insight into the perspectives of Penguin and of Ben helps her learn to communicate more effectively.

Tip

Ben becomes upset because Penguin is not responding. You can share a time when you or your child was upset because someone was not listening or responding. Talk about why there was a breakdown in communication.

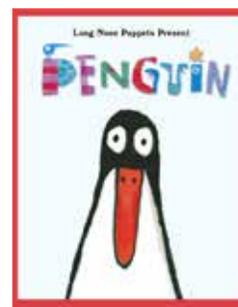
Skill

By **sharing stories**, you're helping your child make the book relevant in her life. Use what is called "**Take-Turns Talk**" in this conversation, where, like a game of ball, you go back and forth, building on and extending what your child says and does. This conversation can help your child think about when communicating works and doesn't work.

Penguin

By Polly Dunbar

When Ben receives a penguin as a present, he tries to communicate with him in many different ways. Ben becomes increasingly frustrated when Penguin doesn't respond. Finally Penguin responds when Ben needs him most!



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Tip

At the end of the book, Ben and Penguin are communicating with each other: “Penguin said ‘everything.’” Ask your child to talk about what Penguin finally has to say to Ben.

Skill

Communicating includes many different ways of connecting with others. By talking with your child about different ways of communicating (through words, behavior, pictures, etc.), you are helping him or her have a deeper understanding of this skill.

These tips sheets were developed by *Mind in the Making*, in collaboration with First Book. Find more books and materials on the First Book Marketplace, a resource available exclusively to educators and programs serving children in need. **Visit: www.fbmarketplace.org.**