

# MIND in the Making

The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs

## Life Skill That Promotes Executive Function (EF): Perspective Taking

Perspective Taking goes far beyond empathy. It involves **figuring out what others think and feel** and forms the basis for children's understanding of the intentions of their parents, teachers and friends. Children who can take the perspectives of others are also much less likely to get involved in conflicts.

### Suggestions for Promoting Perspective Taking for Ages 3-5



#### TIP:

You can ask your child questions about the characters:

- "Why do you think Piggie doesn't like rain and Gerald the Elephant does?"



#### SKILL:

Perspective Taking includes **figuring out what others feel and think**. To do so, you have to **put aside your own feelings and thoughts**, which calls on **Executive Function** skills.



#### TIP:

Ask your child questions about the character's actions and motivations:

"How did Gerald the Elephant help Piggie? Why did he do so?"



#### SKILL:

Perspective Taking includes **understanding others**.



#### TIP:

Ask your child about what the characters learned from their experiences in the book.

You can talk with your child about how Piggie's views change:

- "Remember when Piggie first asked, 'How can anyone play outside with all of this rain?!' Then he saw the worms enjoying the rain. What did Piggie learn from the worms?"
- "Why do you think the worms were happy about the rain and Piggie wasn't?"



#### SKILL:

Perspective Taking involves the self control to **put aside your own assumptions in order to understand the viewpoints of others and how they change through experience**.



#### TIP:

The writer and illustrator of this book, Mo Willems, suggests that children can read this book like a play.



#### SKILL:

**Pretending to be different characters helps children learn to take the perspectives of others**. Children will enjoy opportunities to act out this book.

## Are You Ready to Play Outside?

By Mo Willems

In this hilarious award-winning book, Gerald (an elephant) and Piggie (a pig) think the rain has ruined their plans, until they learn that, to others, wet weather is big fun.



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).