

A group of diverse young children are sitting on the floor, engaged in play. In the foreground, a young girl with braided hair is focused on a task. To her right, another girl with blonde hair is also looking down. On the far right, a young boy with curly hair is holding a small object. The background shows other children and a blurred indoor setting. The overall scene is bright and captures a moment of active learning and play.

Executive Function: What It Is, Why It Matters, and How to Build It

Dr. Carrie S. Cutler

Collaborative for Children

with support from Workforce Solutions

New to virtual learning? Here are a few tips:

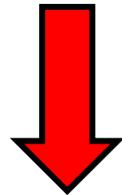
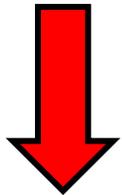
- **Mute yourself** for MOST of the session to limit background noise.
- **Stop your video** if you have to slip out for a minute.
- **Use the chat box** to ask questions. Or **speak up**. It's fine to interrupt. 😊

Have fun! Take notes on the handout!

Think of ways you can **MAKE THESE IDEAS WORK FOR YOU!**



Basics



Unmute Start Video Participants 215 Chat 13 Share Screen Record Reactions

Zoom Group Chat

To: Everyone

Type message here...



The image shows a Zoom mobile app interface with several callouts and annotations:

- Top Bar:** A speaker icon, the meeting ID "623-600-357", and a lock icon. A red arrow points to the "Leave" button with the text "Click to leave the meeting".
- Zoom Basics:** The Zoom logo and the text "Zoom Basics". A grey silhouette of a person is in the center. A message box says "Host is not in the meeting yet".
- Bottom Control Bar:**
 - Mute:** A microphone icon with the text "Mute". A red arrow points to it with the text "Mute/Unmute your microphone".
 - Start Video:** A video camera icon with a red slash. A red arrow points to it with the text "Allow Zoom to access your camera if you want to show your face in the meeting." Below this is a system dialog:

"Zoom" Would Like to Access the Camera

For people to see you during meetings, Zoom needs access to your camera.

Don't Allow OK
 - Share Content:** A share icon. A red arrow points to it with the text "Different options to share: URL, Google Drive, One Drive, etc." Below this is a system dialog:

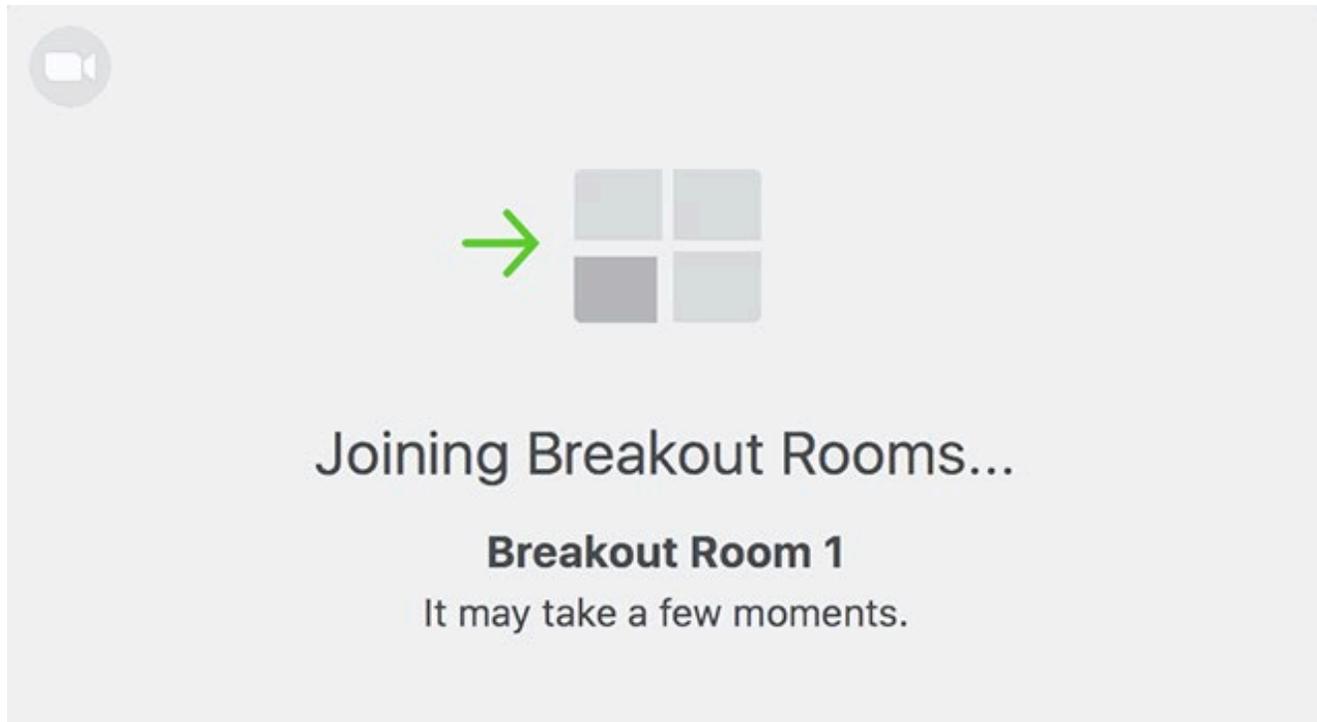
Screen

Photos

iCloud Drive

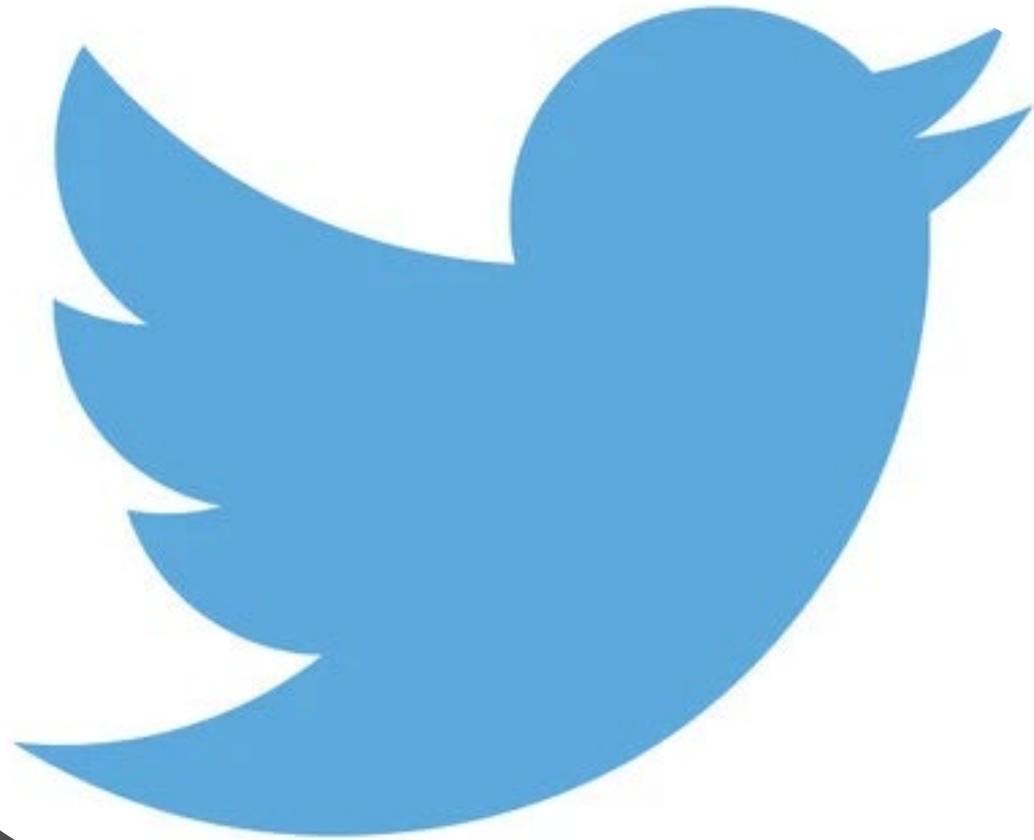
Box

Cancel
 - Participants:** A person icon. A red arrow points to it with the text "Click on Participants to see who is in the meeting, also: Raise hand, Answer yes/no, Ask the presenter to go slower/faster".
 - More:** A three-dot menu icon. A red arrow points to it with the text "Meeting Settings".
- Callouts:**
 - A "More" menu is shown with options: "Sign In as Host", "Enter Host Key to Claim Host", "Chat", "Meeting Settings", and "Cancel".
 - A "Participants (1)" window is shown with a list of participants (Diana (me)), a mute icon, and a bottom bar with options: "raise hand", "yes", "no", "go slower", "go faster", "more", "Chat", and "Invite".



We will be using Breakout Rooms, so please be attentive so you aren't left behind.

This will also help us see if attendees are present throughout the session.



If you want to Tweet
during this session, tag
@DrCarrieCutler

On a scale of Baby Yoda, how are you feeling today?



