A guide for reading together

Watch Out for the Little Pigs!



AUTHOR	RECOMMENDED AGE	FORMAT	STAGE
María José Márquez	Ages 3–6	Picture book	Early childhood

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING · SOCIAL SKILLS · ASKING KINDLY · CLASSROOM AND HOME

What this guide contains

01 Social-emotional learning goals
02 Pre-reading activities and questions by age
03 Closing and extension ideas for classroom and home
04 Learning areas for early childhood
05 Glossary for children and further resources

ABOUT THE BOOK

1 Get to know the story before class

— a classic tale, told the other way around —

Watch Out for the Little Pigs! turns the story of the three little pigs upside down: here the wolf, **Otto**, is big, furry and very calm, and all he wants is to bake cookies. The ones blowing the houses down are three mischievous little pigs chasing the smell. With humor and tenderness, the book opens a simple, powerful conversation: almost anything can be achieved... with a magic word.

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THEMES

- Asking instead of taking: the word "please"
- Resilience: trying again without giving up
- Forgiveness without resentment
- A story has more than one point of view
- Kindness and good manners
- Self-regulation (baking to calm down)
- Not judging by appearances
- Friendship and cooking together

> "Every story seeks to open important conversations with care and empathy.
> — EDITORIAL VÍNCULO

LEARNING GOALS

2 Learning goals and skills

For children aged 3 to 6

SOCIAL SKILLS

Peaceful conflict resolution

Use peaceful strategies to resolve everyday conflicts with other children.

→ *The heart of the book: saying "please" instead of blowing or taking.*

Rules and agreements

Respect rules and agreements created together for the group's well-being.

→ *Knocking on the door and saying "please" as a shared agreement.*

Empathy and solidarity

Show empathy and solidarity toward what peers are going through, by listening, supporting and collaborating.

→ *Otto forgives the little pigs and they end up baking together.*

IDENTITY AND SELF-EXPRESSION

Communicating emotions

Share with others the emotions — love, fear, joy, anger — that different stories stir in them.

→ *Otto goes through fear, frustration and laughter throughout the story.*

Self-regulation

Express emotions while self-regulating, taking into account their own needs, others' and the group's.

→ *Otto doesn't give up: he rebuilds and bakes to calm down.*

LEARNING GOALS · CONTINUED

2 Oral language and social-emotional skills

ORAL LANGUAGE

Phonological awareness

Discover the sounds of words: counting syllables, beginning and ending sounds.

→ The song with a word that changes: straw → sticks → bricks.

Inferences and predictions

Understand texts through attentive listening, making inferences and predictions.

→ Children anticipate the chorus and predict which house comes next.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS IT BUILDS

Kindness	Asking with "please" and saying "thank you".
Resilience	Trying again after a setback, without giving up.
Self-regulation	Finding something calming when emotions run high.
Empathy	Understanding why others act as they do, even if they seem like "the bad guy".
Forgiveness	Making amends and moving on without resentment.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN · TIPS FOR EDUCATORS

- It works best if the group already knows the classic tale of the three little pigs: invite them to remember it.
- Make the most of the song: sing it as you read and raise the volume as the text says (normal → louder → with ALL your might).
- Pause before the word that changes and let them fill it in.
- Don't give away the ending: let them discover the "magic word" on their own.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

3 Setting the stage before opening the book

three short ideas to get started

1 Who's the bad guy in the story? — 10 MIN

Recall the story of the three little pigs with the group: who blows the houses down? Who's the bad guy? Write down their answers and keep them to compare after the book.

LANGUAGE · ANTICIPATION · POINT OF VIEW

2 The mysterious cover — 5 MIN

Show the cover. Ask: what's happening to the wolf? Why might he be scared? What do you think the story is about?

LANGUAGE · PREDICTION

3 Our song — 5 MIN

Teach the chorus before reading so they can sing along: "Step by step, plop, plop, plop! / I build my little house, tap, tap, tap!...". Clap out the syllables.

LANGUAGE · PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

DURING READING

- Sing the chorus each time, raising the volume as the text says.
- Pause before the word that changes (straw / sticks / bricks) and let them fill it in.
- At every KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK!, ask: what should the little pigs say?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

4 After reading — adapt to your group

AGES 3–4

What's the wolf's name? What does he like to do most?

What magic word did the little pigs need to say?

How did Otto feel when his houses blew away?

Activity: Draw your favorite cookie and ask a classmate for it by saying "may I have it, please?".

AGES 4–6

Why did the little pigs blow the houses down instead of asking?

At first we thought the wolf was the bad guy... was he? Why?

What did Otto do when he lost his house? Did he give up?

What happened when they finally said "please"?

Activity: Play "The please traffic light": red = taking without asking; green = asking with "please".

COMPARING TEXTS · CRITICAL THINKING

How is it similar to and different from the "Three Little Pigs" story they knew?

Can the same story be told from another point of view? Go back to the board from the start: did their answer about who's "the bad guy" change?

CLOSING AND EXTENSION

5 To deepen learning in class and at home

IN CLASS

The please traffic light

Describe everyday classroom situations and have children move their card to the right color: red (taking) or green (asking with "please"). Practice the two magic words: "please" and "thank you".

RITUAL

The please circle

Sitting in a circle, pass around a soft object. Whoever holds it asks the group for something using "please" (a clap, a smile, a hug). Close with a group thank-you.

EXPERIMENT

Which house holds up?

Blow (or use a fan) on little piles of straw, sticks and "bricks" (blocks). Which one holds up? Record it with drawings: cause and effect.

AT HOME

Baking together

Home task: bake cookies as a family. Before sharing, everyone has to ask "may I have one, please?". Share the experience in the next class.

PLANNING NOTE

- Suitable for early childhood settings, ages 3 to 6.
- Main areas: social skills, identity and self-expression, and oral language.
- It can be used as a unit of 2 to 3 learning sessions.

GLOSSARY AND RESOURCES

6 Words to support the conversation

Please	The words we use to ask for something kindly, instead of taking it without permission.
Kindness	Treating others with warmth and good manners, even when they are different from us.
Resilience	Keep trying after something hard, without giving up — like Otto, who builds again and again.
Self-regulation	Finding something that calms us when we feel strong emotions (baking calms Otto down).
Forgiveness	Letting go of anger and giving a new chance to someone who made a mistake.
Onomatopoeia	Words that imitate sounds: plop!, knock, knock!, whoooosh.

SUGGESTED FURTHER RESOURCES

Tale · The Three Little Pigs (classic version) — to compare

Series · The Wolf Who... · Orianne Lallemand

Tale · The Wolf's Chicken Stew · Keiko Kasza

Resource · This book's Activity Bank and Family Reading Guide

Did you use this guide in your classroom?

We'd love to know how it went. Share your experience on our social media or write to us — your feedback helps us create more materials like this one.

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