

Welcome to your Bookstart Storyteller pack from BookTrust

We've worked with families and professionals to select the best books to get your story sessions going.

But the books and resources inside are just the beginning – the real magic happens through **you, our incredible storytelling partners.**

Your creativity and passion bring stories to life, inspiring children and families to read and share stories together, have fun and experience the benefits that reading can bring.

Making the most of reading with families

Since launching our Storyteller packs in 2022, we've worked with storytellers like you to understand what really makes a difference for families when it comes to reading and sharing stories.

Here are five useful tips:

1. Help parents and carers by role modelling reading

Demonstrating different ways to read and share stories, and how to make it fun and engaging, inspires and helps parents and carers to give it a try themselves.

84% of parents who had a demonstration of how to read a book tried to set up a reading routine, versus 65% of parents who didn't have one.*

2. Your words mean a lot

You can show parents and carers how to have fun, be silly, make mistakes, and reassure them that there's no right or wrong way to read and share stories with their children. Seeing other families joining in can help them to feel less awkward or unsure, and to give it a go!

The rhymes on the flashcards can help you encourage parents who may be reluctant to join in and build their confidence.

"With parents who maybe don't read themselves, and don't enjoy reading, we'll start off by saying 'You don't even have to read the words, you can just look at the pictures and tell the story your way.' And you can see it does impact parents, you see [them] going off into a corner with a book and their child and just really getting into the book with them."

BookTrust Partner, Northern Ireland

3. Choose interactive, relevant and inclusive books

Interactive books help children to be more involved in the story, and relevant and inclusive books help them to see themselves in the story and its characters. This helps to make stories more enjoyable, and when families are having fun with books, they're more likely to want to read and share stories together more often.

"I never used to read, but... I can see my bundle of joy get excited. The more exciting you make the story, the more the kids are going to want to read, and that's made me want to read more!"

Mother receiving our Bookstart pack, England

*Source: Bookstart Toddler and Pre-schooler evaluation 2023-24, online survey of 529 parents and carers from England, Wales and Northern Ireland



4. How you gift the pack is important

When you're with families, walk them through the books and props in the pack. Being shown how to use the packs can provide a bigger boost to confidence and engagement, compared to just telling them.

"It's silly things that seem so simple when you know them... how to get your children involved... because I know a lot of parents that just don't."

Mother receiving our Bookstart packs, England

5. Highlight the developmental benefits

Books that support age-appropriate development help children learn, and when parents and carers know what to look out for, and spot these benefits, they feel encouraged to keep going.

Parents and carers who were told about the benefits of reading were more likely to say they noticed their children interacting more when reading and sharing stories together.*

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Need recommendations on a specific theme or topic? Check out our curated booklists on our website for ideas tailored to your needs:

booktrust.org.uk/booklists

★ Discover the BookTrust Storytime Prize books

The books are perfect for reading aloud to children and are chosen for their ability to engage children under five. You can find them at your local library, or view the full list on our website:

booktrust.org.uk/storytime

You could use this as an opportunity to encourage your families to join their local library.



Looking for more storytelling inspiration?



Scan the QR code or visit: booktrust.org.uk/storyteller

to access the

Bookstart Storyteller Hub, where you will find activity ideas, downloadable tools and tips to help bring these stories to life.



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You
bring
the
magic

Your Storyteller's Guide

*Source: Bookstart Toddler and Pre-schooler evaluation 2023-24, online survey of 529 parents and carers from England, Wales and Northern Ireland