Handout



Go to www.carriecutler.com



Click on **Download Workshop Materials**



Click on **Collaborative for Children**



Print out the handout or open it in a tab you can quickly toggle to

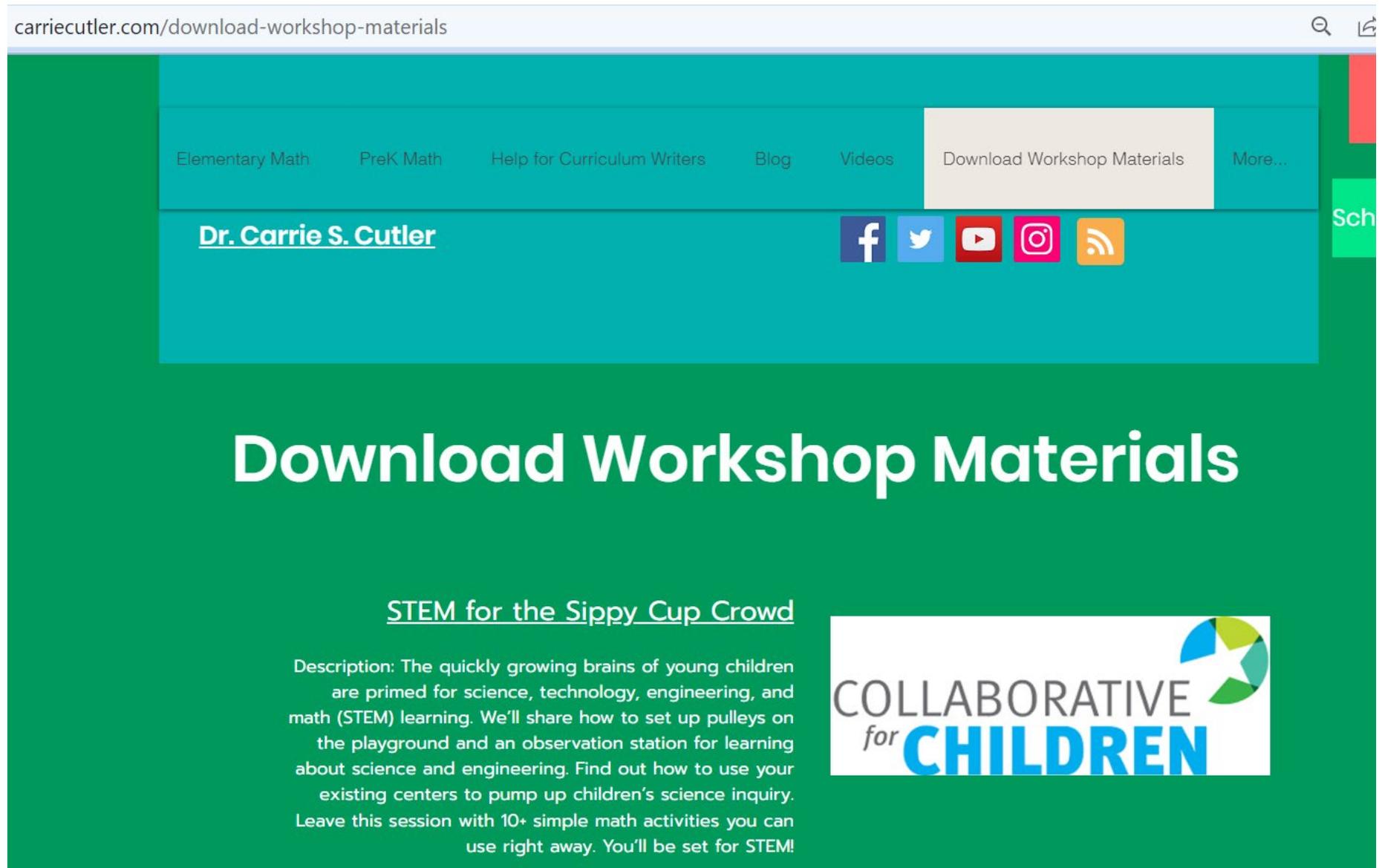


Print out or open the powerpoint (optional)



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[STEM for the Sippy Cup Crowd](#)

Description: The quickly growing brains of young children are primed for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) learning. We'll share how to set up pulleys on the playground and an observation station for learning about science and engineering. Find out how to use your existing centers to pump up children's science inquiry. Leave this session with 10+ simple math activities you can use right away. You'll be set for STEM!

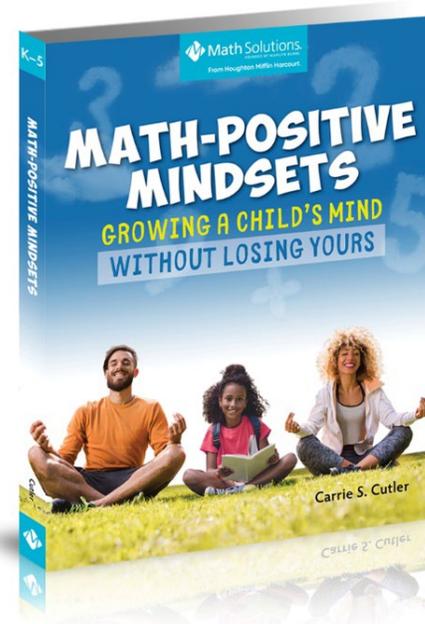
COLLABORATIVE
for **CHILDREN**



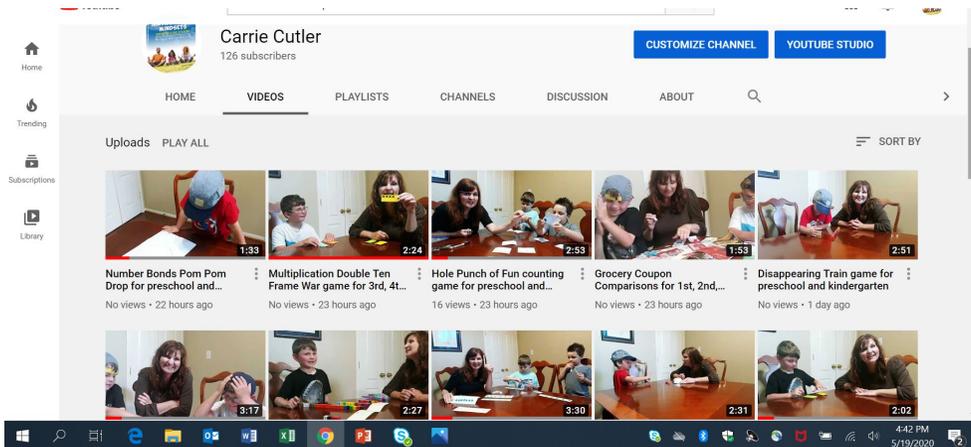
A Very Little Bit About Me



Available on Amazon!



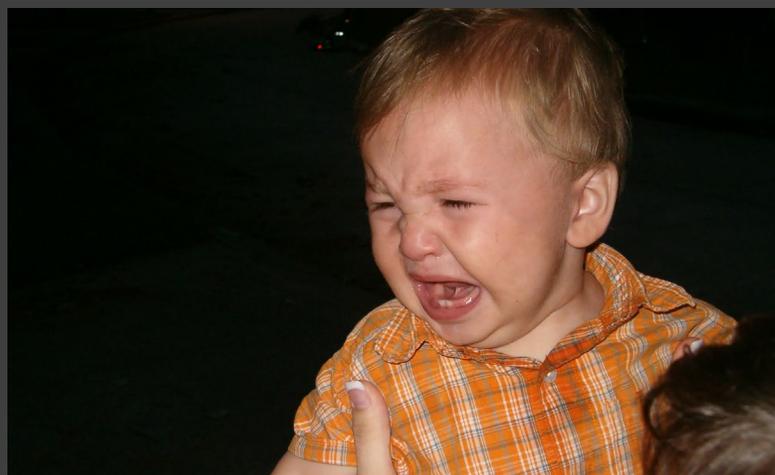
YouTube: Carrie Cutler



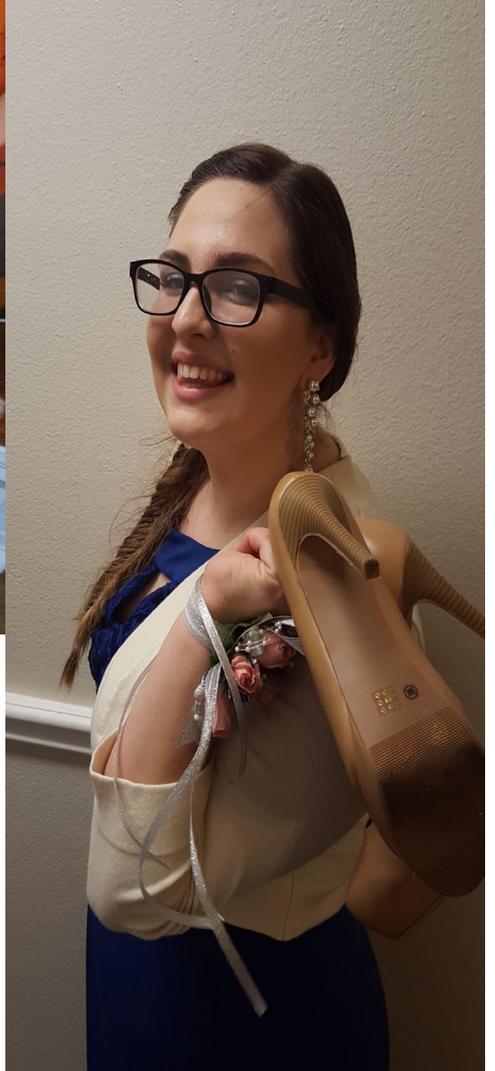
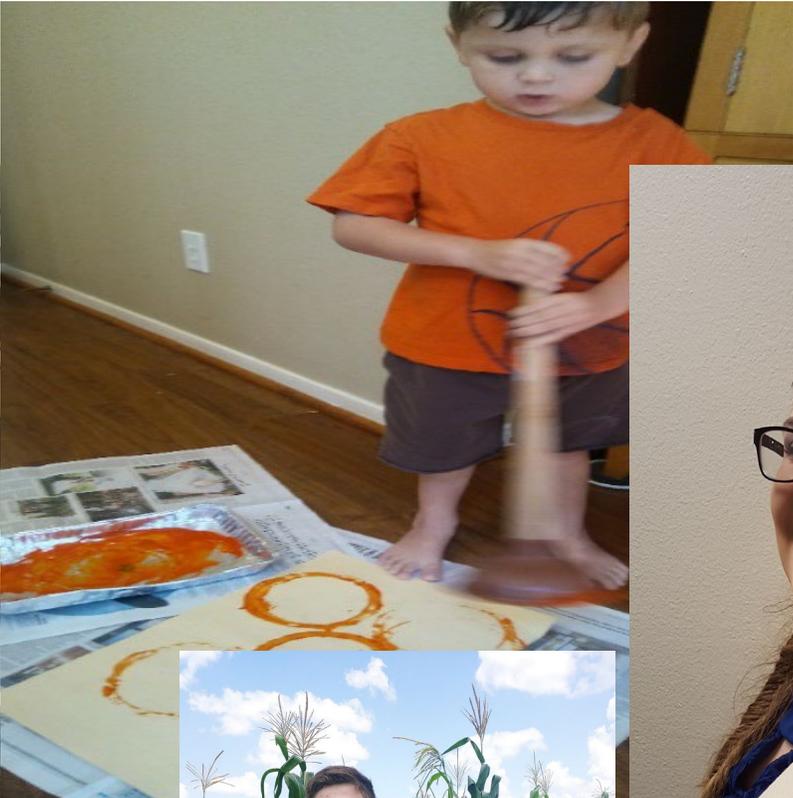
Preschool Math Ideas on www.carriecutler.com



I've Been There



Executive Function helps everyone.



What is
executive
function (EF)?

