

Telling stories with your children – things to try

Sensory storytelling

Here is the outline to the 'Shingebiss' story. Can you think of three easy to source objects that might help to bring it to life by appealing to the different senses:

- *The People loved their home, their tepees, their hunting grounds and their fishing. But every Autumn they left and walked South because they were scared of Old Man North Wind.*
- *One year, a 12 year old girl refused to leave – her family cried thinking she would be frozen.*
- *She made a new tepee, with 2 outer skins. She packed the gap with grass and left a hole in the top so she could make fire. She chopped wood and made a pile.*
- *Old Man North Wind Came and froze the ground. She made a fire and sang to herself.*
- *OMNW froze the river. She chopped a hole in the ice and caught a fish and cooked it.*
- *OMNW froze her tepee. She put a log on the fire and sang.*
- *He blew inside her home. She put more wood on the fire. He started to cry, then realised he was melting. He fled.*
- *She survived and when her family and tribe returned she taught them how to survive the winter.*

Try this with a story you know (or you both know). Tell it using the sensory objects. Repeat it and let your child bring the object out at the right time, joining in where they want.

Learning to tell a story verbally, and/or with actions

- Find a story! Use one you know, or look in the library (folk tales/traditional stories/Greek myths – loads of choice) – or look on the internet – eg 'Folk Tales from Ireland' or 'traditional stories about giants'. It's easier with shorter tales - <https://www.storyarts.org/library/nutshell/index.html> has lots of brief versions of stories.
- Read it together then try to tell it back to each other (perhaps with a time limit). Try playing 'pass the story'. This can be done verbally or using mime and actions.
- Bullet point or draw the main events – try to keep it below eight
- Choose one and try to imagine it together
- Have a go at retelling that part, using the details you imagined
- Play the detail game - clap and interrupt each other with questions
- Try out some actions and facial expressions
- Try it with the rest of the story and find an audience

Make up new stories together

- story dice can be fun
- collect or draw pictures that you can turn into story cards. Think about:

- a) hero
- b) home
- c) journey
- d) problem

Then take the stories wherever you want them to go - does the hero get help? Do they escape? Do you want a happy ending or not?

If you make your own cards, you can tap in to their own current interests, eg Pokemon, unicorns or Minecraft.

Happy storytelling!

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