



I Can Do Hard Things

By Nita Facer
(Based on a true story)

Thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord
(Jeremiah 31:16).

Jon trudged through the back door. He dropped his backpack and slumped onto a chair.

"I'm not going to school anymore," he said to Mom. "I don't know all my ABCs. I don't know all the numbers in the math book. I don't know everything. It's too hard."

Mom sat down next to Jon and put her arm around him. "It sounds like you had a tough first day of school," she said.

"I'm not going back," Jon said, sniffing a little. "I am just going to stay home and help you take care of baby Ella."

"You are a good helper," Mom said as she reached down to pick up Ella, who had crawled over to them. "You are patient and gentle with your sister. You are good at helping wash the car. You can rinse the dishes and pick up your toys and tie your shoes. You can do hard things."

"Those things aren't hard to do," Jon said.



“Do you remember when you were learning to tie your shoes?” Mom asked.

“Yes, that was hard,” Jon said. “The laces kept getting tangled in my fingers.”

“It *was* hard, but you just kept working at it and soon you could do it by yourself,” Mom said.

Jon shrugged. “Well, I wish I could be like Ella. She doesn’t have to do anything hard.”

“Ella is learning too,” Mom said. “Look how she likes to practice walking to you.”

Jon smiled as Ella toddled toward him and grabbed his fingers. “She’s a little wobbly,” he said.

Ella took two steps holding tightly to Jon’s hand. Then Jon wiggled his fingers out of her grip, and she sat down on the floor.

“When I let go she falls down,” Jon said.

“That’s right,” Mom said. “But she keeps getting back up. She wants to do hard things like you.”

“Did I have a hard time learning to walk?” Jon asked.

“Yes, but you didn’t give up,” Mom said. “You just kept trying, and now look at you—you can walk and run and skip and hop and climb trees.”

Jon hopped all the way around the kitchen table. Then he stopped, sat down, and put his face in his hands.

“But school is really hard,” he said. “Do you think I can learn all my letters and all my numbers and everything?”

“Yes!” Mom said. “School is a good place to learn. You’re not supposed to know

everything already. By the end of the year I think you will be surprised at all the hard things you can do.”

“Really? You think I can do it?”

“What do you think?” Mom asked.

Jon grabbed his little sister’s hand and pulled her up to stand. “I think I can do hard things.” ♦



“Being able to work hard is very important in anything we do.”³

Elder Stanley G. Ellis of the Seventy

