

The Kids' STORYTELLING CLUB

Special Presentation!



Storytelling At Home

By Vivian and Barbara Dubrovin

Are you spending some time at home? Is a storm or other weather keeping you in? Or maybe you are on vacation or have days off from school. Or you might have an injury or illness keeping you away from others. Whatever the reason, being at home can be a great opportunity to create and tell stories.

Storytelling does not only happen at big events or festivals. It can be a small group activity, telling to a few people, an informal story exchange. So being with family will give many chances to tell. You'll also be able to listen, to gather many bits and pieces of stories.

And if you are alone at home, the quiet time is a chance to put pieces together to develop new stories to tell. You might also create props to use in your next storytelling.

So, whether you are a beginner looking for a small easy audience, or an experienced teller wanting to practice new skills or create new tales, home-time can be story-time. Included here are easy tips and many ideas to inspire you. Choose whichever fits your life, your home. You'll not only have fun, you'll also improve skills for storytelling, such as:

- ★ How to improvise, adapt, modify. Use whatever is around you to create and tell.
- ★ How to be yourself and find your unique storyteller style. What's in your home is different than what's in your friends' or neighbors' homes. Your home reflects you. Stories created there will too.
- ★ How to tell about what you know about. This is very important because your best stories will be those inspired from your own life.

Your life is full of stories to tell. They are all around you. And your home is a wonderful place to find them.

HOME ALONE

Solo time is a great opportunity to be creative. You have time to think, and to imagine. You can create new tales. Or make simple props for your next performance. Choose crafts that use materials you have, or modify instructions to use whatever you find at home.

Homemade Story Props

Here's a list of twenty crafts we've done that can help tell stories, and are made from everyday items you may have at home. We've also listed where you can find detailed instructions and sample stories to use with them. These resources are in our online bookstore.

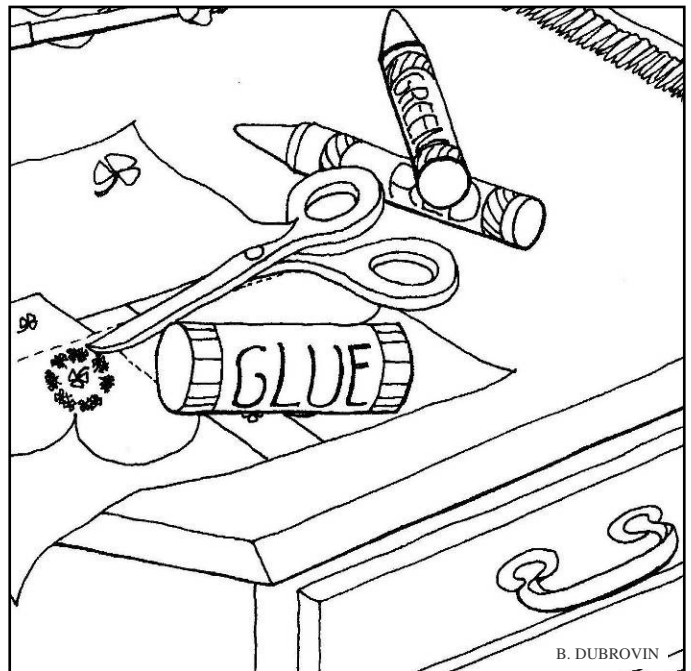
Don't have the books and can't wait? You can find many images in the Craft Closet in the Kids' Storytelling Club online Clubhouse. And some are popular common crafts so a quick search online will provide free instructions for many variations.

- ★ Yarn Doll (SFTFOI, p. 35)
- ★ Storytelling Stick (SFTFOI, p. 65)
- ★ Storytelling Quilt (SFTFOI, p. 85)
- ★ Felt or Fabric Finger Puppets (SFTFOI, p. 97)
- ★ Paper Snowflakes (SFTFOI, p.130)
- ★ Cookie Characters (SA, p. 15)
- ★ Glove Puppets (SA, p. 24)
- ★ Shadow Box Theater (SA, p. 37)
- ★ Topsy-Turvy Doll (SA, p. 45)
- ★ Storytelling Pillow (SA, p. 54)
- ★ Oven Mitt Puppet (TT, p. 19)
- ★ Ghost Marionette (SD, p. 17)
- ★ Rock Art (SD, p. 25)
- ★ Draw-n-Tell Finger Sponge Art (SD, p. 31)
- ★ Yard Rake Puppets (SD, p. 65)
- ★ Fairy Garden Popsicle Stick Fairies (FS Ebook)
- ★ Sock Doll Marionette (EBT Ebook)
- ★ Paper Boxes; cubes, pyramids, hexagons, hearts (print books, and online)
- ★ Tissue Paper Mini-Ghost (JS Back-Issue, and old website)
- ★ The Peace Puzzle (Homepage) *

Props Help You Tell Stories

“Here, Let Me Show You”

Telling a story using a prop, even a very small simple one, can give you the self-confidence you need for a good performance. It gives your audience something to look at. And, it helps you get into the spirit of your story. A prop can be a craft you make, a puppet, or a toy. It's anything you hold while you tell a tale. Making a prop instead of buying one can help you really get to know your story's characters. A simple home-made prop can turn you into a storyteller. Try it. You'll see.



