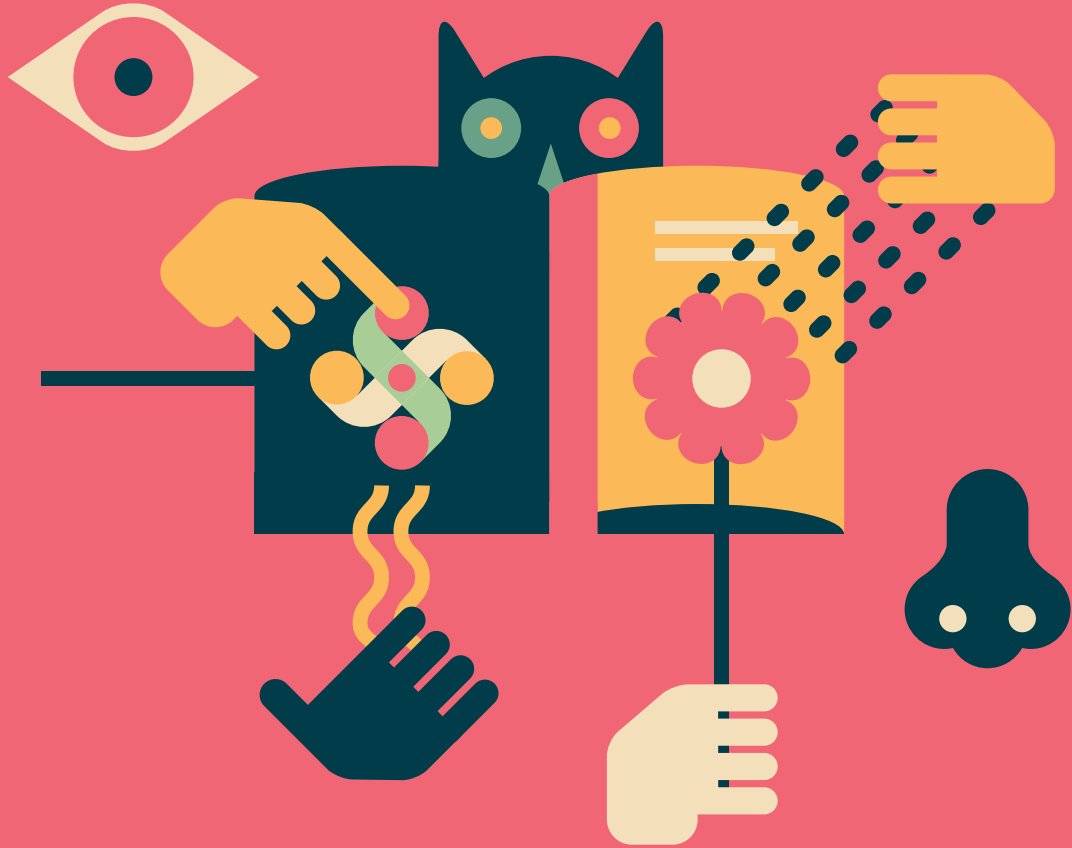


The
Storytelling

Project at SAAAC





Introduction

Welcome to *The Storytelling Project at SAAAC* and the world of sensory storytelling! In this guide, you will find suggestions and a template on how to adapt a favourite story or create your own through the use of the five senses – touch, sight, sound, taste and smell. This approach provides more opportunities for an adult and child to understand, interpret and engage with a story. You can start with a favourite bedtime story, and eventually create your own stories – all with the help of everyday items found at home, and your local dollar store. Use your imagination! Sensory storytelling is easy, fun and an opportunity to spend creative time with your child or students.



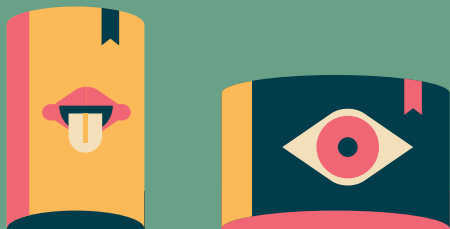
Don't forget...

A story can also be told while preparing dinner, or at bathtime – storytelling isn't just for bedtime.

How?

How to make a story
a sensory story. Step by step...

1.




Choose your story

Choose your story: perhaps your child's favourite story or a popular children's book.

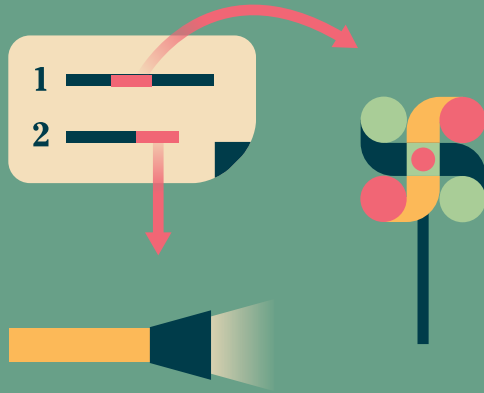
2.