Developmental
Age and EF

11 Ways to
Build Self-
Control

More elements
of EF

Books, Games,
& Other
Resources

Agenda



Before we advance the slide,
what do you already know
about executive function?

- In the poll, put any words you think relate to executive function.
- https://PollEv.com/free_text_polls/OccpADGs_sNYkBGjHnIjhD/respond

Planning 	Organization 	Self-Control 
Task Initiation 	Executive Functioning Skills <small>www.thepathway2success.com</small>	
Time Management 	Metacognition 	Working Memory 
Attention 	Flexibility 	Perseverance 

Clipart by Kate Hadfield

WHAT IS EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING?

IMAGE CREDIT
[HTTPS://WWW.THEPATHWAY2SUCCESS.COM/EXECUTIVE-FUNCTIONING-SKILLS/](https://www.thepathway2success.com/executive-functioning-skills/)



Executive Function refers to

- the higher-level cognitive skills you use to control and coordinate your other cognitive abilities and behaviors.
- How we organize our lives, how we plan and how we then execute those plans is largely guided by our executive system.

Business Roots



- The term is a business metaphor, suggesting that your executive functions are akin to the chief executive.
- It monitors all the different departments so that the company can move forward as efficiently and effectively as possible.



Write down the name of a child you want to support.

Throughout the session jot down tips and games that fit this child's needs.

Two Elements of Executive Function

- *Organization* includes gathering information and structuring it for evaluation.
- *Regulation* involves evaluating the available information and modulating your responses to the environment.



Jamboards & Breakout Rooms

- Don't go to your breakout room yet.
 - Just look to see what room you'll be in.
 - Open the Jamboard link for your room. Does the link work?
 - Now click the button to take yourself to your breakout room. Work together on the task.
 - We'll meet back here in 5-7 minutes.
-
- Group 1
<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1IW177AsQd741gkTaUWQuUBLcbNuuQRiExis8OoajODI/edit?usp=sharing>
 - Group 2
<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1XduUaf6bPZR6esbnSdbu9XbsXqxZDPhc3d0N9S7OHs/edit?usp=sharing>
 - Group 3
<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1qaf6BciYofwVH17c2DFJmWm1gjWTOHWGl11Ox4eNN4Q/edit?usp=sharing>

Jamboard & Breakout Rooms Activity

Does the behavior fall under
organization or **regulation**?

- A. Initiation of action
- B. Self-control
- C. Controlling emotions
- D. Working memory
- E. Cognitive flexibility
- F. Abstract thinking

- Organization

- Regulation

Does the behavior fall under organization or regulation?

- A. Moral Reasoning
- B. Attention
- C. Planning
- D. Decision Making
- E. Sequencing
- F. Initiating And Inhibiting Context-specific Behavior

- Organization

- Regulation



Organization

- Attention
- Planning
- Sequencing
- Problem-solving
- Working Memory
- Cognitive Flexibility
- Abstract Thinking
- Rule Acquisition
- Selecting Relevant Sensory Information

Regulation



- Initiation of Action
- Self-control
- Emotional Regulation
- Monitoring Internal and External Stimuli
- Initiating and Inhibiting Context-specific Behavior
- Moral Reasoning
- Decision-making



Hop into your breakout group to talk about the video for a few minutes.



Brain Connections

The frontal lobes are the last areas of the brain to fully develop.

This area of the brain was evolutionarily late to appear and is much larger in human beings than in our closest nonhuman primate relatives.

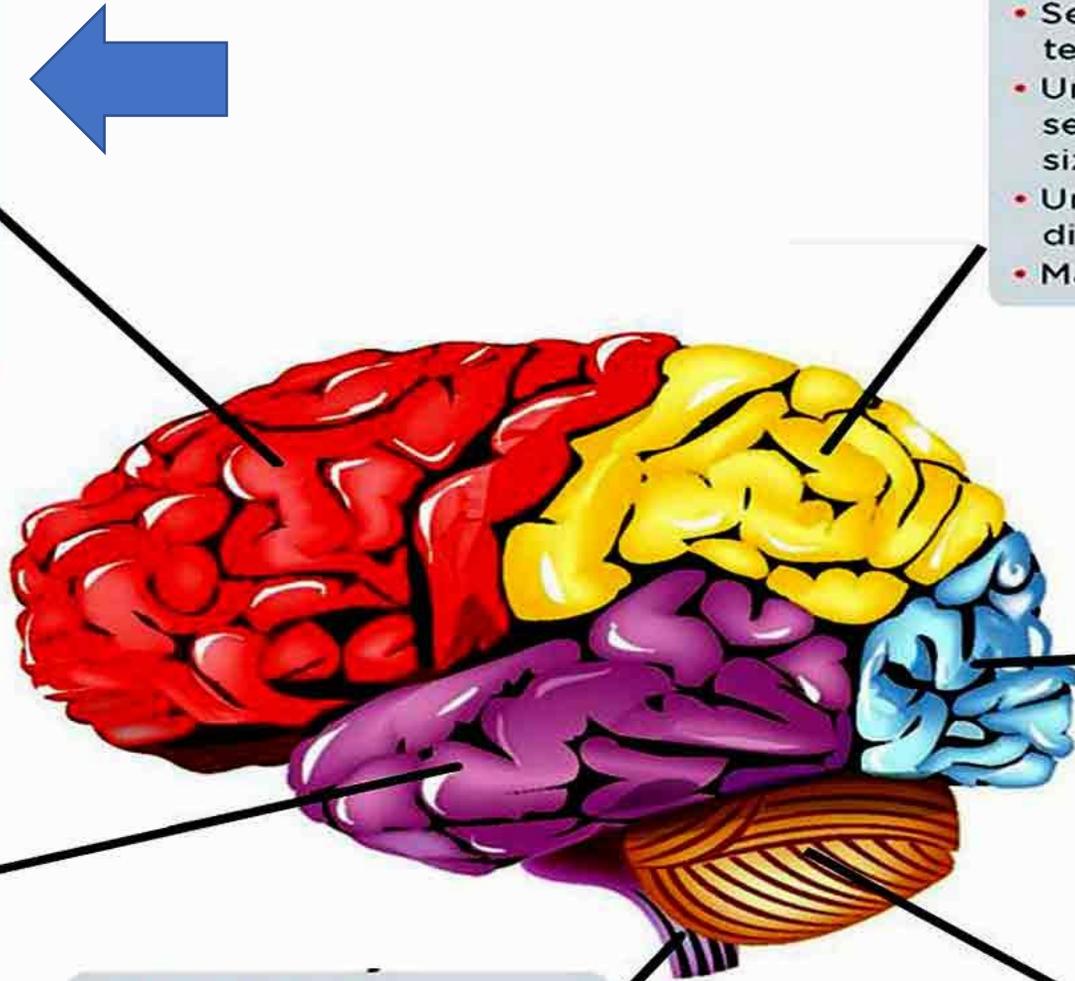
The frontal lobes typically account for about 40% of the human brain.

Frontal

- Personality
- Emotions and arousal
- Intelligence
- Ability to concentrate, make decisions, plan, put things in order, solve problems
- Awareness of what is around you
- Voluntary movement
- Ability to speak and write
- Behaviour control

Parietal

- Sensations: pain, touch, temperature
- Understanding and interpreting sensory information, such as size, colour and shape
- Understanding space and distance
- Math calculations



Occipital

- Vision
- Interpreting what you see

Temporal

- Ability to understand language
- Hearing
- Memory, long-term storage of memories
- Organization and planning
- Behaviour and emotions

Brain stem

- Breathing
- Heart rate control
- Consciousness, alertness, wakefulness
- Swallowing
- Blood pressure
- Sweating

Cerebellum

- Balance
- Motor (movement) coordination
- Posture
- Fine motor skills

IF THE BUM
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\$ Move

No One Is Born with Executive Function Skills, but Nearly Everyone Can Learn Them.



Our genes provide the blueprint for learning these skills, but they develop through *experiences and practice.*

Developmental Ages and Stages





Early Foundations—Infancy

The foundation is laid in infancy, when babies first learn to pay attention.

Responsiveness in Infancy



- Relationships with responsive caregivers are important.
- Something as simple as playing a game of **peekaboo** can help build the early foundations of **working memory and self-control** as baby anticipates the surprise.



Consistency

- Infants also begin to regulate their waking and sleeping cycles when caregivers provide a consistent environment for this.



The Toddler Years



As you scan the next slide, just focus on the TODDLER column. Note what the skill “looks like” in the classroom.

Table 1. Executive Function in Early Development

Executive Function	Executive Skills	Older Toddlers (ages 2-3)	Preschoolers (ages 3-5)
Emotional Control: Managing emotions in order to achieve goals, complete tasks, or control and direct behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staying calm Coping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbally expresses wants and needs to adults Allows adults to help them calm down when upset 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepts and responds to “no” from the teacher Accepts disappointment in a short time Uses non-aggressive solutions when faced with conflict in group of children without becoming overly excited
Cognitive Flexibility: The mental ability to switch between different concepts; to think about multiple concepts simultaneously	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creativity Flexible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds appropriately to changes in routines/structures with close adult support Engages in novel activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjusts to changes in plans or routines with some warning Begins to connect concepts that are not directly related based on personal experience
Goal-directed persistence: The capacity to have a goal, follow through to the completion of the goal, and not be put off by or distracted by competing interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working through the hard part of a task or activity Not quitting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows adults to guide them in activities from start to finish without resistance Tries to achieve a goal at least once without frustration Asks for help from others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tries independently to solve a problem or achieve a goal more than once, with minimal frustration Asks for help from others
Metacognition: The ability to stand back and take a birds-eye view of oneself in a situation. It is an ability of an individual to observe their own use of problem solving. It also includes self-monitoring and self-evaluative skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-monitoring Self-reflecting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will have brief conversations (1-2 turns) with adults about what is happening in the present moment Listens to adults as they briefly describe their own behaviors and emotional states 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes minor adjustments to the strategy being used to solve a problem Engages in some self-talk about their own actions Can briefly describe to others how they are solving a problem Can briefly describe their emotional states

