

Skill-Building Book Tips

7 Essential Life Skills

Chug, chug, chug into *The Little Engine That Could* 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

Ask your child:

- “What helped the clown and the other dolls and toys continue to seek solutions to get the train to the children, even when other engines refused to help?”

Ask your child to recall a time when things weren’t working, but he or she continued to try hard. Ask what difference that made.

Skill

Taking on Challenges includes **being able to press on, not avoiding or simply coping with difficulties**.

Tip

Ask your child how believing you can do something difficult helps make it possible to succeed.

Skill

Children learn Taking on Challenges from **examples and role models**. Children can learn from the Little Blue Engine as a role model and her saying: “I think I can—I think I can—I think I can.”

Tip

Ask your child:

- “What was the goal that the little train and the dolls and toys had?”

It’s also good to point out that the goal was very important to all of them.

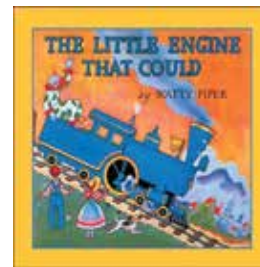
Skill

Having a goal is important to Taking on Challenges. **Executive Function** skills are driven by goals.

This book was written a long time ago and includes some stereotypes, such as the helpful train is a female train and the unhelpful trains tend to be male. Ask children what might be different in this story if it had been written today.

The Little Engine that Could By Watty Piper

The “I think I can” refrain of this classic picture book is synonymous with accomplishment and success. It originated with this book and the story of the Little Blue Engine who knew she could make it over the mountain even though she was small and inexperienced.



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**.