

# MIND in the Making

The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs

## Life Skill That Promotes Executive Function (EF): Communicating

Communicating is much more than understanding language, speaking, reading and writing. It is the skill of **determining what you want to communicate** and **realizing how our communications will be understood by others**. It is the skill that teachers and employers feel is most lacking today.

### Suggestions for Promoting Communicating for Ages 6-8

#### TIP:

When Martin Luther King, Jr. saw signs that read “WHITE ONLY,” he felt bad until he remembered the words of his mother: “You are as good as anyone.” Ask your child:

- “Why do you think these words changed the way Martin thought?”

Ask your child to recall examples where words affected him or her in powerful ways. Share with your child stories from your own experiences.

#### SKILL:

Communicating includes realizing the **power of words to change how we understand our experiences**.

#### TIP:

Martin begins to learn this from his father and makes a commitment to use “big words.” He became driven by a goal.

Ask your child how Martin’s goal of using big words to change things affected others’ views.

#### SKILL:

Communicating involves realizing the power of words to change others’ views. Martin had a goal—**Executive Function** skills are goal driven.

#### TIP:

Ask your child:

- “What actions did Martin’s words affect?”

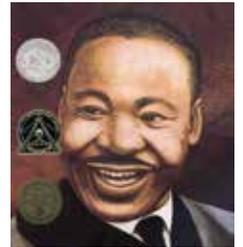
This is a great way to help your child think more deeply about what it takes to bring about changes in our world.

## Martin’s Big Words

By Doreen Rappaport

Illustrated By Bryan Collier

An inspiring introduction to an American hero, this picture biography helps readers understand how Martin Luther King, Jr. used his words to motivate others and achieve nonviolent change during troubled times.



High-quality books and educational resources from First Book supporting research-based Life Skills from *Mind in the Making* by Ellen Galinsky



Find more books and materials on the First Book Marketplace, a resource available exclusively to educators and programs serving children in need. [www.fbmarketplace.org](http://www.fbmarketplace.org).

You will notice that these tips promote two child development principles: **Serve and Return** and **Executive Function** skills.

**Serve and Return**, like a game of ball, involves a back and forth conversation between you and your child where you listen, then build on and extend what your child says or does to promote learning.

**Executive Function** skills are skills you use to manage your attention, your feelings, your thoughts and your behavior to reach your goals.

They include being able to pay attention, remember information, think flexibly and exercise self control.

Find more about *Mind in the Making* at [www.mindinthemaking.org](http://www.mindinthemaking.org).

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### Suggestions for Promoting Communicating for Ages 6-8

#### SKILL:

Communicating involves realizing the **power of words to change what others do**.

#### TIP:

In the book, there are direct quotes from Martin Luther King, Jr. Ask your child:

- “Did reading or hearing Martin’s own words feel different than reading or hearing words written about him?”

The book ends with the statement that Martin’s “big words are alive for us today.” Ask your child to think of examples where this is true.

The illustrator of this book, Bryan Collier, writes that the stained glass windows he has painted for the pages of the book tell a story—because they allow you “to look past where you are.”

Ask your child:

- “What do you think the illustrator means by this statement?”

Have your child look at and talk about the other illustrations in the book.

#### SKILL:

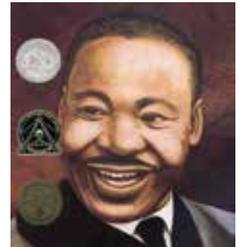
Communicating comes in many forms, from written to spoken words, from art to dance, and other forms of expression.

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