Executive Function	Executive Skills	Older Toddlers (ages 2-3)	Preschoolers (ages 3-5)
<p>Task initiation: The ability to begin projects without procrastination, in an efficient or timely fashion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting started 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins simple task with close adult supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows an adult direction immediately after being given, even during a preferred activity
<p>Time management: The capacity to estimate how much time one has, how to allocate it, and how to stay within time limits and deadlines. It also involves a sense that time is important.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Done on-time, Remembering the schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to adult guidance to complete an action at the appropriate pace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completes daily routines (with cues) Can complete tasks more quickly when prompted Finishes a small chore within a time-limit
<p>Working memory: The ability to hold information in memory while performing complex tasks. It incorporates the ability to draw on past learning or experience to apply to the situation at hand or to project into the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember and use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows the instruction just given by an adult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can follow the steps of a routine with only one prompt Can complete a simple errand

Executive Function	Executive Skills	Older Toddlers (ages 2-3)	Preschoolers (ages 3-5)
<p>Organization: The ability to create and maintain systems to keep track of information or materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning-up/ setting-up for later • Labeling • Sorting • Matching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participates in putting things in their proper place with adult support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts things in appropriate places, with reminders • Creates own organization system if one is not obvious (e.g., sorting items, putting objects away)
<p>Planning/prioritization: The ability to plan how to reach a goal or to complete a task. It also involves being able to make decisions about what's important to focus on and what's not important.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning (visually and verbally) • Figuring out where to start and how to finish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participates in simple planning with adult guidance • Participates in completing steps of a task or project with adult support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes simple plans with a beginning, middle, and ending with some independence • Can follow-through with plan with minimal adult guidance • Can identify the end-goal of the activity
<p>Response inhibition: The capacity to think before engaging in an action—the ability to resist the urge to say or do something</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiting • Thinking first 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can withhold responding for a few seconds if closely monitored by an adult • Responds to “first, then” presentation of tasks, when supported by an adult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks before taking things • Waits for turn when in group activities
<p>Sustained attention: The capacity to maintain attention to a situation or task in spite of distractibility, fatigue, or boredom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing • Listening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefly attends to adult-directed activities or instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independently completes simple assignment, task, or chore • Attends to others in a short activity (e.g., small-group or circle) • Listens to adult or peer read a short book

3 Tips for Toddlers

Caregivers can support toddlers' executive function by:

- a. providing simple cause and effect reasoning for desired behaviors
- b. using suggestions rather than commands
- c. using language to assist self-control

Use the chat. What phrases can you use for each item above?

Example: *"I bet that hurt your feelings."*

Breakout Rooms: Scaffolding with Infants & Toddlers

- Read through the scenario and talk about it with your group.
- Which executive function or skill do you recognize?
- What does the teacher do to support the infant or toddler's executive function?





Dramatic Play builds Executive Function

Ages 2-6: The “High Season” of Imaginative Play

Synchrony between the flourishing of make-believe play and self-regulation is no coincidence.
Here are 3 big ideas.

1. Creating imaginary scenes using substitute objects helps kids distinguish internal ideas from concrete reality.
 - When children use a cup for a hat or a block for a phone, they change an object’s usual meaning, thereby detaching mental symbols from the real objects and actions to which they refer.
 - Through playful substitutions, children rely on thought rather than impulse to guide their actions.





Playful Substitutions

- Popsicle stick become spoon to feed doll
- Child will initially use an empty container but not a piece of paper as a teacup.
- What other playful substitutions have you seen your kids use?

Imaginative Play Builds Executive Function

2. Pretend play has its own social rules.

- In fantasy play, young children willingly place constraints on their own actions.
- When they follow the rules of serving a meal, caring for a sick doll, or launching a spaceship, they're defining what's appropriate to do and say.



Imaginative Play Builds Executive Function

3. When adults offer gentle guidance and support during children's play, children learn to negotiate the messy and sometimes unpredictable circumstances they face. Managing strong emotions, understanding others' emotions, and learning to trust and ask for help are valuable life skills formed through the interactions that play supports.





The Case for Play

- Increasing numbers of U.S. young children are being deprived of play in favor of narrowly focused academic training in their homes, preschools, and kindergartens. At the same time, many children, especially those from low-SES families, enter kindergarten with self-regulation problems that pose long-term threats to academic success. A serious consequence of prematurely concluding that make-believe play is epiphenomenal is that development-enhancing play experiences will be further diminished in children's lives.
- Early childhood programs that elevate academic training at the expense of play have been found to dampen motivation to learn and diminish regulation of attention and behavior, especially among low-SES children. Until evidence indicates otherwise, returning play, including make-believe play, to center-stage in the curriculum is a crucial step toward restoring developmentally appropriate experiences to children's classrooms and to their home lives, as parents look to educators for models and advice on development-enhancing learning activities.

IF THE BUM
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GET UP
\$ Move



11 Ways to Support Focus and Self-Control

How can we
promote the
life skill of
focus and self
control in
young
children?

- You don't need extra time or supplies to weave these skills into everyday classroom activities.
- Children learn these skills best not by sitting in chairs, but by being active, engaged, and having fun!
- Here are 11 [playful suggestions](#) for promoting focus and self control.

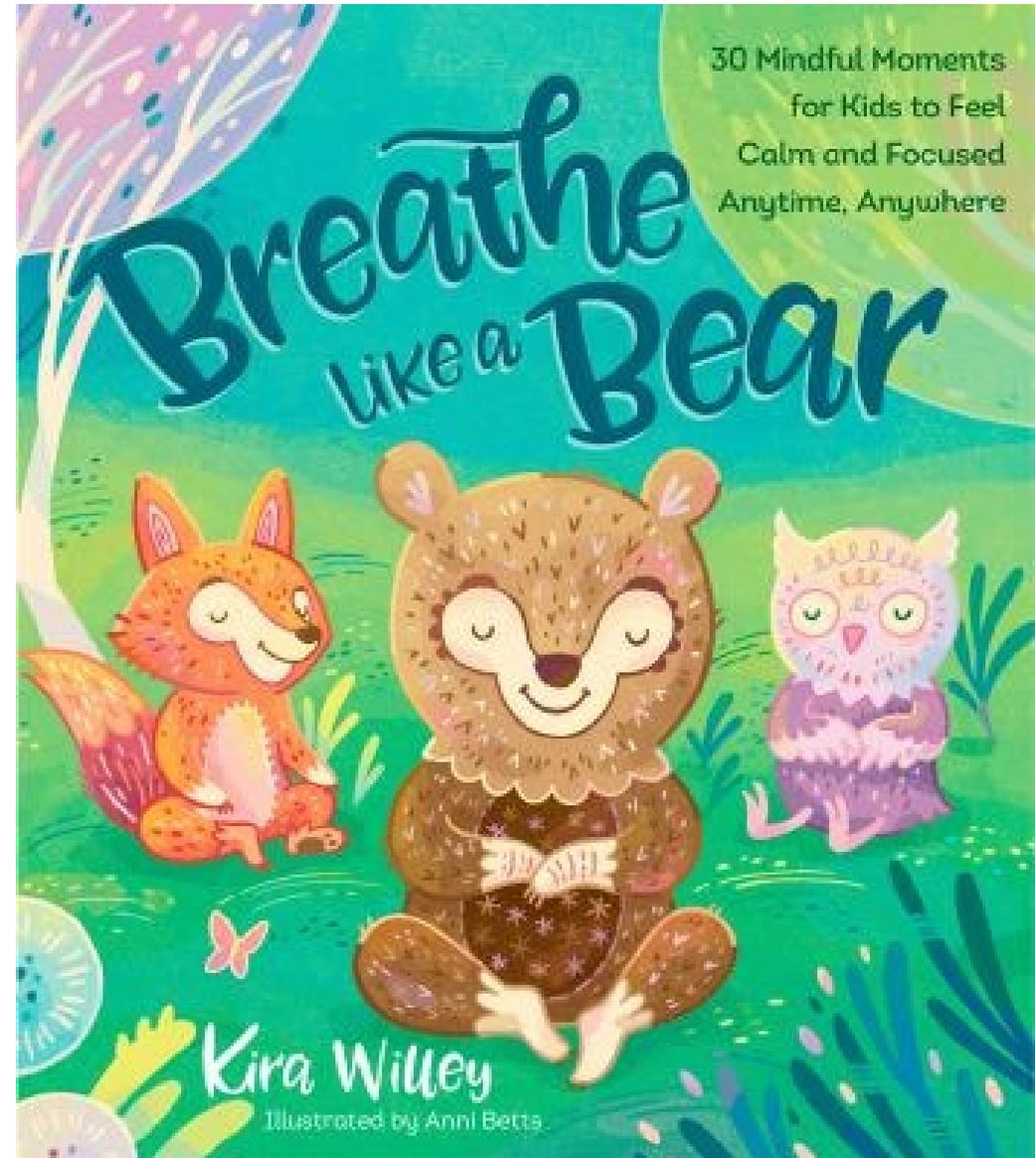


1. Promote the children's self-generated strategies for bringing themselves under control.

- Notice what children already do to manage their behavior, like moving to another space when there is too much noise.
- Encourage this strategy by creating special quiet spaces where children can calm down.

2. Help children think of ideas for bringing themselves under control.

- Have a meeting with children, inviting them to think of strategies they can use when they are frustrated or angry to manage these feelings.
- Write the ideas down and remind children about them at times when they need to use self control.



Helicopter Breathing

Children's Literature Connection:

Breathe Like a Bear
by Kira Willey

- Stand up straight.
- Hold pointer fingers straight up.
- Move fingers and arms up in a swirling motion, making the sound “Ch-ch-ch-.”
- Exhale one long “Chhhhhh---” while bringing the hands down to the sides and crouching to the floor.
- Repeat until calm.

