

Skill-Building Book Tips

7 Essential Life Skills

You can read *Home at Last* in a way that highlights **Self-Directed, Engaged Learning**, a Life Skill that promotes Executive Functions. It is through learning that we can realize our potential. As the world changes, so can we, for as long as we live—as long as we learn.

Principles of Self-Directed, Engaged Learning

- Establish a trustworthy relationship with your child.
- Help children set and work toward their own goals.
- Involve children socially, emotionally and intellectually.
- Elaborate and extend children's learning.
- Help children practice, synthesize and generalize.
- Help children become increasingly accountable.
- Create a community of learners.

Tip

Ask your child how it feels not to understand what others are saying and have your child recall an experience when this happened to him or her. Then talk with your child about why it was meaningful for the Patino family to learn English.

Skill

Self-Directed, Engaged Learning means **working toward relevant and meaningful goals**. **Executive Function** skills are driven by goals.

Tip

Ask your child to recall an experience when he or she had to learn something that was hard. What helped him or her do this?

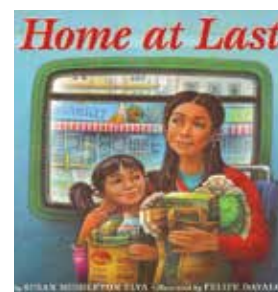
Skill

Learning involves **dealing with challenges**. When you help your child relate the story to personal experience with overcoming challenges, you are promoting both attitudes and skills that will help your child address other learning challenges in the future. This back and forth conversation you have with your child about this book 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.

Home at Last

By Susan Middleton Elya

Ana Patino's family moved to the United States from Mexico when she was eight and her twin brothers were babies. Papa goes to work at a canning factory and Ana goes to school, where she is one of two non-English speaking students. Her mother runs into problems because she does not speak English. Ana suggests her mother could learn English, but her mother says it's impossible, until she finally agrees to try.



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**.