

# Skill-Building Book Tips

## 7 Essential Life Skills

Dance into *Brontorina* in a way that highlights Taking on Challenges, a Life Skill that promotes Executive Functions. Life is full of stresses and challenges. Children who are willing to **take on challenges** (instead of avoiding them or simply coping with them) do better in school and in life.

### Tip

Brontorina knows in her heart she's a ballerina but others think she's too big and doesn't have the right shoes. Talk with your child about how Brontorina may have felt when she ran into these obstacles. Ask your child:

- "How do you think Brontorina felt when she was told she was too big to dance and she didn't have the right shoes?"
- "What does Brontorina say to Madame Lucille that convinces her to give the dinosaur a chance? What did Clara and Jack say?"

### Skill

Taking on Challenges includes **trying things that are hard, and often requires the support of others**. By asking your child how it feels to be turned down and what can be done to change people's minds, you're helping your child understand how to overcome challenges in her own life. This back-and-forth conversation 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.

### Tip

In the end, Brontorina's ballet teacher decides to meet Brontorina's needs by finding space that is big enough for her to dance. Talk with your child about how sometimes major obstacles can be overcome with a shift in thinking.

### Skill

Taking on Challenges includes **exploring options and resources to help you achieve what you want, by changing the way you think about it**. This involves cognitive flexibility, an important part of **Executive Function** skills.

### Tip

Share a story with your child about a time you decided to pursue a dream and what you had to do to achieve it. As the book says, "It all began with a dream."

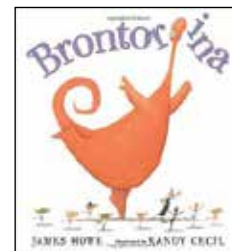
### Skill

You can be a **role model** to your child in overcoming challenges by sharing your dreams and strategies.

### Brontorina

By James Howe

Brontorina, the dinosaur, dreams of becoming a ballerina so she approaches Madame Lucille's Dance Academy. In this charming story of friendship and support, there are many challenges to face before Brontorina's dream can come true.



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](http://www.fbmarketplace.org)**