



# Whistle for Willie

written and illustrated by Ezra Jack Keats



## Reading and Activity Guide

### BEFORE READING

- + *Do you know how to whistle? If you do, how did you learn? If children do not know how to whistle, ask children What do you do to get someone's attention?*
- + *This book is all about a little boy named Peter who is trying to do something he's never done before, ask Do you think he'll be able to do it the first time he tries? Let's read to find out!*

### DURING READING

- + *What are all the ideas that Peter tries in order to whistle? Try all of those ideas along with Peter. What other tricks do you think we (or Peter) could try in order to whistle?*
- + *How do you think Peter feels each time he isn't able to whistle? What would you say to a friend who is trying something new or what would you like someone to say to you?*

### AFTER READING

- + *Why do you think Peter was finally able to whistle? Encourage children to keep trying even when they fail, however, remind them that it may take longer than it took Peter or they may need to get a little older or learn a particular skill. Patience is a really important skill that we all get better at, receiving encouragement from one another helps!*
- + *Discuss Janine's questions: How do you learn new things? How do you usually respond when you're trying something new and you aren't able to do it right away? It is important to help children verbalize their emotions and identify what makes them upset, frustrated, sad, etc.*
- + *God designed us to be curious and to learn and explore this amazing world. God also designed us to grow and adapt as we try new things. While it is fun to see and experience all the ways in which we (and the world) change, it is comforting to know that Jesus is constantly loving and taking care of us. Who is someone you like to explore with? Who is someone in your life who comforts, supports, and encourages you when you need it?*

### Springboard Activities:

**Activity #1: Emotional Charades** - After discussing how children respond to setbacks, introduce them to an Emotions Chart and talk through the difference between the various emotions. Even young children can understand and benefit from the subtle nuances of say, the difference between annoyance and frustration. In order to help them learn the different emotions, play a game of emotional charades where the child acts out the different emotions. After they have mastered them, or for older children, play a game of actual charades, but add in the emotions. They will pick an action or object to act out as well as the emotion they need to display. For instance, they may pick "dinosaur" and "excited" so you get to watch a high-energy T-Rex running around. Or "hula hooping" and "angry" will lead to the most aggressive hip sways you've ever seen!

**Activity #2: Try Something New** - Ask children what is one thing new that they would like to learn how to do. Research all about it. Watch tutorials. Find a website that teaches you the tricks of the trade. Try it out! As an adult, you may want to join in the fun and try something yourself. What a great way to model how to respond when you experience failure! Talk through your emotions and thoughts as you experience them.

