

Skill-Building Book Tips

7 Essential Life Skills

Prepare for a journey when reading *The View from Saturday* 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 to talk about what each of the children in the book—Noah, Ethan, Nadia and Julian—was particularly good at. How did these strengths help them become a team that worked and learned well together?

Make a list with your child about her strengths. Also talk about how these strengths may be used to work toward goals.

Skill

Children are more likely to be **engaged learners if the learning builds on their strengths.**

Tip

Julian’s father says, “The Souls have all returned from a journey.” He goes on to say each of the children found something on their journey.

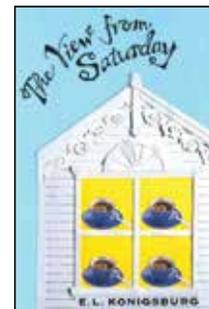
Ask your child:

- “What do you think Julian’s father meant by that statement? What did each of the children find?”
- “How did these journeys lead them to become friends?”

Talk about how finding things in common can help build trustworthy relationships. Ask your child what she looks for most in a friend and why. Share your thoughts, too.

The View from Saturday By E. L. Konigsburg

The View from Saturday is about the journeys of four children to become a group they call The Souls. They are, somewhat unexpectedly, chosen by their sixth grade teacher to compete in the Academic Bowl team against seventh and eighth graders. Their teacher, Mrs. Olinski, was often asked why she had chosen these four children and she didn’t have a good answer. The book is about her journey, too—a journey of returning to teaching after a crippling car accident ten years earlier.



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Each of these children was involved in a meaningful personal learning journey—a journey that promoted their **Executive Function** skills. This kind of deep learning is most likely when children can learn from people whom they **trust**—both children and adults.

Tip

The children could answer some of the questions asked in the Academic Bowl because they had had meaningful experiences where they had learned this information. For example, Nadia learned about the Sargasso Sea from rescuing turtles.

Ask your child:

- “How do you learn best?”
- “Which question would you like to be asked in an Academic Bowl? Why?”

Share a time when you learned something and then were able to use it. You can also ask:

- “What do you think Mrs. Olinski meant when she said, ‘... sometimes to be successful, you have to risk making mistakes?’ ”

Skill

Self-Directed, Engaged Learning is promoted through real experiences and through opportunities to use the knowledge we have gained. It involves making mistakes and learning from them, too. This back-and-forth conversation you have with your child 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.

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.**