



10 Tips for Beginning to Tell Stories to Children

1. Choose a story you enjoy, and want or need to share. Avoid dry 'myths'; go for surprise or excitement.
2. Identify and learn the 'bones' of the story, not the exact text.
3. Remember a story in the mouth works differently from a story on the page. Simplify language and description, and keep to the action of the main tale.
4. Tell the story to yourself – a few times. Then check the book text and put the book away again.
5. Make the tale into your version of the story, not the voice of the author where you found it. They found it and changed it before you did!
6. Do not start telling till all the children are settled and ready. Start off with something they can join in with – a song or a rhyme. It will gather them in and focus them.
7. Decide in advance how and where you will begin. Use a formula – 'Once upon a time...' or 'Did you hear about the...' – if you want.
8. Remember to recap a couple of times, especially after interruptions.
9. Do not use puppets, illustrations or other physical aids the first time you tell a story, just get through it – bare bones if need be – and never apologise for the quality of what you did or identify omissions.
10. **Have fun!** If you don't enjoy it, how can they?

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