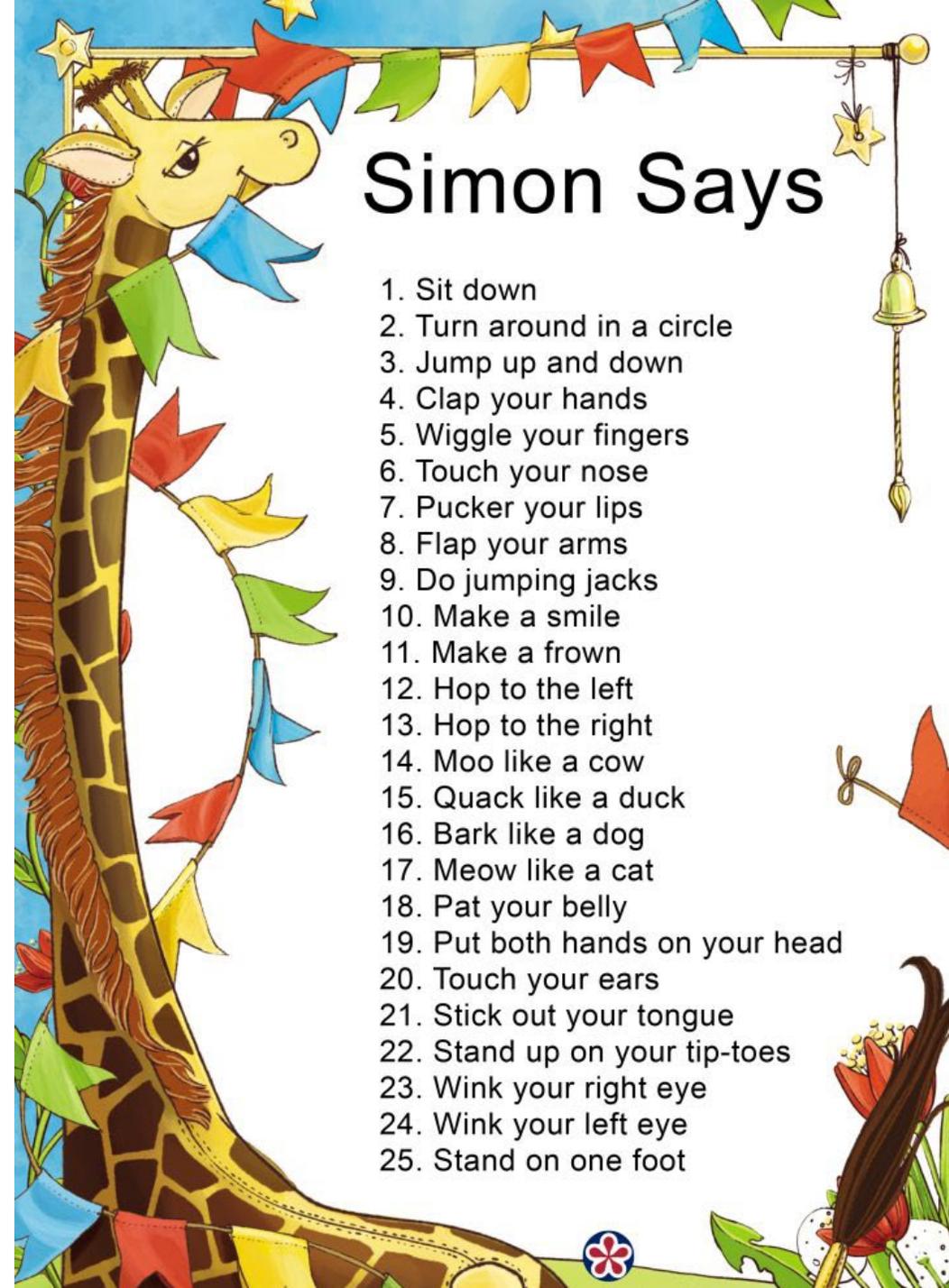
Coordination of the three discrete parts of this practice--breath, movement, and the audible “ch-ch-ch” expression--focus the child's energy and mind on the moment and center the child in the body. Children can experience the release of emotion as they verbalize the “ch-ch-ch” sound with vigor.

TEACHERS CAN ASK:

Do you notice a difference in how calm you feel? How does breathing in a different way make your body feel?

3. Play games that have rules.

- Simon Says is an excellent example of a game that requires children to focus, remember rules, think flexibly, and control their behavior to do what Simon says.
- To make this game more challenging, play Simon Says Do the Opposite. For instance, when you say, “Touch your toes,” children should touch their heads.



4. Play games that require children to pay attention.

- Play rhyming games, like “I am thinking of an animal with a name that sounds like pat.”
- Play word games, like “I am a fruit, and I start with the letter R. What am I?”
- These games ask children to listen and focus, think flexibly, and use what they already know to come up with ideas.

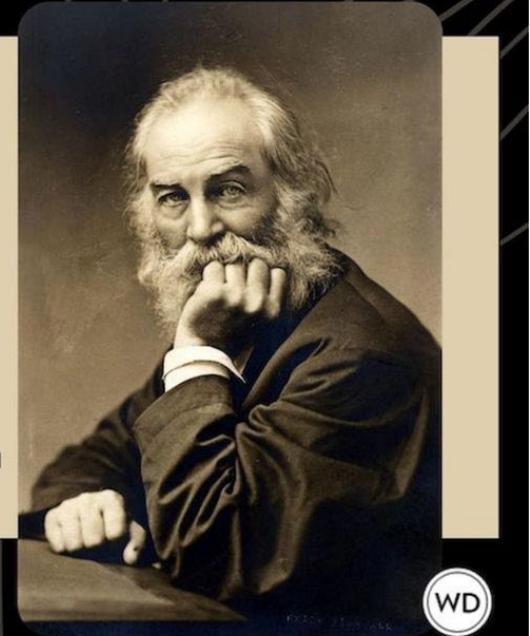


5. Read stories in ways that encourage children to listen.

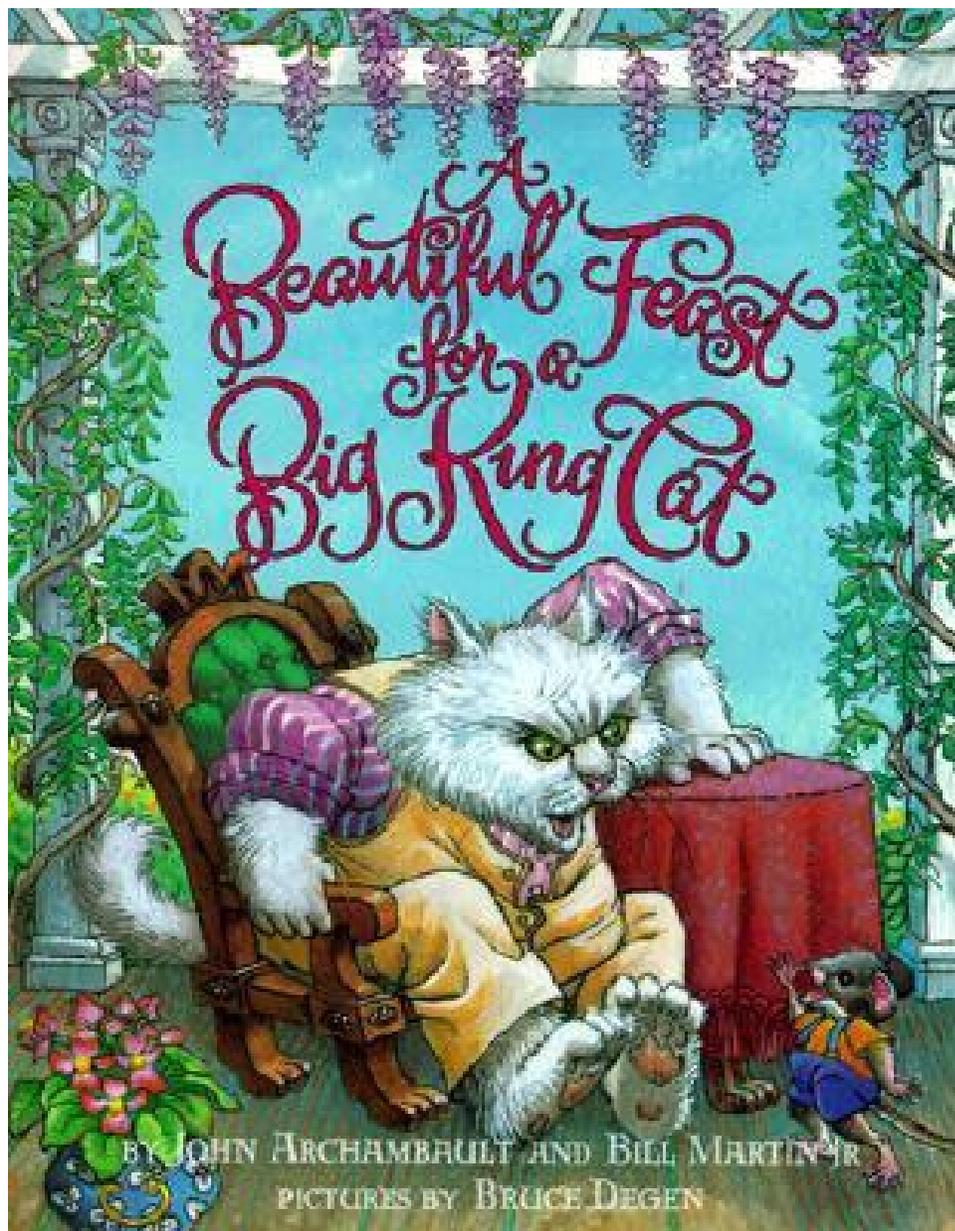
- When reading a familiar story or singing a favorite song, stop and ask children to finish the sentence or verse. Do they remember what comes next?
- Try singing different words to a song, like “Row, row, row your chair” instead of “Row your boat.” Do the children notice? Do they correct you?

"What anaphora does to the reader is get them used to a certain refrain and structure in a sentence so that we begin to anticipate it. Then, when the writer breaks the pattern, the reader is surprised and begins to pay more attention to what comes next."

—AARON BAUER



What are
your favorite
read alouds
that kids “fill
in the
blanks” on?



6. Play *sorting games* with changing rules.

- Use cleanup time to encourage children to focus, remember rules, and think flexibly. Invite children to put away toys and supplies by type and return them to their proper homes.
- Try switching up the rules too—ask children to sort toys first by size or color, and then sort them back to where they belong.



Clean Up Sorting Song

- Let's pick up the **blue** toys, the blue toys, the blue toys.
- Yes, let's pick up the blue toys. Let's put them away.

- Let's pick up the **crayons**, the crayons, the crayons.
- Yes, let's pick up the crayons. Let's put them away.

- Can you find a **square**, a square, a square?
- Oh, can you find a square and put it away?



7. Have children set goals or make plans, follow those plans, and then discuss what they accomplished.

- At playtime, have children make “play plans.”
 - What area of the room will they play in first, and what will they do there?
- They can draw a picture of their plan or use picture cards.
- Later, talk together about what worked, what didn't work, and what to try next time.

8. Giving Choices

Preschool-age children are increasingly capable of voluntary control of their emotions, their peer interaction, and their problem-solving activities.

Teachers can:

- give choices among social and learning activities
- support complex dramatic play
- encourage independent problem solving





Encourage independent problem solving. Don't rescue too quickly.

