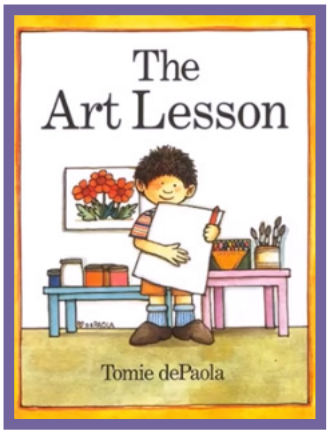
SUNCOAST CAMPAIGN FOR GRADE-LEVEL READING

KINDERGARTEN



The Art Lesson

By Tomie dePaola

ACTIVITY: DRAW YOURSELF DOING YOUR FAVORITE ACTIVITY!

SUPPLIES:

- Paper
- Markers or Crayons

DIRECTIONS:

1. Think about something you like to do such as reading, playing a game, kicking a ball, singing, picking flowers or doing cartwheels. Maybe it's something you like to do with a friend or maybe it's something you like to do by yourself.
2. Draw a picture of yourself doing this favorite thing!

Take a pic!

Take a photo of your artwork and send it along with your name to:
connect@gradelevelreadingsuncoast.net

MIND in the Making

The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs

Life Skill That Promotes Executive Function (EF): Focus and Self Control

Children need this skill in order to achieve their **goals**, especially in a world that is filled with distractions and information overload. It involves **paying attention, remembering the rules, thinking flexibly** and **exercising self control**.

Suggestions for Promoting Focus and Self Control for Ages 6-8

TIP:

You can ask your child:

- "What was Tommy's goal? How did he work toward it?"

Wait for the child's response and respond to that.

SKILL:

This back and forth interaction is what researchers call "**serve and return**." Like a game of ball, one of you says or does something (serves) and the other responds (returns). The importance of these everyday interactions to brain building is a key finding from child development research.

TIP:

You can ask:

- "What were the goals of Tommy's friends?"

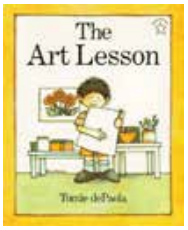
SKILL:

Focus and Self Control includes **having a goal and working toward it, even when you feel like doing something else or others want you to do something else**. **Executive Function** skills are driven by goals.

The Art Lesson

By Tomie dePaola

Tommy is a creative kid who loves to draw until a strict teacher makes him follow the rules of her art class. An autobiographical story by beloved author Tomie DePaola, this is an empowering ode to creativity!



High-quality books and educational resources from First Book supporting research-based Life Skills from *Mind in the Making* by Ellen Galinsky

Find more books and materials on the First Book Marketplace, a resource available exclusively to educators and programs serving children in need. www.fbmarketplace.org.

You will notice that these tips promote two child development principles: **Serve and Return** and **Executive Function** skills.

Serve and Return, like a game of ball, involves a back and forth conversation between you and your child where you listen, then build on and extend what your child says or does to promote learning.

Executive Function skills are skills you use to manage your attention, your feelings, your thoughts and your behavior to reach your goals.

They include being able to pay attention, remember information, think flexibly and exercise self control.

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Suggestions for Promoting Focus and Self Control for Ages 6-8

TIP:

Ask your child to think about what Tommy did when he was told to take his box of 64 crayons home or to copy a picture?

You can ask:

- "Did that help Tommy achieve his goal?"

Continue the conversation by asking:

- "Have you ever had a time you wanted to do something different and had to wait? What did you do to help yourself wait?"

SKILL:

Focus and Self Control requires us to **be able to think about things flexibly** as well as not **to go on automatic**, but to **exercise self control**.

TIP:

The book ends with the fact that Tommy continued to draw and still does.

Ask the children if they notice that the character in the book (Tommy) and the book's creator (Tomie) have almost the same name.

SKILL:

Children would enjoy looking up Tomie dePaola and finding out more about him.

Pursuing additional information requires Focus and Self Control.

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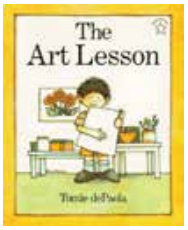

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