* *The Peace Puzzle is a complete project, with a craft, story, and telling suggestions, free to download at www.storycraft.com. You can make and tell it today!*

Improvise, Modify, and Adapt

Modifying crafts can make them even better storytelling props. For example, maybe you make a ghost marionette with a white plastic trash bag and dental floss, instead of the suggested white fabric, beads, and string. And maybe that makes it extremely lightweight so that it floats and twists a lot anytime a nearby door opens. Is it scaring others? Or is it scared and trying to get out of the way? What's your story there? Does it wish it was bigger and heavier "like it was supposed to be?" Or, is it happy to be the way it was made? Look again through the craft ideas list. Maybe instead of a paper snowflake that wanted to be a star, you cut paper flowers to tell a spring tale of a flower that wanted to be beautiful. What other crafts can you adapt, using whatever you have at home? Be creative! And tell your story!

Find Characters, Settings, And Plots From Your Own Life

"Oh, That's A Story?"

To be a good storyteller, tell about what you know about. Your stories will then be interesting and believable. But where are such stories hidden in your life? Here's a simple method to begin to find some at home, in just three days.

Day 1

First, start with a blank page. At the top, write simple facts about yourself: your name, your birthday, your home town, your family's names, your school. Then write a few complete sentences: what is your favorite class at school? Who do you eat lunch with? What do you like to eat for lunch? Then, look out the window, describe what you see. Be specific. Then write something you did yesterday, and something you did last year. Fill one page only. Then stop. Put it aside. Do something else.

The next day, start with a blank page (don't just add to the first one). Write down a family member's name, or a pet's. Then write their birthday, their home town, their favorite thing to wear. Write a complete sentence about a place you went together, and another sentence about what you ate there. Remember, anything that comes to mind while doing this, write that too. Write no more than one page. At the bottom, stop. Set it aside.

Day 2

Day 3

The third day, again start with a blank page. Write the name of someone you don't know well, a family friend or a neighbor. Write their birthday (if you know it), their home address, their workplace or school. Describe a place you went together recently. What did you do there? What did you eat? Again, write the extra thoughts you have while doing this. Fill one page only. Then stop. Do something else.

The next day, you will already be thinking of who else you'd write about and things you did, places you went. Those are all pieces of stories – characters, plots, settings – that you can collect for future stories. It's really that easy to train your mind to start looking for stories in your life! Try it. See what story pieces you find hiding between the lines as you write.

You can find help to put those pieces together into complete stories in *Create Your Own Storytelling Stories*, by Vivian Dubrovin.

Here's the key to all this: if something pops into your head while writing (it will) write that, too. Even if it's about someone or something else. It may be some trivia about a friend or relative, or something that happened at school. Write it down. You're not writing a complete story here, you're learning to find bits of stories in your life, wherever they're hiding.



TOGETHER TIME

There are many opportunities for storytelling at home with the people who live with you. You might be:

- ★ Babysitting younger siblings while parents are at work or are working from home
- ★ Telling bedtime stories to siblings, for good dreams and quiet sleep
- ★ Exchanging casual tales or pieces of family stories at the dinner table
- ★ Helping parents with chores or home repair projects, learning of family traditions
- ★ Playing sports or games in the yard, telling of similar experiences while waiting your turn
- ★ Creating arts or crafts together, telling stories that stretch imagination

You might also set aside special storytelling times to entertain with a story specially created for small audiences. You might even use a new prop to tell it, with a craft you just made at home!

Wherever you find the opportunity, creating and telling at home can give you a real sense of accomplishment during your home-stay, and it will help you tell better stories later, everywhere.

Storytelling Is In-Between Conversation and Performance

“Who Are You Talking To?”

Remember, each telling of a story will be unique. What the audience knows or likes will affect what part of the story the teller focuses on. So you need to know your audience to be a good teller. And you know your family! So you already know how to adapt a tale so they will enjoy listening. How would you tell to your little sister, or the same story to your grandma? Or to everyone at once? How does it change?

Your family is the easiest audience you can ever have. It may be so easy, it sometimes seems just like conversation. Take advantage of home time and this “practice audience” to improve how well you adapt a tale as you tell.



Home-Time Is A Time To Learn About Family

“He Sure Is A Character!”

You might learn of people you’d not heard of before, or learn more details about names you already know. Maybe you learn that your uncle when he was young was a crossing guard helping other kids get to school, Or, that your grandma made peanut butter and... *lettuce...* sandwiches. Or you might be reminded how your grandpa would always offer the last serving of food to everyone else at the table, even though he really wanted it, until someone would say, “We don’t want it! Go ahead. Eat it!”

