

# The Early Years Count Literacy Connection



## Max Explains Everything Soccer Expert

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illustrated by Deborah  
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*Preschool edition*

### Overview of Book

Max has been playing soccer for three whole weeks and feels he now has the experience to explain everything about the game. He explains what to wear, how to warm up, what the coach will say to the team, who the ref is, and how to take care of the field. Hmm—he's forgetting something important about soccer. What could it be?

Genre: Picture book

### Vocabulary

Books are a rich source of words new to children. Here are some words from *Max Explains Everything Soccer Expert* to introduce in your classroom:

cleats	ref
fans	practice
distracted	huddle

Each time you read the book, choose 2 or 3 words to highlight.

Use age-appropriate definitions and/or the illustrations to help children gain an understanding of each word's meaning.

Use these new words throughout the day, reminding the children, "That's a word from our story!"

### Connecting with the HighScope Curriculum

**COR Advantage 1.5**

Approaches To Learning  
Item A (*Initiative and planning*)

Social And Emotional  
Development  
Item F (*Building relationships with other children*)

Physical Development  
and Health  
Item I (*Gross motor*)

Social Studies  
Item FF (*Knowledge of self and others*)

### Reading Tips

Three readings are recommended to familiarize children with the story. Each reading provides an opportunity to introduce new vocabulary words, pose open-ended questions, and engage children in activities that make the story "come alive."

Ask the children about their knowledge of and experience with soccer and team sports in general. Ask questions like, "Why does Max have so much in his pocket?" Find out the children's opinions of Max as a soccer player and as a kid. You might ask, "What do you think Max likes to do best?" Allow time for discussions on topics like winning, distractions and practicing.

At the end of each reading, display the book in the book area so children can read it on their own.

### **Throughout the Routine**

Refer to the book throughout the day and use new vocabulary words in meaningful ways. Active engagement with the story helps the content come alive.

Do “warm-up” movements like Max (stretch, twirl and somersault) as the easy to join part of **Large Group Time**.

Have ball-play a focus at **Outside Time**. Encourage approaching and kicking. Designate a spot as the “goal” so children have a target.

Get into a “huddle” at the end of **Greeting Time**. Use this as a way to give all the children an authentic positive message.

### **Around the Room**

Highlight the book's content and build on the children's excitement in a variety of locations.

In the **Book Area**, post photos of soccer players from around the world and the Women's Olympic Team. Add other relevant books like *Winners Never Quit!* By Mia Hamm and *Froggy Plays Soccer* by Jonathan London.

Set up the carpet/large motor area as a “dribble practice” area with balls and cones/obstacles for the children to practice maneuvering balls with only their feet. Agree on age-appropriate and doable ground rules as a group before “practice time.”

### **Open-ended Questions**

Enhance active engagement and early critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions. These questions encourage children to explain why or how things happen, make predictions, or brainstorm possibilities rather than give one “right” answer.

Here are some questions you might ask for *Max Explains Everything Soccer Expert*:

What are you an expert at? Please explain!

Why do you think Max likes soccer so much?

What distracts you when you are trying to do what you enjoy?

*For more information on how to use books and stories with children to enhance your curriculum, contact*  
***The Family Connection:***

website—  
[www.famconn.org](http://www.famconn.org)

Facebook—  
[@famconnsjc](https://www.facebook.com/famconnsjc)

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### **@ Home**

Since many of the children in our county will have this book at home, use it as a way to further the home-school connection. In your daily contact—in person or by text, email or other notes home—encourage families to share *Max Explains Everything Soccer Expert* with their child. Here's a sample message you can send:

Max in the story *Max Explains Everything Soccer Expert* is like young children everywhere. He wants to experience soccer in his way without anyone telling him he is wrong. He loves a lot of things that have nothing to do with soccer, but he still gets to experience and focus on them while being part of the soccer team. While reading with your child, notice where Max has his focus—the lovely sky, saving bugs, and examining flowers. He thinks about how to make the soccer game fun for others—how to pose for pictures, how to compliment teammates and introduce himself to new kids. Winning is not important when the focus is on the whole experience.