Maggie Helps Mommy

Teacher Guide

AGES 2-6

Read-aloud questions, activities, and printables for toddler, preschool, and kindergarten groups.

About the book



Maggie Helps Mommy shows young children that pitching in at home makes more time for the people they love. It is Book 2 in the Max & Maggie's Family Values series by Kia Bell, illustrated by Karina Nechval.

It's Saturday, and Maggie has waited all week to bake cookies with Mommy. Mommy has a lot to do first, so Maggie gets to work. She puts away books and toys, wipes up her baby brother Miles's spill, dries the dishes, and carries a heavy laundry basket with help from her brother Max. When the chores are done, Mommy has time to bake, and Maggie learns the best part was being together.

Big idea: Helping at home is a way to care for your family, and it makes time to enjoy each other.

Themes: helping without being asked, noticing what needs to be done, family teamwork, responsibility for your own things, kindness, and time together.

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How to use this guide

AGES 2-6

Pick the section for your group's age, read the book aloud, then choose one or two activities. Each section stands on its own, so a mixed-age center can use more than one.

Section	Ages	Best for	Time per activity
Toddlers	2	Toddler rooms, family child care	5 to 10 minutes
Preschool	3 to 4	Preschool and pre-K classrooms	10 to 20 minutes
Kindergarten	5 to 6	Kindergarten and transitional K	15 to 30 minutes

Reading tips for every age

- Read the book once just for enjoyment before using any questions or activities.
- Point to the pictures. Many of Maggie's jobs are shown in the art before they are named in the words.
- Invite children to join in on the sound effects and the words to act out: SPLAT, WIPE, WIPE, WIPE, and HEAVY.
- Connect the story to your classroom jobs, cleanup time, and the ways children already help the people they live with.

Including every child

- When you talk about Maggie's family, say "Mommy." When children talk about their own homes, say "your family" or "the people who care for you."
- Let children answer by pointing, acting it out, choosing a picture, or speaking in their home language.
- Every child can take part in a job. One child can choose where something goes while a partner carries it.
- Helping can look different for each child: noticing a job, offering to help, helping with support, or asking for help.

Safety: Use light baskets, unbreakable dishes, and cloths dampened with water only. Adults choose and supervise every job.

Skills labels

Each age section ends with short skill codes. The full wording is in Standards at a glance at the end. The codes come from three frameworks:

- **ELOF:** the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, used for toddlers (IT goals) and preschoolers (P goals).
- **Common Core:** the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, used for kindergarten. Many states use these or a close version.
- **CASEL:** the five social and emotional learning competencies, used across all ages: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

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Words to know

AGES 2-6

Introduce two or three words before reading, then point them out in the story. Toddlers need only the starred words; act them out instead of defining them.

Word	Kid-friendly meaning	Try this
help*	Do something to make a job easier for someone	Hand a friend a block they dropped
notice	See something and pay attention to it	What do you notice in this picture?
chores	Jobs we do to take care of our home or classroom	Name one chore you do
tidy*	Put things back where they belong	Tidy one shelf together
spill*	Something that falls out and makes a mess	Pretend to wipe a spill
wipe*	Clean by rubbing with a cloth	Wipe the table in circles
dry	Take the water off with a towel	Pretend to dry a plate
heavy*	Hard to lift or carry	Compare a scarf and a small basket of blocks, then ask a friend, "Can you help me?"
together*	With someone else	Carry something with a partner
busy	Having lots to do	Pretend you have several jobs to do at once
gentleman	A boy or man who is kind and helps others. Max says it after he helps Maggie carry the basket.	Ask a friend, "Can I help you carry that?"

*Starred words work well for toddlers. If your class read Book 1, *Max Learns to Be a Gentleman*, ask what Max learned there.

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Toddlers

AGE 2

Toddlers learn helping by doing it next to you. Keep reading short, let them touch and point, and turn the story into real jobs right away.

Read-aloud tips

- Read in a small group of three or four, or one on one.
- Pause at SPLAT and WIPE, WIPE, WIPE so children can say or act out the words.
- Skip words if attention runs short. The pictures tell the story.

Questions to ask while reading

Choose a few questions that fit your group. You don't need to ask them all.

- Where is Maggie? Can you point to Mommy?
- What fell down? Uh oh, SPLAT!
- What is Maggie doing? Can you wipe, too?
- Is the basket heavy? Who helps Maggie carry it?
- Are Maggie and Mommy happy?