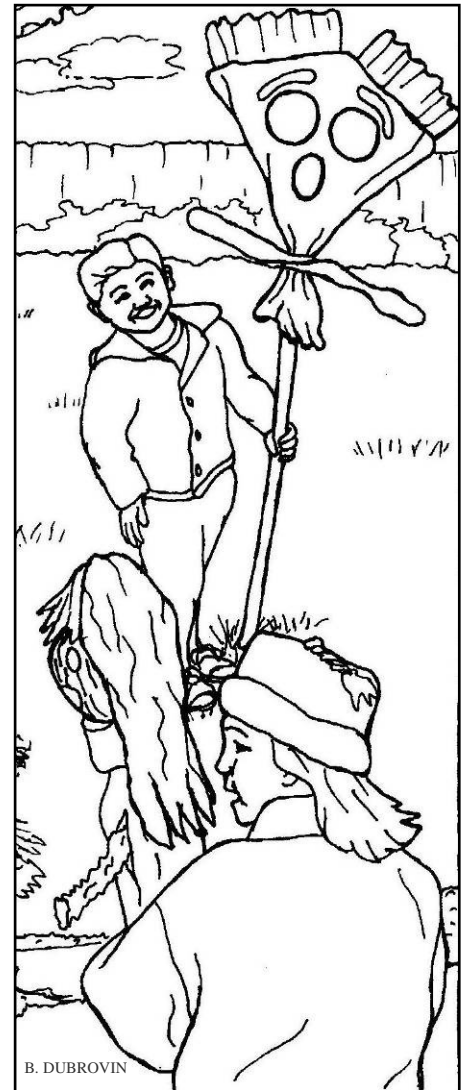
You might think you’ll remember such gems, but write them down. You’ll not only learn to appreciate your family more, these will inspire you to include interesting details for your next story’s characters, too.

How Do You Get Started? Give A Story to Get A Story

“Oh! That Reminds Me...”

Often, you’ll want to tell a story but can’t think of any...until a family member starts telling. Then stories may tumble into your head, too. When this happens, listen until the speaker is finished, then tell yours.

And then watch and see how many more you get! Stories multiply like this, especially when storytelling with your family.



MORE IDEAS

All this is just the beginning of creativity. You can find more ideas at a library or online. Here are a few specific resources that can help you keep going. Some are digital that you can download now while you wait for print book orders.

Ebooks, Kindle format (Amazon):

1. *Easy Beginner Tales*: Three projects for small audiences: A simple finger puppet, a sock-doll marionette, and a basic puzzle. You’ll learn to tell a complete story, interact with an audience, and not get scared or stuck in the middle of a story.
2. *Family Stories*: Three projects designed to be done at home will help you learn to use props, discover your family history, and create stories with your family while working on a project together.
3. *Finding Fun In Storytelling*: A simple stick from your yard, plus some string, beads or ribbons can turn you into a storyteller. Discover how.

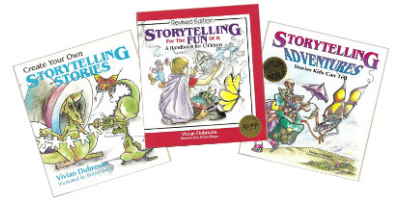
Ebooks, pdf format (www.storycraft.com bookstore):

1. *Discover Bright Fantasy*: To escape to a fantasy story, use origami monsters, storytelling cards and games, paper airplane dragons, and other easy home-made crafts. They’ll turn your ordinary experiences into fascinating fantasy tales.
2. *An Afternoon at Fantasy Fair*: Sample stories and friendly advice show how to turn everyday situations and events into fantasy tales.

Storytelling At Home

Recommended Print Books (at storycraft.com, and in many bookstores):

Storytelling For the Fun of It, by Vivian Dubrovin (SFTFOI)
Storytelling Adventures, by Vivian Dubrovin (SA)
Tradin' Tales With Grandpa, by Vivian Dubrovin (TT)
Storytelling Discoveries, by Vivian and Barbara Dubrovin (SD)
Create Your Own Storytelling Stories, by Vivian Dubrovin (CYOSS)



Each of these award-winning print books has storytelling projects you can do at home, or other places. You can find descriptions and prices at our website, www.storycraft.com

L king for More

Storytelling Ideas, Activities, Crafts, Sample Stories, and Advice?

We hope you've enjoyed this project presented by The Kids' Storytelling Club. At the Club you'll find more storytelling fun like this, with new ideas and timeless favorites, all to help you become a better storyteller.

The Kids'
STORYTELLING
CLUB

www.storycraft.com

Celebrating 25 Years Online!

Where Are We?

Storycraft Publishing for many years has been helping kids tell stories. Some of our print books and ebooks were published when we were located in Masonville, Colorado, and those still have our old address. You won't find us there anymore, we're now in Loveland, Colorado. But we're still at our same online home, www.storycraft.com. And you can contact us by email anytime: info@storycraft.com

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