NORTH PARK
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



The Story of Tyler

Getting Comfortable with Offering Choices

1

Start small.

2

Offer only choices that are acceptable to you. There should be many “right” choices.

3

Give child time to choose.

4

Recognize that doing this is a best practice. Way to go!

9. Help children find and use strategies to delay gratification.

Children need tools to help them manage their behavior while waiting.

—like singing a favorite song, thinking about fun things, or playing I Spy or the ABC game with a friend—

Model too. Children learn from what they hear you say!

“I really want that my snack now, but I am going to wait until after lunch.”

“This line is really long, and we have been waiting for such a long time. I just need to be patient.”

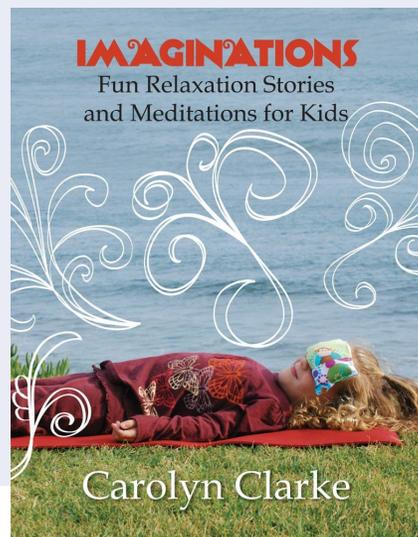
Guided Meditation & Body Scan

Children's Literature

Connection:

*Imaginations: Fun
Relaxation Stories and
Meditations for Kids* by
Carolyn Clarke

- Draw children's attention to parts of the body, instructing them to tense each part for two to three seconds and then relax with an exhale.
- Lastly tense and relax the entire body with an exhale.

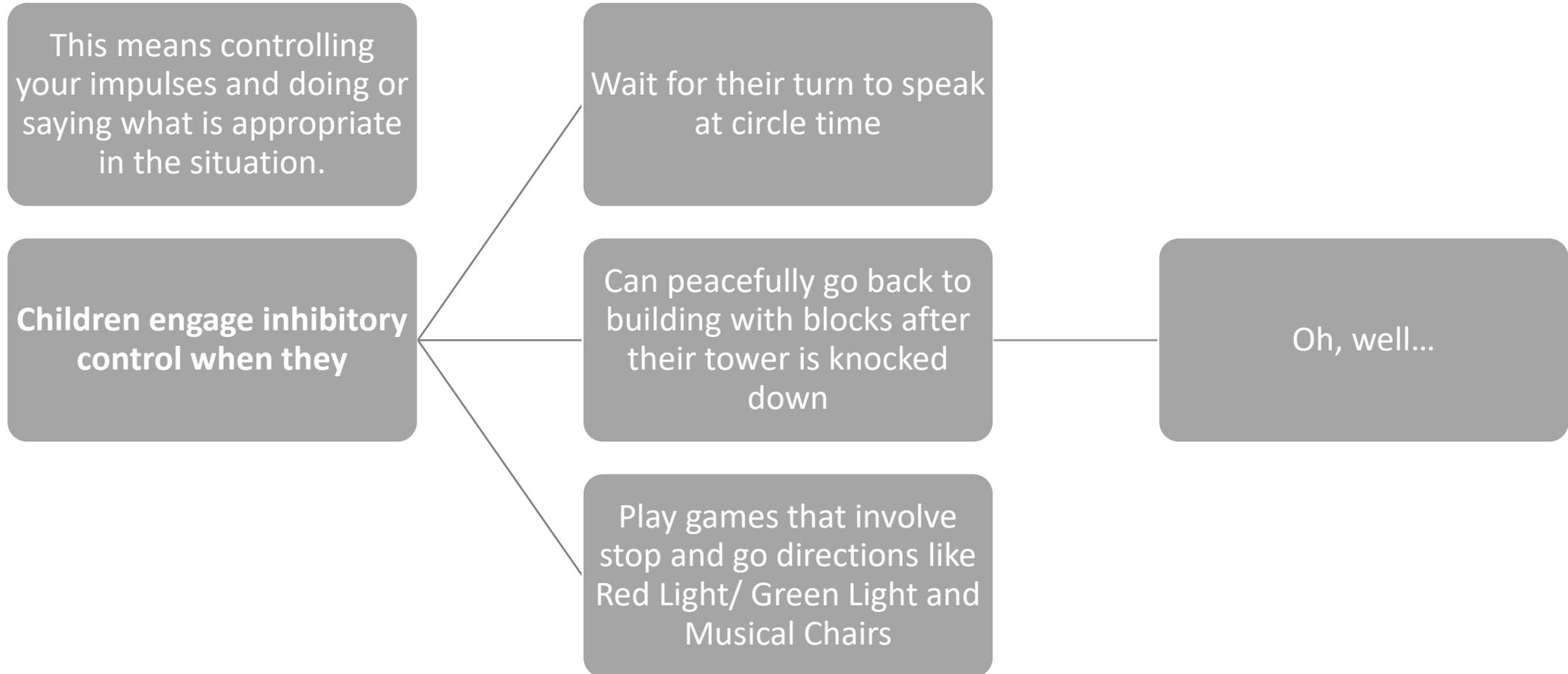


Progressive muscle relaxation focuses the mind on specific parts of the child's body, creating body awareness. Children learn to recognize the difference between tension and relaxation and can identify it in their own bodies in times of stress.

TEACHERS CAN ASK:

Is it easy to feel all the parts of the body? Which parts are hard to feel? How did it feel to relax on the floor? Is it hard or easy to be still?

10. Reinforce inhibitory control.



Freeze Dance



11. Practice cognitive inhibitory control—or avoiding automatic responses.

- Consider the teacher who asks her class what bears eat and hears children shouting, “Leaves!” because she just taught them about a deer’s diet.
- Teachers can help children practice cognitive inhibitory control by reminding them to pause and carefully consider their responses before calling out.
- Thumbs Under Chins





Supporting dual language learners

- Dual language learners have to work harder than monolingual children to learn focus and self control because they are learning to listen, think, and communicate in more than one language.
- Many experts believe this extra effort strengthens the skills of focus and self control for bilingual people when they are supported early in life.
- Make sure the environment is not so noisy that DLLs have a hard time hearing and learning new speech sounds in English.
- Small groups, individual play with materials that respond to an individual child's interests, and a quiet area are all elements of an environment that supports DLLs as they focus on learning and on learning a new language.

IF THE BUM
IS NUMB,
THE BRAIN IS
TOO.

GET UP
\$ Move

Other areas of EF

Working Memory

Cognitive Flexibility

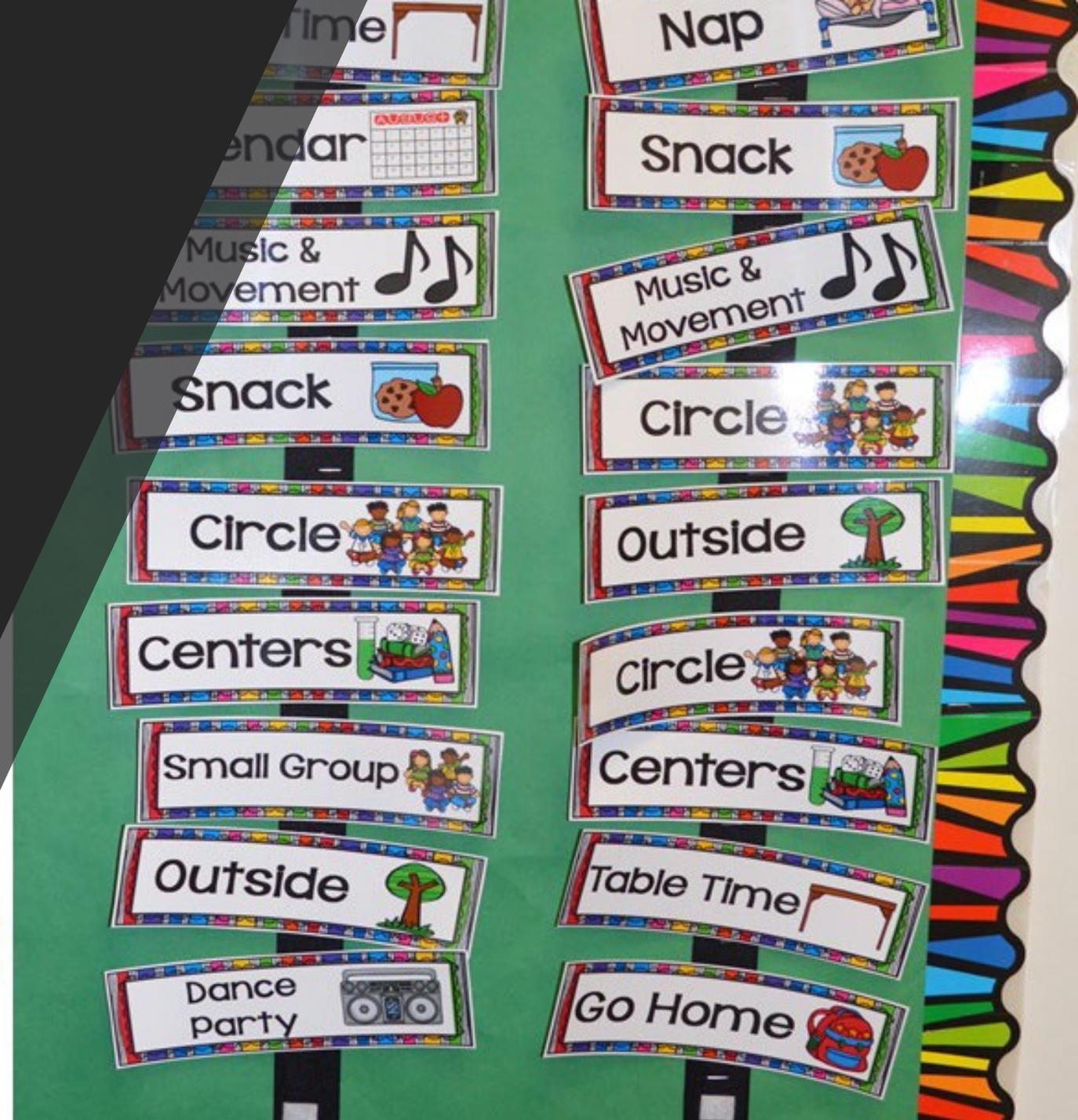
Staying Focused on
a Goal

Following Multi-
step Directions

Supporting Late
Bloomers and Kids
with Learning
Differences

Working memory

- Holding information in your mind while also using the information to make connections between what you already know and new experiences or ideas.
- Children use their working memory when they
 - Sing along to a familiar song
 - Remember and follow the schedule of the day
 - Make a prediction about what will happen next in a story



Working Memory Games

- *Picnic Time.* Tell child 3 things to collect for a picnic. Have them collect the items (or pictures of items) and bring them to a picnic rug.
- Memory and other matching games.
- Word list games. “I went to the shop/zoo/beach and I saw....”.