Activities

1. **Helping hands cleanup.** Set out two or three bins with picture labels (blocks, cars, books). Let each child choose a toy and find its bin. Name the help out loud: "You put the cars away. You helped!"
2. **Wipe, wipe, wipe.** After snack or messy play, offer each child a small damp cloth to help wipe the table. Say "wipe, wipe, wipe" together, just like Maggie.
3. **Carry it together.** Fill a small, light basket with soft toys or scarves. Two children hold the handles and carry it across the room together, like Maggie and Max. Show them how to ask, "Help me?"

What to notice: A child joins a shared job, imitates a helping action, or offers an object to someone.

Skills: ELOF IT-SE 5, IT-SE 8, IT-ATL 6, IT-LC 9, IT-LC 12 · CASEL social awareness, relationship skills

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Preschool

AGES 3-4

Preschoolers can start to notice what needs doing, offer help, and ask for help when a job is too big. Use the questions to move from what Maggie did to what children can do in your room.

Choose a few questions that fit your group. You don't need to ask them all.

Before reading

- Look at the cover. What are Maggie and Mommy making? What do you think will happen?
- What jobs do you help with at home?

During reading

- Why can't Maggie and Mommy bake cookies right away?
- What did Maggie notice when she looked around?
- How do you think Mommy felt when Miles knocked his bowl off his tray?
- The basket was too heavy for Maggie. What could she do?
- How did Max help Maggie?

After reading

- What was the best part of Maggie's day?
- When have you needed help with a job? Who helped you?
- How can you ask a friend if they would like help?
- How do you feel when you help someone? Is helping ever hard?

Activities

1. **Our helping jobs chart.** Make a chart of real classroom jobs (table wiper, book helper, plant waterer) with a picture for each. Let children choose a job to try each week, and add their photo or name. Talk about how each job takes care of everyone in the room.
2. **Story sequence and retell.** Use the five printable story cards in this guide: tidying up, the spill, drying dishes, carrying the basket, and baking. Start with two or three cards, like tidying up and baking, then add the others as children get to know the story. Children put the cards in order and retell what happened, using "first, next, then, last."
3. **Helping house dramatic play.** Add a small laundry basket, dish towels, unbreakable dishes, and playdough "cookie dough" to the housekeeping area. Children take turns being the helper and the busy grown-up, and practice asking, "Can you help me?"

Extension: Keep a "We noticed!" board. When a child sees a friend help, add a paper heart with both names.

What to notice: A child notices a job without a reminder, offers or asks for help, or retells the story's main events in order.

Skills: ELOF P-SE 2, P-SE 7, P-ATL 3, P-ATL 10, P-LIT 4, P-LIT 5 · CASEL social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision-making

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Kindergarten

AGES 5-6

Kindergartners can talk about why characters act and use the words and pictures to explain their thinking. Use this section to dig into Maggie's choices and connect them to children's own lives.

Discussion questions

Choose a few questions that fit your group. You don't need to ask them all.

- Who are the characters in this story? Where does it happen?
- What are the big things that happen, from beginning to end?
- At first, Maggie is thinking about cookies. What else seems to make her happy as she helps? What in the story makes you think so?
- Look at Maggie's face and raised finger when she looks around the room. What do you think she is thinking? What happens next?
- How did Maggie feel when Mommy smiled at her? How do you know?
- Maggie needed Max's help with the heavy basket. When is it a good idea to ask for help?
- Is helping ever hard? What makes it easier?
- Kia Bell wrote the words and Karina Nechval drew the pictures. What did each of them do to tell the story?

Activities

1. **Our class helping book.** Each child draws a time they helped someone at home or school, then writes or dictates: "First I ___. Next I ___. It made me feel ___." Bind the pages into a class book for your library.
2. **Our cleanup plan.** Give a small group one area to clean up, like the block corner. Before they start, the group decides who will do what. Afterward, talk about it: How did you decide who would do what? What made the job easier? How did it feel to finish together?
3. **Max and Maggie compare.** Max calls himself a gentleman after helping Maggie. If you have Book 1, *Max Learns to Be a Gentleman*, read both books and make a two-circle chart: how Max helps, how Maggie helps, and what both of them do.

What to notice: A child uses details from the words or pictures to explain a character's feelings, shares a job fairly in a group, or tells events in order in a drawing or sentence.

