

Storytelling

Using storytelling to develop imagination, language and confidence

Playing this game can be a really good way to help your child develop confidence in talking and using language. In the UK, much emphasis is placed upon using books to prepare children for school. But using storytelling to develop ideas and language is another way in which your child can develop essential literacy skills.

You will need

Between two and six people, children and adults

How to play

- Ask your child to pick a topic – it can be whatever they like.
- If they struggle for ideas, then make suggestions such as monsters, mermaids, wizards, amazing pets, dreams, or something you know they're specifically interested in.
- If your child is confident, they might like to start the story – if not, then an adult should begin with the first few sentences.
- Try to end at an exciting bit so that the child will enjoy taking the story forward. If more than two people are playing, then each can take a turn to tell a part of the story.
- Many children will struggle for ideas at first, and may need a bit of help, but with practice they will come up with their own ideas. You may need to be a little patient if the stories are repetitive – children will still love them!
- Let the story end naturally.

Remember to give your child lots of praise and encouragement, and try not to correct them. There are no silly or wrong ideas – in storytelling anything goes!

Child
of our
Time



Storytelling

The explanation

This is a great game to play with a family on a long car journey – all ages can join in and it only needs you and your imagination.

The game does also have real benefits for children. It gives them practice at:

- listening to each other and to adults
- putting ideas into words – think of it as being like putting the magical pictures children draw into words
- speaking up in a group
- developing vocabulary.

In the UK, knowledge and ideas are mainly passed on and preserved through books and writing. But this is not true in all cultures, and storytelling also has the benefit that it teaches children that knowledge can also be kept and passed on in other ways.

You may not have had much experience of telling stories yourself, so this may also be new for you! You can learn alongside your children and may like to tell them stories that you've made up or heard, or even real stories about your family and experiences. Any of these kinds of stories will help children to develop their ability to express themselves and listen – and, in time, they'll be able to pass on your stories!