Working Memory Games

- *Get the Loot.* Pretend to be pirates. Set up two pirate ships with pictures of items for the 'loot.' Tell child 2 things to take from the other pirate ship. Child repeats the things they need to get 3 times before they get it. Slowly increase the number of items.



Cognitive flexibility

- When you switch your attention from one situation to another, follow a new set of rules, or adjust your priorities as things change, you are using cognitive flexibility.
- **Children think flexibly when they**
 - Take on different characters and roles in dramatic play
 - Adjust to transitions throughout the day
 - Play games where they work on opposites, like dancing slowly to fast music and then dancing fast to slow music





Staying focused on a goal

- Focusing is more than just paying attention. True focus means being alert and engaged and knowing where to direct your attention despite distractions.
- **Children use their ability to focus when they**
 - Play games that involve paying attention to details, like I Spy
 - Put away their backpack and lunch boxes
 - Use scissors, a paintbrush, or another tool in art experiences

Following multi-step instructions

Following 3-Step Directions

Instructions: Cut out these strips and tell the child one set of directions while showing him the pictures. Have him follow the directions. Start by letting him take the strips with him while he does the directions, then, have him do it later for memory or without the pictures at all.



Go to the light switch, turn it off, and come sit back down.



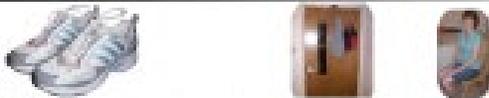
Raise your hand, wait until I say your name, then ask a question.



Stand up, push in your chair, and line up at the door.



Fold a paper, throw it away, and come sit back down.



Take off your shoes, put them by the door, and sit in a chair.

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- Tell the child the 3-step direction out loud (without the visual present).
- Show the pictures.
- Say the 3-step direction again while they're looking at the directions.
- Then, have them follow the steps.
- If they need to use the visual aid for completing the task, that's fine! But try to fade the visuals back as quickly as possible.

ACCENTUATE
THE
Positive
ELIMINATE THE NEGATIVE
latch on to the
AFFIRMATIVE
& DON'T MESS WITH
MISTER IN BETWEEN

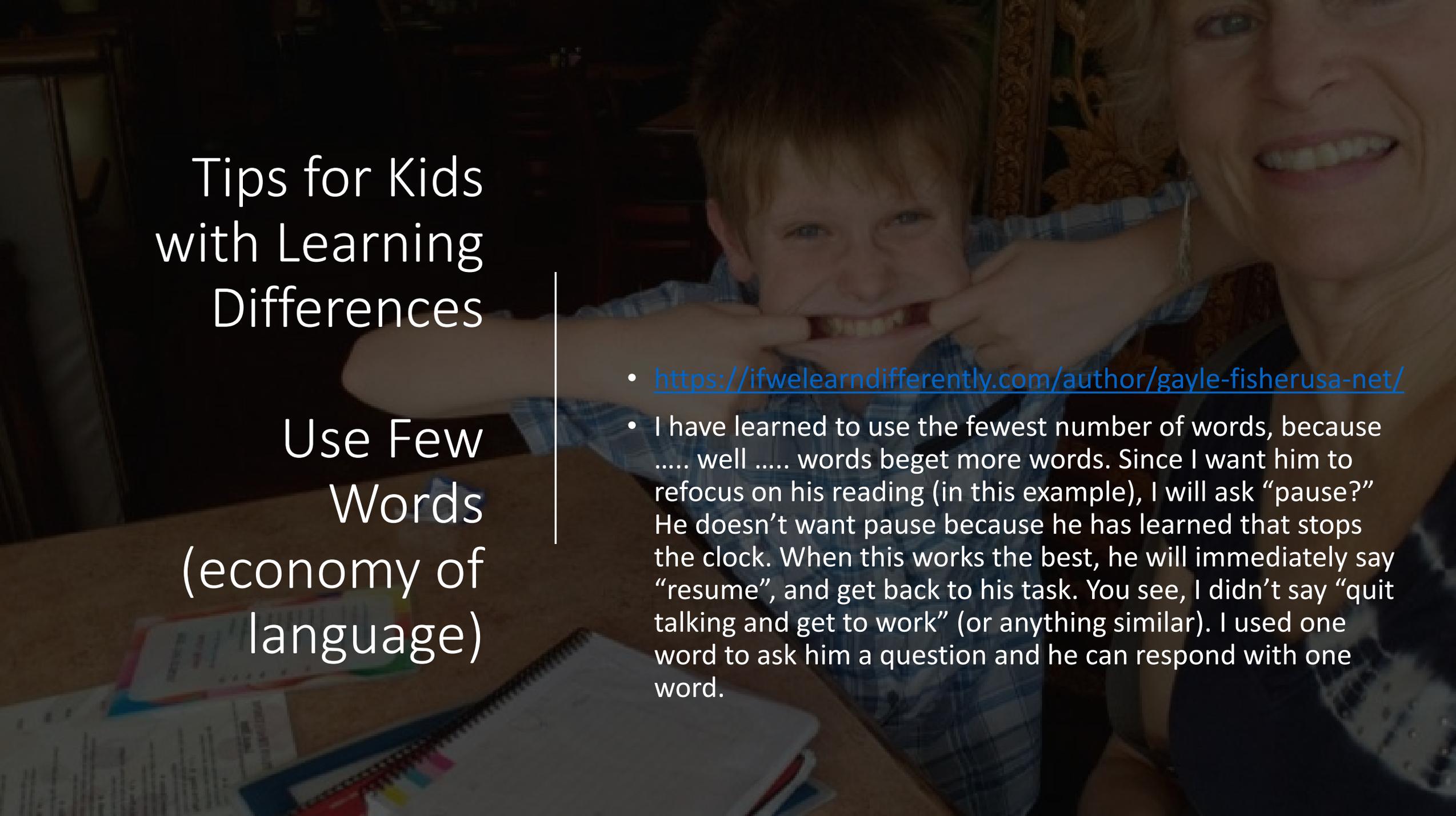
Tips for Kids with Learning Differences

- Catch the brain off guard and reboot it. Sing! Wiggle! Tell a joke! Then your child will be back with you.



Tips for Kids with Learning Differences

- Buddy up.
 - “Watch the girls.”
 - Peer modeling doesn’t work if the teacher takes over all the executive function spaces.

A woman with blonde hair is smiling and pointing her finger towards a young boy with blonde hair. The boy is also smiling and pointing his finger towards a book on a desk. The background is slightly blurred, showing a desk with papers and a spiral notebook.

Tips for Kids with Learning Differences

Use Few
Words
(economy of
language)

- <https://ifwelearndifferently.com/author/gayle-fisherusa-net/>
- I have learned to use the fewest number of words, because well words beget more words. Since I want him to refocus on his reading (in this example), I will ask “pause?” He doesn’t want pause because he has learned that stops the clock. When this works the best, he will immediately say “resume”, and get back to his task. You see, I didn’t say “quit talking and get to work” (or anything similar). I used one word to ask him a question and he can respond with one word.

“Water the Flowers, Not the Weeds”



Don't reinforce negative,
attention-seeking
behavior.

“That’s an outdoor voice. We use that outside.”

“That’s distracting when you hum loudly. We do that at recess.”

“First You Name It, Then You Limit It”

(or Put the Boundaries On It)

Tips for Kids with Learning Differences

- Use humor to help diffuse situations. Humor, not sarcasm or put downs.
- Use humor to help child build self-control.
- Use humor to humanize.





Tips for Kids with Learning Differences

Gradual Release

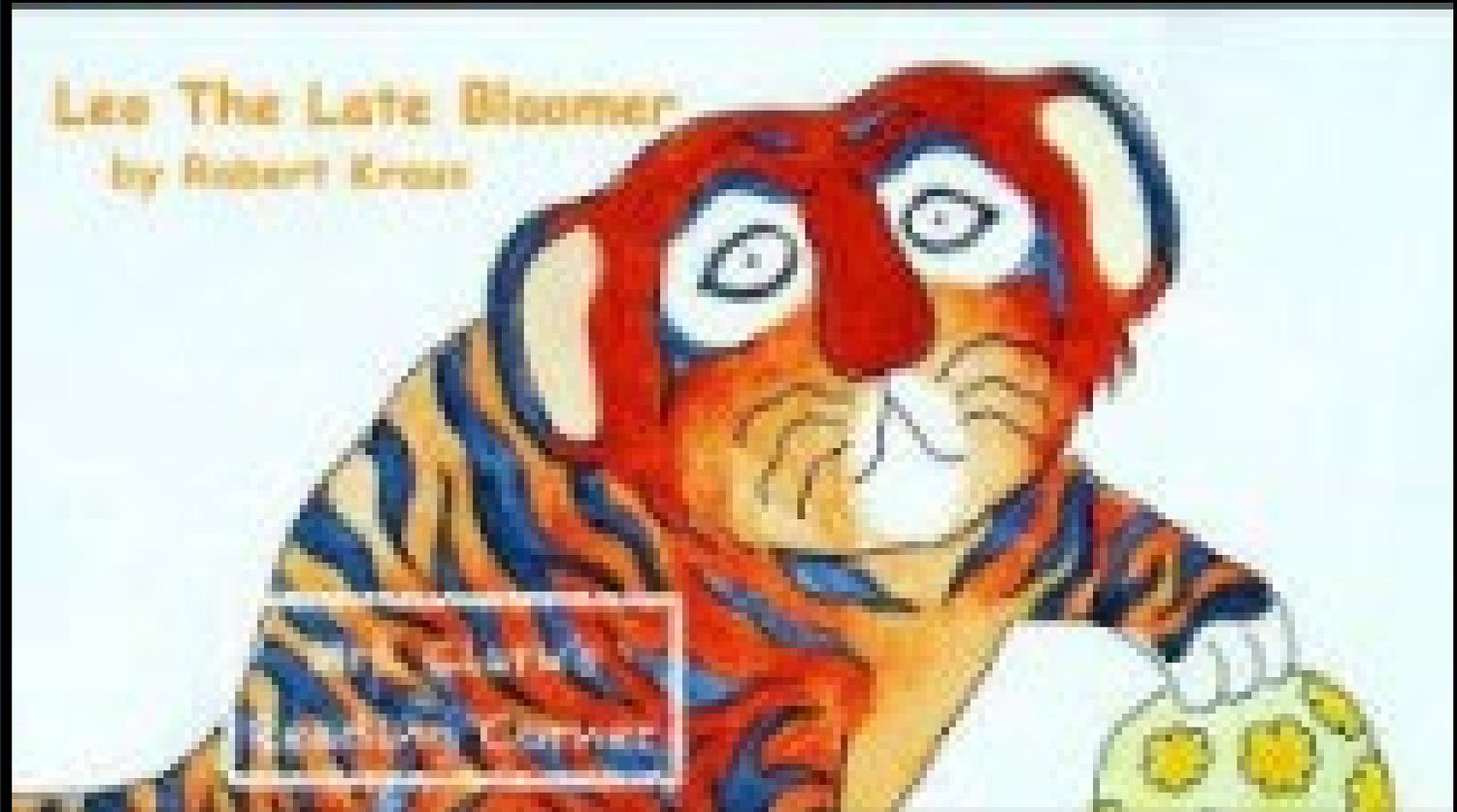
With your support, children will gradually manage more and more aspects of their environment, and that makes life easier for everyone!

