

Tales Toolkit information for families

We're really excited that you've joined our Family Tales Toolkit website. Your child may have been using Tales Toolkit in school this year to create lots of wonderful stories. We thought we'd send you a little information about the storytelling method. Please chat with us if you have any questions.

What is Tales Toolkit?

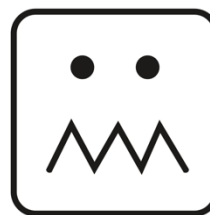
Tales Toolkit provides interactive, child-led resources that use easy to remember symbols for character, setting, problem, solution to represent story structure.



Character



Setting



Problem



Solution

There are lots of different resources all using the same symbols. Children soon remember them and use them to tell and write their own stories all about the things that interest them. They can use anything they find from a wooden spoon to a favourite toy!



Your child's school are members of Tales Toolkit. This means their early years staff are all trained in how to use it and will be telling lots of creative stories with your children. We love to include in stories the things your child is interested in, so please let us know if you have any ideas.



Over time as your child becomes more confident, staff start to make links in their Tales Toolkit stories to topics and books they're reading in class including songs, maths and links to early reading and writing in our sessions.

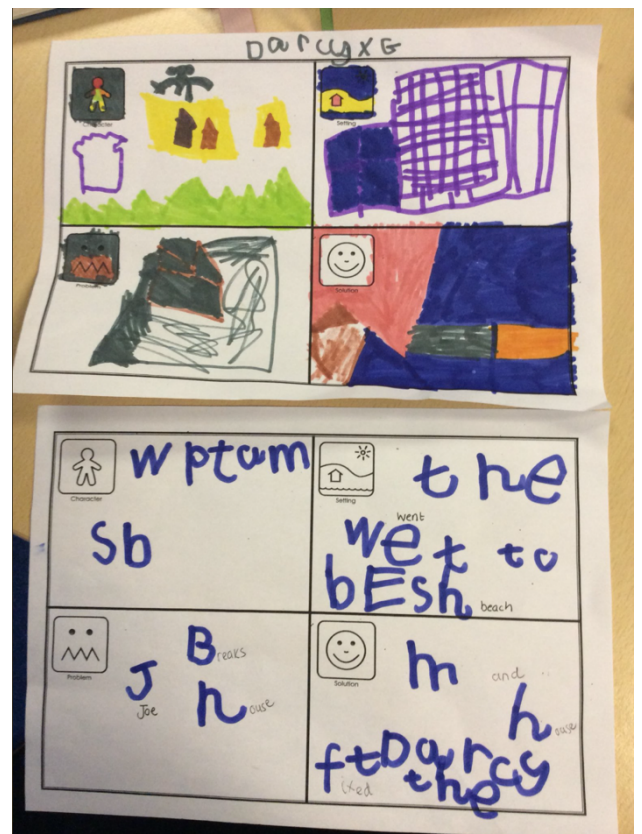
And when your child is familiar with the structure of Tales Toolkit there are lots of resources to get them writing their stories and becoming authors of their own tales.



How does it help your child?

There are lots of benefits to using Tales Toolkit. Here are just a few of the things you will see improve in your child:

- Communication and language skills
- Social skills
- Confidence
- Creativity
- Literacy
- Problem solving skills

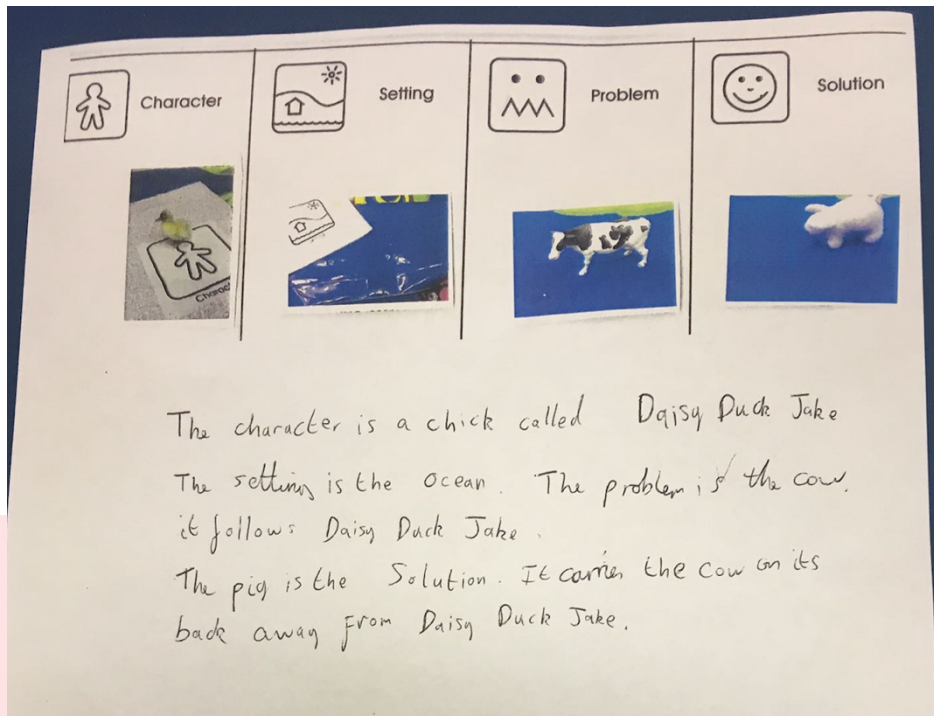


Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Goldsmiths University in London ran a year-long study to look at the difference made by Tales Toolkit and they saw improvements across every of learning.