Skills: Common Core RL.K.1, RL.K.3, RL.K.6, RL.K.7, RL.K.9, SL.K.1, W.K.3 · CASEL self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision-making

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A Note for Families

AGES 2-6

From your child's classroom

Dear families,

This week we read *Maggie Helps Mommy* by Kia Bell. In the story, Maggie helps her family with chores, and her brother Max helps her when a job is too heavy. When the work is done, Maggie and her mom have time to bake cookies together. We talked about noticing what needs to be done, offering to help, and asking for help.

At home, try asking your child: "What can you help with today?" Then notice and name their help: "You put your shoes away. That was a big help!" Helping is one way we care for each other.

Helping jobs to try

AGE 2 Put toys in a bin, carry a napkin to the table, put clothes in the hamper

AGES 3-4 Wipe the table, match socks, water a plant, help set the table

AGES 5-6 Sort laundry by color, dry unbreakable dishes, feed a pet, help measure for baking



Free Max & Maggie games and activity pages are at **kiabell.com**.

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Story Cards

AGES 3-6











For teachers

Print these five cards and cut them apart. For younger children, start with two or three cards and add the rest over time. Children put them in story order and retell what happens on each one.

The cards are lettered out of order so the letters don't give away the answer.

Answer key: D (tidying up), B (wiping the spill), E (drying dishes), C (carrying the basket with Max), A (baking with Mommy).

Cut along the dashed lines.

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Standards at a Glance

AGES 2-6

Use these tables as a lesson-planning reference. The first shows which skills each activity supports; the second gives each standard's full wording.

Skills by activity

Age	Activity	ELOF or Common Core	CASEL
2	Helping hands cleanup	IT-SE 8, IT-ATL 6	Social awareness
2	Wipe, wipe, wipe	IT-LC 9	Not a focus
2	Carry it together	IT-SE 5, IT-SE 8	Relationship skills
2	Read-aloud questions	IT-LC 12	Social awareness
3 to 4	Discussion questions	P-LIT 5	Self-awareness, social awareness
3 to 4	Our helping jobs chart	P-SE 2, P-ATL 3, P-ATL 10	Responsible decision-making
3 to 4	Story sequence and retell	P-LIT 4, P-LIT 5	Not a focus
3 to 4	Helping house dramatic play	P-SE 2, P-SE 7	Relationship skills
3 to 4	We noticed! board	P-SE 7	Social awareness
5 to 6	Discussion questions	RL.K.1, RL.K.3, RL.K.6, RL.K.7, SL.K.1	Self-awareness, social awareness
5 to 6	Our class helping book	W.K.3	Self-awareness
5 to 6	Our cleanup plan	SL.K.1	Relationship skills, responsible decision-making
5 to 6	Max and Maggie compare	RL.K.9	Social awareness

Full wording

Code	Full wording
IT-SE 5	Child imitates and engages in play with other children.
IT-SE 8	Child expresses care and concern towards others.
IT-ATL 6	Child demonstrates emerging initiative in interactions, experiences, and explorations.
IT-LC 9	Child attends to, repeats, and uses some rhymes, phrases, or refrains from stories or songs.

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Standards at a Glance (continued)

AGES 2-6

Code	Full wording
IT-LC 12	Child comprehends meaning from pictures and stories.
P-SE 2	Child engages in prosocial and cooperative behavior with adults.
P-SE 7	Child expresses care and concern toward others.
P-ATL 3	Child appropriately handles and takes care of classroom materials.
P-ATL 10	Child demonstrates initiative and independence.
P-LIT 4	Child demonstrates an understanding of narrative structure through storytelling/re-telling.
P-LIT 5	Child asks and answers questions about a book that was read aloud.
RL.K.1	With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
RL.K.3	With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.
RL.K.6	With prompting and support, name the author and illustrator of a story and define the role of each in telling the story.
RL.K.7	With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).
RL.K.9	With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories.
SL.K.1	Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
W.K.3	Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.

Sources

- Head Start ELOF: Social and Emotional Development, Infant/Toddler
- Head Start ELOF: Social and Emotional Development, Preschool
- Head Start ELOF: Approaches to Learning, Infant/Toddler
- Head Start ELOF: Approaches to Learning, Preschool
- Head Start ELOF: Language and Communication, Infant/Toddler
- Head Start ELOF: Literacy, Preschool
- Common Core: Kindergarten Reading Literature
- Common Core: Kindergarten Speaking and Listening
- Common Core: Kindergarten Writing
- CASEL: What Is the CASEL Framework?

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