Children are moving along a continuum of development.

How can we hasten development when it is needed and honor the pace of “slow developers” of certain skills?

Leo the Late Bloomer

by Robert Kraus
and José Aruego



- In this book, Leo the tiger does not read, does not write, does not even speak. His father is frustrated and concerned, but Leo's mother simply asks for patience. Eventually, over time, Leo does learn to read, write, draw, and speak. His first word is actually a complete sentence, "I made it."

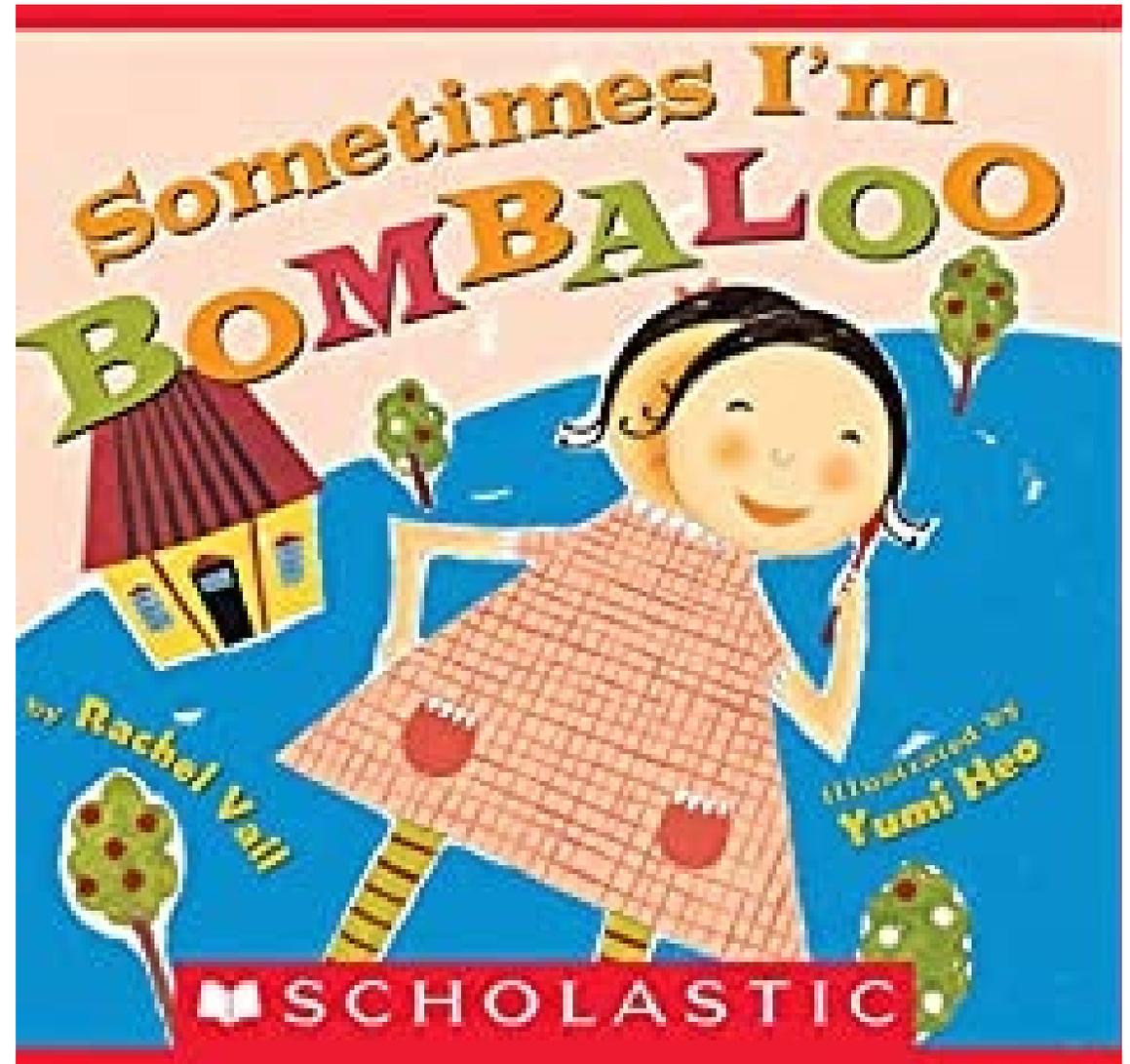
Activity

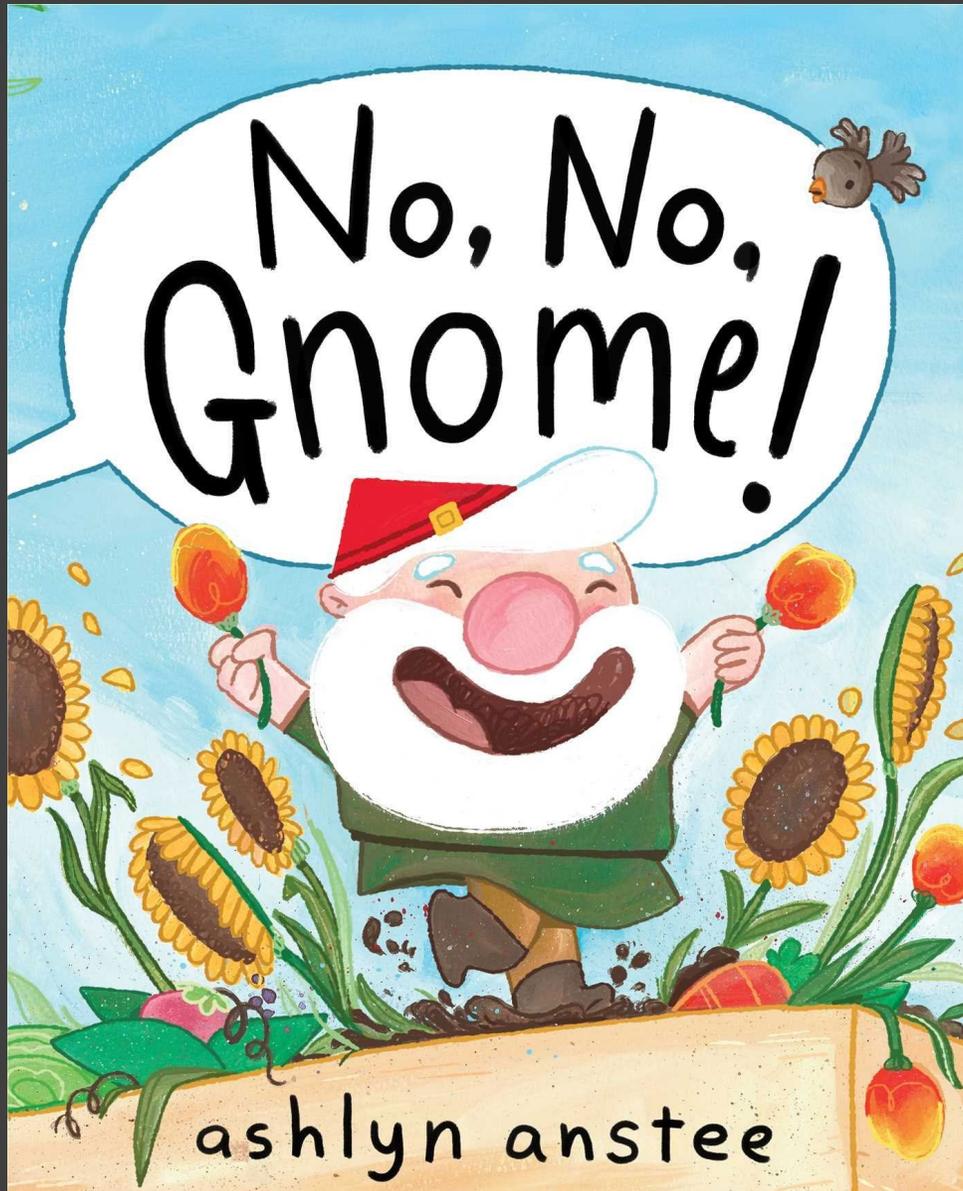
- Look back at your sticky note from the beginning of the session.
- Take a few moments to brainstorm ways to hasten their social development through one of the games or activities we've shared today.



Picture Books Scavenger Hunt

- Find picture books with a story that could be used to explore, discuss, or teach some aspect of executive function.
- Meet back here in 7 minutes.





A few of Dr. Cutler's favorite books

- *No, No Gnome!* By Ashlyn Anstee
- *Wild Feelings* by David Milgrim
- *When Sophie Gets Angry—Really, Really Angry...* by Molly Bang
- *Sometimes I'm Bombaloo* by Rachel Vail

Sponge





YOU WILL RECEIVE
AN EMAIL WITH A
SURVEY. AFTER YOU
FILL THAT OUT, YOU
WILL BE EMAILED
YOUR CERTIFICATE.



Thanks for coming! I love working with teachers and parents. Please reach out if I can support your work!

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