

Tales Toolkit – Everyone has a story



Since September 2019, as part of our School Improvement Plan, to help us to effectively support our children's learning and improve our own practice, we have been using 'Tales Toolkit' to support our children at nursery with their storytelling.

Here's what Tales Toolkit say...





Tales Toolkit is a learning tool that effectively develops children skills in lots of areas of learning and including language, literacy, social skills, creativity, confidence, empathy, writing, problem solving, maths and lots more

- It is fun and engaging for both children and staff
- Children working at different levels and with different needs are all involved and learning
- Children lead the stories. They use props linked to the community and their interests to help them with their story telling
- Lessons are easy, simple to follow and lead to consistency in staff practice
- Tales Toolkit resources are used across many settings as an effective assessment tool

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Tales toolkit uses the following symbols (and we also use signs as well) on 4 bags that also have story props in them, to help children to tell their own stories.



	Character
	Setting
	Problem
	Solution

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Task 1: Next time you read a story with your child talk to them about the different elements of the story

Story Element	Think about the following questions and encourage/ support your child to use lots of different words, noises and actions to describe and bring the story to life. These can be real or nonsense words
<u>Character:</u> Who is in the story (concentrate first on the main character?)	What do they look like? How do they sound? How do they feel? How do they smell?
<u>Setting:</u> Where does the story take place?	What does it look like/ sound like? How does it smell? What time of day is it? What can you see?
<u>Problem:</u>	What is the problem? Why is it a problem for the character? What does the character say?
<u>Solution:</u> How can the problem be fixed/ solved?	What is the solution? How can it help to solve the problem?

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Now let's take it a bit further and get even more creative...

Task 2: Firstly find 4 objects or props from your house.

The first one will be the **character**. This could be for example a soft toy or small word play model or could even be something as random as an old toothbrush with a face drawn on it!

Secondly the **setting**. This can be a bit tricky. You could use a picture or photograph of a place...this could be somewhere new or somewhere that that you've been before or you may like to use something a bit more open like some grass clippings from the garden or a piece of fabric.

The third it is going to be your **problem**. Remember don't be too prescriptive, it can be a very random object. Don't expect your child to use it in the way that you think...just let them come up with their own ideas.

Lastly one more object to be the **solution**. Again this can be very random and doesn't have to link (in your mind) to any of the other objects.

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So for example you may have...



Rubber duck
Character



Grass clippings
Setting



Fork
Problem



Piece of string
Solution

Remember these are just ideas but you can use whatever you like and have got at home.

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Each time when you give the objects to your child get them to look, touch, and smell the objects to get a real feel for them. Use the words (character, setting, problem, solution) and show them the symbols if possible or you could simply show them on your mobile device.

Character: Give the first object to your child, ask them to describe. Support them by adding new words as necessary, but remember to give them lots of opportunities to share their own ideas and descriptions. The words they use may be these may be real or nonsense words, the character's name, noises of how the character sounds, what he/ she says or how they feel. Summarise what your child has said (you may even like to write it down or draw it as a reminder) then move on to the setting.

Setting: Give them the second object. Encourage and support your child to describe where their story takes place, what it looks like and how it feels, smells, is it a nice place or not and why? Again summarise their ideas and then show them the problem.

Problem: Give them the third object. Get them to think and talk about why the object is a problem. What has happened? How did it happen? How was the character effected? Remember to value your child's ideas (however random they are) by listening really well and then summarise what they have said before moving on to the solution.

Solution: Give them the final object. Support your child to talk about why the last object is a solution that solves the problem. What will the character do? How does the solution help? Why does it solve the problem? By the time you summarise the final ideas of your child, they (and you) will have created a fantastic story together...and of course remember to congratulate your child on how brilliant their story is!

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The first time you do this your child's story may be short, but as they get used to the format (which we have been using a lots at nursery as well) then their stories will just get better and better and they may even start to use the process independently to help them with their own story-telling.

So play around with ideas and props and have lots of fun storytelling! Remember of course to tell us and show us the stories that you have created on Tapestry.

