

A Practical Guide

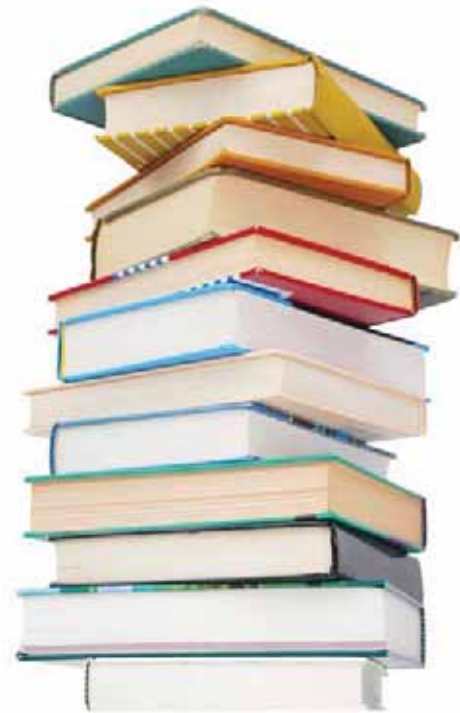
Bedtime Books & Storytelling



My Mini
Monsters



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Create Your Own Story

Celebrate World Book Day this March by cuddling up with a mystical tale of mermaids or a spooky story of skeletons! Grab a book or create an adventure - start exploring your own imagination!

The key to successful storytelling is to tell your kids a story they want to hear.

Put your child at the centre of a story you know they will love, whether this is making friends with a dinosaur, travelling to outer space or swimming with mermaids. Whatever your story, make sure you create a world that your listener wants to be part of.

Bedtime is the ideal time for storytelling and the perfect way to relax your little one before they drift off to sleep. Set aside 20 minutes before 'lights out' as often as possible to tell stories and create a routine that will prepare young children for bedtime.

Get all the bedtime chores, like cleaning teeth and preparing school clothes, out of the way before snuggling up in bed at the same time each evening.

Set the fairytale mood with fairy lights, a nightlight or hand-held torch and begin the adventure!

Starting with traditional phrases will become a comfort to your child and help them develop their own creative writing skills at school. Try these fail-safe openings:

"A long time ago in a distant land..."

"Once upon a time..."

"Come with me into a magical world..."

Get your little monsters enveloped in the mood by leaving blanks in the story for names and creatures to emerge. Tailor each story to your child's personality and behaviour but try to explore lots of subjects within their favourite topics. Don't try to make stories morally perfect at a young age, but do try to end the story happily to avoid bad dreams!



Top Tips for Storytelling

- **Be Confident:** children have vivid imaginations so even if your stories seem simple to you, believe in them yourself because your child will certainly be lapping up every word.
- **Use Your Voice:** bring your characters to life with different voices and creative names. If you're too tired to play the 'huge, terrifying giant' just change the story (it's yours after all!) and play a 'cute, sleepy mouse' instead.
- **Colourful Characters:** try to be as descriptive as possible when creating characters as they are often more important than the story itself. If you're running low on new characters, use toys and objects for inspiration, or even tell a few anecdotes about your childhood and family memories.
- **Context and Themes:** try to work everyday situations into your stories which might be troublesome to your child such as bullying or schoolwork, so that they feel more confident to talk about their worries and daily activities.
- **Be Vulnerable:** be as open and honest as possible. You're not an adult at storytime you're an author so recreate yourself if you want to. If you can't be silly around your own children, who can you be silly with?!

