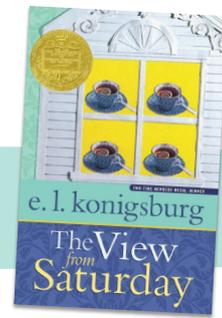


The View from Saturday



It is through learning that we can realize our potential. As the world changes, so can we—as long as we continue to learn. The ability to adapt and learn in the unique situations around us is called Self-Directed, Engaged Learning Skills.

Children are more likely to develop this life skill when adults: establish a trustworthy relationship with children, help children set and work toward their own goals, involve children socially, emotionally and intellectually, as well as elaborate and extend children's learning. Also, adults can help children practice, synthesize, and generalize to create a community of learning.

Discussing books with children can help them learn the life skills essential to everyday life success. Books like “The View from Saturday” can specifically be used to develop the skill of Self-Directed, Engaged Learning.

As your child reads this book, use these questions start a conversation:

This book provides a great opportunity for children to learn how to elaborate and extend knowledge through the Academic Bowl team's adventure.

1.

Ask your child to talk about what each of the children—Noah, Ethan, Nadia and Julian—were particularly good at doing. Children are more likely to be engaged learners if the learning builds on their strengths. How did the children's strengths help them become a team that worked and learned well together? Ask your child:

- “What are your special strengths? How do you use your strengths to work toward goals?”

2.

Julian's father says, “The Souls have all returned from a journey.” He goes on to say all of the children found something on their journey. Ask your child:

- “What do you think Julian's father means by that statement? What did each of the children find?”
- “How did these journeys lead them to become friends?” You can talk about how finding things in common can help build trustworthy relationships, enabling the members of the team to learn from each other.
- Ask your child what he or she looks for most in a friend and why. Share your own thoughts, too.

3.

The children could answer some of the questions asked in the Academic Bowl because they had meaningful experiences where they learned the information. For example, Nadia learned about the Sargasso Sea from rescuing turtles. Ask your child:

- “How do you learn best?”
- “Which question would you like to be asked in an Academic Bowl? Why?” You can share a time when you learned something and then were able to use it.
- You can also ask: “What do you think Mrs. Olinski meant when she said, “...sometimes to be successful, you have to risk making mistakes?” Why is making mistakes such an important part of learning?”

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 Self-Directed, Engaged Learning, call on Executive Function Skills, which have been found to 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.