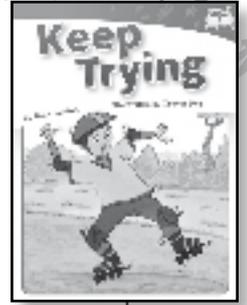


Keep Trying

by Jane Buxton

illustrated by Trevor Pye



Overview

This text is about achieving success through encouragement and practice. Dad supports his son by encouraging him to “keep trying”, then the child returns the favour by helping Dad learn to skip.

Suggested purposes

This book supports the comprehension strategies of identifying the main ideas, using prior knowledge, and making connections with real-life experiences. It provides opportunities to practise cross-checking and to focus on irregular verbs. The repetitive structure provides support for less confident readers.

Text features (Focus on only one or two per session.)

- the high-frequency words – *and, can, do, I, it, said, you*
- the initial consonant blends – *cl, sk, sw, tr*
- the contraction – *can't*
- the irregular verb – *could*
- the repetition in the text
- the use of direct speech
- the use of exclamation marks
- the passage of time between the events of the left and the right pages
- the safety equipment featured in the illustrations
- the relationship between the boy and his father

Setting the scene

Ask the students to recall learning a new skill. Draw out the idea that it takes time. Use the example of a young child learning to walk. Encourage the students to share their observations of younger children. Try to emphasise skills and activities that don't involve formal lessons. *When you were learning to ride a bike or catch a ball, how did you feel? Did anyone help you? How did you feel when you managed it?*

The first reading

Look at the cover illustration. *What is the boy trying to do? How is he feeling?* The expression on his face, the position of his body, and the “wobble” lines suggest that he is having trouble. *What should he do to get better at skating? Can you read the title?* Read the names of the author and the illustrator.

Back cover – Read aloud the preview question. Discuss the students' predictions.

Title page – Note that Dad is poised to help the boy but is letting him have a go.

Listen as the students read the text independently, offering help as necessary. The introductory discussion and the framework of high-frequency words should provide strong support.

Page 3 – Note the change in tense between the left and right pages that signals the passing of time. Some students may have difficulty with the syntax, preferring to say “And I can” rather than “And I could”. Orient them by asking, *Do you think he could?*

As the students read, draw their attention to the initial consonant blends of the new verbs on each page. Note their responses to the change in the text structure on page 12.

Ideas for revisiting the text (Choose only one or two per session.)

- Listen to the students reread the text, observing their use of appropriate phrasing and expression.
- The extensive use of high-frequency words offers an opportunity to monitor the students’ word knowledge. Ask them to locate specific high-frequency words. *Can you read me a sentence that includes the word “you”?*
- Focus on any of the initial consonants or blends that the students may be unsure of. Locate the words in context and make a list of other words that start the same way.
- Focus on the word “trying”. Locate the other verbs and add “ing”. Note that some, such as “skate”, will need to lose the final “e” and that “swim” will need an extra “m”.
- Discuss the contraction “can’t”. Write “cannot” on the board and show how the apostrophe replaces “no”. Explore the idea that “can” and “can’t” are opposites. List other pairs of contractions that are opposites.
- Focus on the word family “could”, “would”, and “should”.
- Look at the speech marks. Choose a left-hand page. *What did Dad say? What did the boy say?* To illustrate how the words inside the speech marks are spoken, read the text again, breaking it into parts with a reader, Dad’s voice, and the child’s voice.
- Discuss the use of exclamation marks for emphasis.
- Using the words and punctuation cards for this book, reassemble the sentences with the students.

Suggestions for further activities

- Give each student a piece of paper divided in two and ask them to draw a picture of themselves as they were learning a new skill and a picture after they had learnt it. Ask them to add captions under each picture.
- As a group, develop a timeline from being a baby to being five years old. Include some of the things that the students learnt over that time.
- Ask the students to interview some adults. *What did you find hard to learn to do?*
- BLM word activity: practise using initial consonant blends

The students can join the consonant blends with the rime to make words from the story that begin with “s” or “c”.

- BLM comprehension activity: read and complete sentences

The students can write “can”, “can’t”, or “could” in the blank spaces to complete the sentences. (It will be important to discuss this activity before the students attempt it.) The students can then read the sentences to a partner.