

The Little Engine That Could

Watty Piper + Dan Santat

READ

Before

- Open the book so the child can see the front and back simultaneously.
- Read the title and author of the book.
- Introduce the story's setting by asking your child(ren), "Where do you think the story of the Little Engine is taking place? What do you think the Little Engine is carrying?"

During

- During the reading, stop to discuss details such as:
 - What happened to the train going over the mountain?
 - What was he carrying?
 - Where was he going?
 - How did he feel after being stranded?
- Discuss with your child(ren) how a passenger train and a freight train differ and how everyone felt when the big engines refused to help.
- Ask your child(ren) "What did the Little Engine say to herself as she hitched herself onto the train?"

After

- After the story, encourage your child(ren) to talk about the story.
- Begin by asking questions such as:
 - Why do you think the little engine kept saying 'I think I can, I think I can' when trying to pull the train over the mountain?
 - Tell me about something difficult for you to do.
- Have your child(ren) say, "I think I can, I think I can" before beginning a difficult task.
- After completing a task, have your child(ren) chant, "I thought I could. I thought I could" to remind your child to believe in themselves, work hard, and not give up!

PLAY

Let's Learn Kentucky - Connect Together

Early relationships are the building blocks for healthy growth and development. Building daily habits of connection, learning about emotions, and cooperating with others will help your child develop healthy habits for daily life.

Look What I Can Do!*

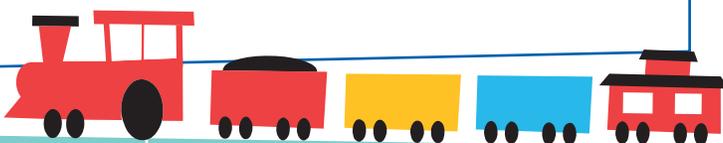
- Children enjoy helping and feeling independent. Think of some things your child can do to help you at home or when you are out and about. They might put on their shoes, carry an item, or hold your hand when crossing a street.
- Tell your child that you need their help during the day. Ask them to help you by doing one thing you know they can do, like putting on their shoes. As they put on their shoes, be sure to tell them what a big helper they are being.
- Think of a new thing you would like your child to do. Once they can put on their shoes, they may be ready to put on their socks AND shoes. Show them how to do their new skill first. After a few days, have them try to do it on their own. If they get upset, gently help them and practice more.

Make It Easier

Your child may need you to show them how to do something new many times before they are ready to do it on their own. Try this process: You do it for them, you help them do it, then they do it on their own

Extend the Learning

Ask your child to help you by doing two or three things in a row. You might ask them to put on their socks, put on their shoes, and stand by the door to get ready to leave. Following more than one instruction at a time is an important school readiness skill.



Find More Ways to Play

Let's Learn Kentucky
[Connect Together](#)



Governor's Office of Early Childhood
[Kentucky Family Guides](#)



ENROLL

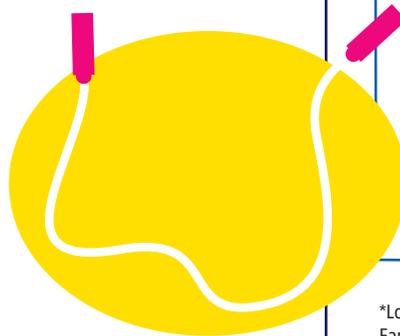
Enroll your child in [Dolly Parton's Imagination Library](#) and receive a FREE, age-appropriate book once per month.



SHARE

Help your child develop a growth mindset and perseverance to work through challenges by encouraging them to stick with a task, to try, learn, and try again.

Learn more from PBS Parents:
[Try, Learn, Try Again: Practicing Perseverance](#)



EXPLORE

[Daniel Tiger: Bathtime Helper](#)

In this game, Daniel loves being a “helper in my family,” showing appreciation for siblings and parents.



*Look What I Can Do! is shared from the Family Guides, a companion of the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards, housed in the Governor's Office of Early Childhood.