

Storytelling

Storytelling is the telling of a story out loud. The storyteller uses words and gestures – and the listener uses their imagination to picture what is happening. It can be the re-telling of a familiar or traditional story or perhaps a ‘new’ made-up story. Listening to a story being told instead of read can be very special.



Story language

Storytelling language can be different to everyday language. It is often used in fairy tales:

‘Once upon a time in a deep dark wood...’

‘Trip trap, trip trap over the rickety-rackety bridge.’

‘... and they all lived happily ever after.’

Sometimes words and phrases are repeated throughout the story which children love to join in with:

‘I’ll huff and I’ll puff and I’ll blow your house down!’

‘I’m a troll, fol-de-rol!’



Storytelling helps children become familiar with story language. This will be useful when they are ready to tell and write their own stories.

What's in a story?

Stories usually follow the same pattern and include similar things, for example:

- they have a beginning, a middle and an end
- they are made up of events that follow on one after the other
- there is often a problem that gets resolved by the end
- they have characters who behave in many different ways
- they include story language

In some cultures traditional stories are passed down by word of mouth only. Some of the stories that you tell with your child now may well become oral family heirlooms!

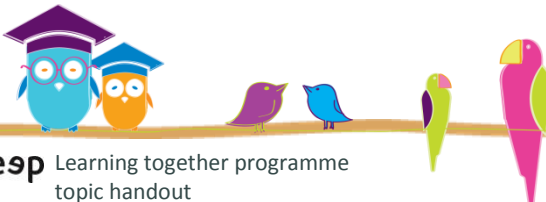
Listening to stories helps children to understand how stories are put together and this will help them when they come to tell and write their own.

Telling stories

When children know a story well they will be able to tell it themselves.

Well-known or favourite stories are great starting points for making up stories to tell children, or for them to create their own stories.

Try telling the story from the pictures in your child's favourite book. Encourage them to join in – you might recognise them using some familiar words or phrases from the story.



Sometimes the pictures in a book can tell more about a story than the words alone. Look closely and you might find interesting things happening in the pictures that are not written in the words!



Picture books with no writing at all can be fun for children to ‘read’. They’ll enjoy looking at the pictures to decide what the story is about and making it up for themselves. This encourages their imagination and lets them explore new ideas.

Telling stories in their own words helps children to learn new language – it is also an important part of learning to read and write.

Children can often ‘talk’ a story long before they can read or write one.

My story

Children love hearing stories about themselves, their pets, their friends and their family. It can also help them to think about different situations and explore their feelings.

Try making up a story around your child as the central character and something that happens to them, such as the day they:

- didn’t feel very well
- went to see Granny
- missed the bus
- helped to cook the dinner, etc.



Here is an example to get you started:

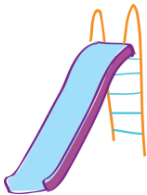
Once upon a time, Meggie went to stay with her Granny. She stayed for a whole week!

On Monday, Meggie and Granny went shopping. They bought some carrots as a special treat for Granny's pet rabbits.



On Tuesday Meggie helped Granny put the rubbish out for the dustmen to collect. The wheelie bin was bigger than Meggie and she could only just reach the handle!

On Wednesday Meggie helped Granny make pizzas for tea. Meggie chose mushrooms, ham and sweetcorn for her pizza. Granny had mushrooms, ham and pineapple. They were very tasty and they ate every last crumb!



On Thursday Granny took Meggie to the park. Meggie loved whizzing down the big blue slide. She went down it more times than Granny could count!

Can you guess what Meggie and Granny did on Friday....?

As well as stories about them, your child will love to be told a story that *you* remember from your childhood.

Children love hearing stories about very ordinary everyday events – particularly when they have a starring role!

