

# Skill-Building Book Tips

## 7 Essential Life Skills

Have fun reading *A Chair For My Mother* in a way that highlights Focus and Self Control, a Life Skill that promotes Executive Functions. Children need this skill to achieve their **goals**, especially in a world that's filled with distractions and information overload. It involves **paying attention**, **remembering the rules**, **thinking flexibly** and **exercising self control**.

### Tip

As you read *A Chair for My Mother*, talk with your child about how it might feel to lose his things in a fire.

Rosa might have felt sad or angry but instead, she and her family focused on creating a new home and saving money to buy a new chair. Ask your child how it would feel to save that much money.

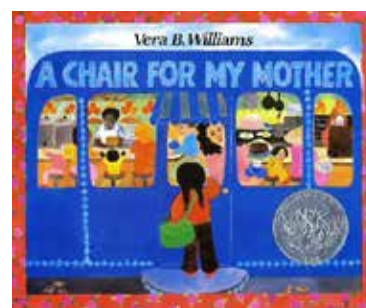
### Skill

The skill of Focus and Self Control is necessary as you **work toward a goal**. **Executive Function** skills are driven by goals.

When you talk about how Rosa and her family saved for the new chair, your child will see the value of working toward long-term goals. The 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.

### *A Chair For My Mother* By Vera B. Williams

When a fire destroys their home, Rosa, her mother and grandmother put their shiny coins into a jar until they have saved enough to buy the chair they are all dreaming of.



### Tip

Ask your child about a goal he'd like to work toward. Talk about what it might take to make it happen.

### Skill

When you help your child think of a goal he's interested in achieving, and discuss ways to stay focused on that goal, you're helping him learn the skill of Focus and Self Control. Make sure you help him identify a goal he really cares about, not one you set for your him.

### Tip

Share a story with your child about a time when you stayed focused on a goal and had to wait to make it come true. Share your strategies for how you made that happen.

### Skill

Children learn through stories. When you share your story and strategies, your child will learn ways to help himself in the future. Focus and Self Control is promoted when we have strategies to help us wait, stay focused and not go on automatic, even when things get hard.

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