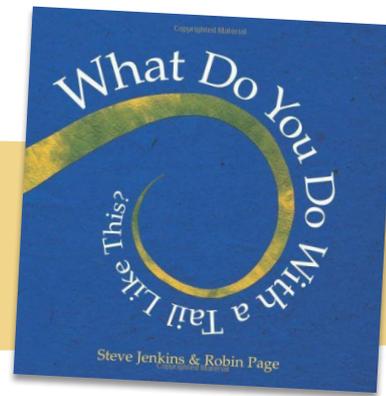


What Do You Do With a Tail Like This?



Figuring out what's the same and what's different, and sorting these things into categories, is a life skill called Making Connections and is at the core of creativity.

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

Discussing books with children can help them learn the life skills essential to everyday life success. Books like "What Do You Do with a Tail Like This?" can specifically be used to develop the skill of Making Connections.

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

This book provides a great opportunity to for you to have conversations with your child about the many ways that living beings are similar and different, and how they use the various parts of their bodies. You can build on your child's comments and questions to help him or her have a deeper understanding about the world and how it works.

1.

As you read "What Do You Do With a Tail Like This?," ask your child to guess what each body part does and match it to the animal before you turn the page. Asking your child to come up with his or her own ideas, your child is making connections between new and old information.

2.

You can also help your child look at the information in this book in new ways by inviting him or her to think about similarities and differences. You can ask:

- "In what ways do animals use their noses in similar and in different ways?" Their ears? Their eyes? Their mouths? Their tails?"

3.

As you talk about this book, build on and extend your child's interests and questions. For example, you can talk about the animals your child knows and how they use their noses or other parts of their bodies.

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 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.