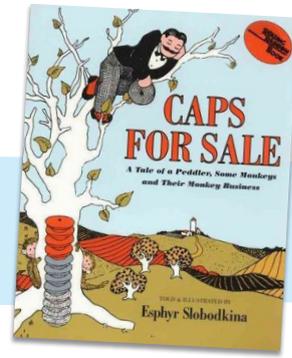


Caps for Sale



Making Connections is a creative life skill that involves figuring out similarities and differences, and sorting these things into categories.

In a world where people can simply search for anything online, those that can see connections are able to go beyond simply *knowing* information to *using* information.

Reading books with children can help them learn the life skills essential to everyday life success. Books like “Caps for Sale” can specifically be used to develop the skill of Making Connections.

Try these activities while reading with your child:

This book provides a great opportunity for you to have conversations with your child about initial impressions and new thoughts based on new information. When we are aware of how we are thinking, we can learn additional ways to process information.

1.

Making Connections involves putting things in categories. As you talk with your child about this book, talk with each other about some of the categories you see. For example, the peddler always wore his caps in the same order—on top of his own checked cap, he wore gray caps, then brown caps, then blue caps, and finally red caps. Have your child check this order on the different pages of the book.

2.

Besides his own checked cap, the peddler had the same number of caps of each color. Ask your child to count them—there are four caps in each group. You can ask your child:

- a. “Are there still four caps of each color as the peddler walks through town?”
- b. “Are there still four caps of each color when the peddlers walks out to the country for a nap?”

It should be especially fun to check these numbers when the monkeys are wearing the caps. You can ask your child:

- a. “How many red caps do you see? How many blue caps?”

3.

Point out to your child that the monkey is copying the peddler’s actions—from stomping his feet, to shaking his fist, to throwing his own cap down. You can play this game with your child—making up new actions to repeat in order to get those caps back!

You will notice that these tips promote two child development principles: 1) Serve & Return. Like game of ball, serve and return involves a back and forth conversation where you listen, then build on - and extend - what your child says or does to promote learning. 2) Executive Function skills are skills that are used to manage attention, feelings, thoughts and behavior to achieve goals. They include being able to pay attention, remember information, think flexibly and exercise self-control. All of the life skills, like Making Connections, call on Executive Function Skills, which studies find help children thrive now and in the future.

Life skills are discussed in depth in [Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs](#) by Ellen Galinsky, president of Families and Work Institute. Mind in the Making shares the best research on children’s and adults learning. Its mission is to promote executive function life skills in order to keep the fire for learning burning brightly in all of us. Find more about Families and Work Institute’s Mind in the Making at www.mindinthemaking.org.