

Helping Children Develop Self-Confidence

This book narrates the story of a little girl (and her dog assistant) who set out to build “the most magnificent thing.” Despite her having a very clear idea of what she wanted to build, the end result is not as magnificent as she expected. *The Most Magnificent Thing* walks us through frustration, perfectionism, and the value of trying new things and persevering through challenges.

CORE SKILL OBJECTIVES

INTENTIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES

RELATE



Children will:

- ◆ Explore initiative, independence, and perseverance

Teachers will:

- ◆ Acknowledge effort
- ◆ Promote autonomy

TEACHING TIP

Children need to develop self-confidence to persist through challenging tasks. When children believe that they are capable, they are more likely to take risks, be creative, and keep trying when things do not work the way they expected. Teachers can support children’s self-confidence by following their lead, which communicates interest and value in their ideas. Also, by acknowledging children’s effort during the process (e.g., “you are trying really hard,” “you kept going despite it did not look as you expected”) instead of focusing on the final product (e.g., “your tower is perfect,” “you are so smart”).

1. INTRODUCE

- ◆ “Today we’re going to read a story about a girl and her puppy assistant who attempted to build ‘a magnificent thing.’ Let’s see what happens!”

2. READ THE BOOK

- ◆ Pause occasionally to highlight how the girl tried things on her own and persisted through challenges.
- ◆ Encourage children to share their thoughts about the story and acknowledge their responses.

Promote Autonomy and Acknowledge Effort



Read: “The girl tinkers, hammers and measures...”

Acknowledge: “She is following her ideas and trying things by herself.”

Connect: “Have you ever tried to build something by yourself? What did you build?”

Read: “...Her hard work attracts a few admirers, but they don’t understand...”

Acknowledge: “Look at the girl’s face (*point to her expression*). She seems very frustrated. Her product is not magnificent as she had in mind”

Ask: “Do you think she is going to keep trying? Why? What would you recommend her to do?”

Read: “... She gets to work, she works carefully, slowly tinkering...”

Acknowledge: “After taking a walk with her assistant, she kept trying really hard to make her creation magnificent”

Ask: “What do you think is going to happen next? Will she feel proud of her creation?”

3. REVIEW

- ◆ “Sometimes, things do not work the way we expected. But it is important to keep trying! When you keep trying, like the girl and her puppy assistant did, you are always learning new things that will take you closer to your goal or spark new ideas!”

4. KEEP IT GOING

- ◆ When appropriate, follow individual children’s lead to communicate interest and value in their ideas. For instance, if a child starts telling a story, leverage that moment as an opportunity for oral storytelling. When following the child’s lead, strive to intentionally acknowledge their efforts (e.g., “you are trying hard to share your story”).