How can you use Tales Toolkit at home?

On this website you'll find films and ideas from us, experts and schools all over the world. Using these you'll be able to create and write your own Tales Toolkit stories with your child. You can film your story, print off some of our templates and write your stories, just notes down the stories your child creates, draw your own symbols, use large pieces of paper on the floor and mark make stories. There's no wrong way of doing this, it's all about having fun and creating tales together.



When recording your child's stories, write exactly what your child says, word for word. Just remember, there are no wrong answers, Tales Toolkit stories can be random and creative, if they tell you the story was about a duck wearing space wellies, then go with the flow!

As your child becomes more familiar with Tales Toolkit you might hear them start to use the story language discussing characters, settings, problems and solutions. We encourage children to make links with the story structure and real-life situations, finding solutions to problems in their everyday life and this is something you can do at home too. You might even try imagining some magic solutions!

If you do create Tales Toolkit stories at home, then share them with us! You should be proud of the progress your child makes and show off your fantastic stories with your child's teacher.



When telling Tales Toolkit stories here are some top tips

Create a safe space

- Anything your child says is ok, they might use silly words, random ideas and want to explore violence (for example using phrases like 'hit him,' 'throw her in the bin,' etc.) this is ok. Children explore the things they see, hear and experience around them and story gives you a safe space to discuss these. Please chat with us or your child's teacher if you want some more advice on this.
- There are no right or wrong answers. When retelling stories your child will remember the bits that were important to them. When your child first starts to tell you stories their stories will be simpler, this is ok and it's wonderful to see the stories and retelling become more detailed in time.
- Turn off background noise, find a cosy space, get down to the same level as your child and put aside some time to create stories so your child has your full attention.



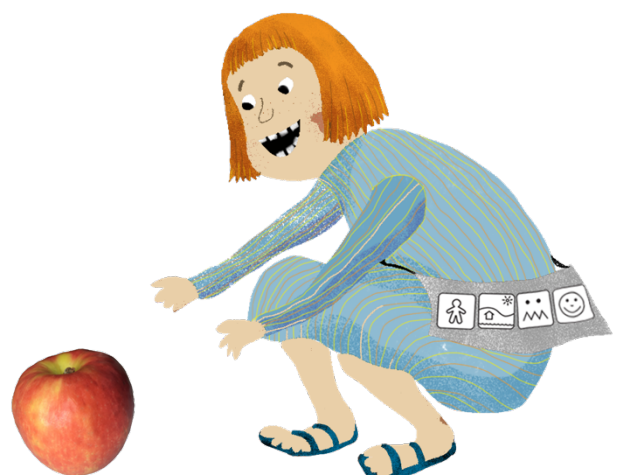
Let the child lead

- Include things in your stories that your child is interested in. For example, favourite toys, cartoon characters, pictures of family, you're the best person to know what they like.
- Count to ten before you jump in to help! (it can feel like a long time!) Sometimes, children need a bit longer to work out what they want to say next, especially if they're creating stories independently, so be patient and be sure to encourage their own ideas!



Make it fun!

- Funny voices, silly actions, songs and dances are all ways to have a laugh with your child, whilst creating a great story too! Anything goes, and this will help you rediscover your own creative side.



Here are just a few ideas of the kind of things you can say when chatting through a story with props. Try not to ask too many questions. You don't need to say all of these, choose your favourites.



Character

I wonder who's in the character bag today?

Who's this? I would like to know his name.
Can you think of a name for him?
He hasn't got a name, maybe we could help him.
I wonder what he likes doing?



Setting

Let's look in the setting bag to see where he's going.

I wonder where this can be?
Have you been anywhere that looks like this?
What can you hear/see/smell/do/touch?
What does the character do in this setting?
It's very shiny and blue, I'm trying to think of where I know that is blue and shiny.
This material is green, I'm trying to think of a place where I've seen green before.
Our character is very excited to be at the beach, I wonder what he's going to do here.
I'd like to know what (Bob) is going to do at the beach



Problem

Our character _____ was having lots of fun when 'Oh no, a problem!'

I wonder who/what this is....?
Why is it a problem for our character (Bob)?
I'm trying to think why _____ might be a problem.
How can we help?
At this point encourage the children to suggest ideas and try them out with the props. For whatever reason, their solutions don't work.
Oh no! That was a great idea. But it didn't work! What else could we try?



Solution

Let's look in the solution bag to see if there's anything that can help?

What/who is this?
I wonder how this might help our character to solve the problem.

You now have a better idea of how Tales Toolkit works. Just remember there are no wrong answers, make sure you have lots of fun and enjoy creating stories with your child!



If you're interested, Tales Toolkit have a book available to buy. You can use this with your child at home to create and write your own stories. You'll find this in the shop section of the Tales Toolkit website or right at the bottom of the resources section in this website.



For more information you can check out the Tales Toolkit website www.talestoolkit.com

There are films you can watch on **YouTube** explaining more about Tales Toolkit.

And your team at school is always happy to chat if you have any questions or want to know more.

Tales Toolkit are always really excited to hear from families. You can email us at info@talestoolkit.com or share your stories on our Facebook and twitter pages. You might even see one of your school stories on their page!

Thank you for your support.
We're sure you'll have lots of fun creating Tales Toolkit stories with your child.
We can't wait to hear your tales!