

Skill-Building Book Tips

7 Essential Life Skills

Read *The Pot That Juan Built* in a way that highlights Making Connections, a Life Skill that promotes Executive Functions. This Life Skill is at the heart of learning—**figuring out what's the same and what's different, and sorting these things into categories. Making unusual connections is at the core of creativity.** In a world where people can Google for information, it's the people who can see connections who are able to go beyond knowing information to **using this information well.**

Tip

As you explore *The Pot That Juan Built*, take the time to talk with your child about the natural materials Juan uses and how one thing can turn into something else.

Skill

When you observe and discuss the different materials used in creating pottery, your child is making connections between **old and new information**. These connections help your child classify information in new ways, which is important to learning.

Tip

Talk with your child about things in the world that were created from other things. It could be cereal that comes from corn or a wooden chair that comes from a tree.

Skill

When you help your child discover what the everyday objects in the world are made from, you will give her a deeper understanding of the environment and how natural materials are used. These connections can spur more questions about **what's the same and what's different** in the original object and what it becomes.

Tip

Reminiscent of *This Is The House That Jack Built*, this book begins with the pot that Juan built and works backwards to share the steps in natural pottery making. Before turning each page to reveal the next step, ask your child:

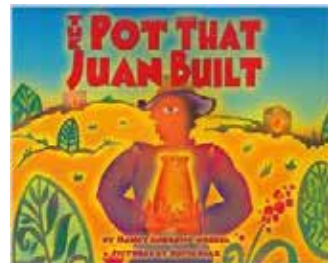
- “What do you think is going to come next in the book?”

After you or your child read the poem, look at the text on the facing page to learn more about the process of pottery making.

Because the poem is repeated and elaborated upon in the book, see if your child can remember the words.

The Pot That Juan Built By Nancy Andrews-Goebel

The Pot that Juan Built is a beautiful biography of a Mexican artist who rediscovers the ancient processes for making pottery used by the long-vanished Casas Grandes Indians in Northern Mexico.



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Skill

Predicting what comes next and asking your child to repeat and remember the words of the poem promote **paying attention to detail, remembering, analyzing information and anticipating**, all of which call on **Executive Function** skills.

Tip

At the end of the book, there's an historical "Afterword," which discusses the impact of Juan's discovery on his village of Mata Ortiz, transforming it from an impoverished community to a community of acclaimed artists. Share stories you know about how people have transformed communities and helped them thrive.

Skill

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.

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.**