Simplify it to 8–10 sentences

Simplify the story into 8–10 sentences. It's ok if you do not say the exact words of the story.  **Keep the sentences short and simple – stories don't have to be too long.**

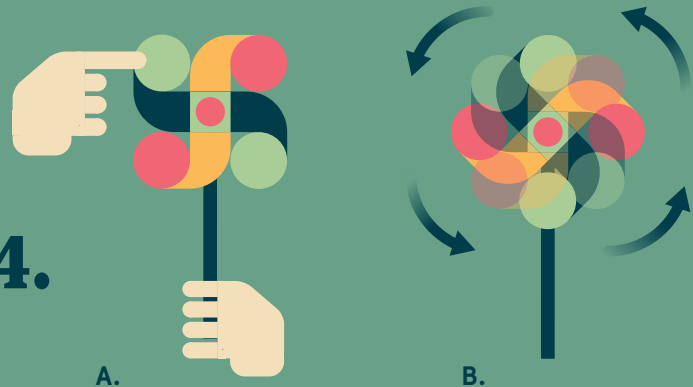
3.



Choose an object that represents each sentence

For each sentence choose an object that represents an important element of that sentence. 🖐️ Think about all the senses when you choose an object – touch, taste, smell, sight and sound. Actions are great too! Give a hug, tickle, high-five or clap. If you use the same object or action for another sentence that's just fine! 🗡️ Look around your home or classroom for objects – a pencil can be a wand and a blanket can be a dark cave.

4.



Practice actions to perform with each object

Use the template below as an aid and practice! Review your ten sentences and experiment with the objects and with your voice. 🗣️ You can whisper, shout, even make up character voices. Placing the items in a bag and revealing them sentence by sentence creates suspense and excitement. Keep telling the story. 👁️ Your child will learn the actions and words, and will join in with the storytelling.

My Story:



Story



Object/
Gesture



Action

e.g.

Example from *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown:

In the great green room

There was a telephone

And a red balloon

And a picture of—

Red balloon

Blow up the red
balloon and move it
around the room.

1.

2.

Story Ideas:



GOING ON A BEAR HUNT

by Michael Rosen

1. Green pom pom for the grass
2. Spray bottle for the river
3. Playdough for mud
4. Xylophone music for the forest
5. Blanket for the dark cave
6. Bear stuffy for the bear

THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR

by Eric Carle



1. Plastic egg on a leaf
2. Toy caterpillar
3. Plastic wind up teeth to eat up the fruit
4. Different fruit or cake to taste
5. Pillow case for the cocoon
6. Butterfly wings for the transformation



MY MOTHER'S SARI

by Sandhya Rao

1. A sari or big piece of fabric
2. Use the fabric and transform it into different objects and actions from the book

GOODNIGHT MOON

by Margaret Wise Brown



1. Flashlight for the light of the moon
2. Telephone
3. Red Balloon
4. Hairbrush
5. Mittens
6. Socks

Or Write Your Own:

1.

Choose a theme such as a trip - traveling by car, plane, bicycle, or walking.

Or choose an everyday activity such as brushing teeth or bathtime. Have fun with fantasy and magic (wands, spells, giants, unicorns).

2.

What are the main objects in your story?

Bathtime: water, bubbles, bath toys

3.

Who is the main character in the story?

Your child? A family pet? An imaginary friend?

4.

What is going to be the 'oh no' moment or the turning point of the story?

For example the sea runs dry (drain the bath) and the hero has to escape (lift child out of the bath and wrap in a towel).

5.

Write out each sentence including the objects and actions to be used.

See following pages for template.



Example:

Asha's Adventures at

THE PARK



Asha asks her mom: “Please Mom can we go to the park? Please?” Mom replies: “Ok, let’s go!” Asha lifts her arms in the air and with a smile says: “Yay!”

At the park, Asha runs through the green grass, smells the flowers, and goes down the slide: “1,2,3 wheeeeeee” ...bump!

Then her mom pushes Asha on the swing, and Asha pretends to go as high as outer space. She imagines she’s an astronaut flying around the planets and stars.

Suddenly it starts to rain, and Asha’s mom says: “I think it’s time to go home...and eat some ice cream.”



Inspired by an everyday activity.

Let's break it down...





Story



Object/ Gesture



Action

-
1. Asha asks her mom: “Please Mom can we go to the park? Please?”

Hands



Sign for please with your hands.
 2. Mom replies: “Ok, let's go.”
Asha lifts her arms in the air and with a smile says: “Yay!!”

Hands and Facial Expression



Show a smile on your face and lift arms up in the air.
 3. At the park Asha runs through the green grass,

**Green fabric/
green pom pom or
real grass**



Spread out the green fabric and run your hands through it. Or shake the green pom pom
 4. smells flowers,

**Real flowers or
plastic flowers**



Smell flowers
-

5. and goes down the slide: “1,2,3 wheeee”...bump!

Gestures with hands and facial expression



Pretend to climb up a slide and count 5 steps on your way up. Show a surprised face when you land at the end 'bump.'

6. Then her mom pushes Asha on the swing, and Asha pretends to go as high as outer space.

Gestures with hands



Give a push, and then pretend to fly in slow motion.

7. She imagines she's an astronaut flying around the planets

Bubbles



Blow bubbles

8. and stars.

Sing



Sing 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star'

9. Suddenly it starts to rain,

Spray water bottle



Spray in the air and on hands to feel the rain.

10. Asha's mom says: “I think it's time to go home and eat some ice cream.”

Ice cream



Sign for home and prepare an ice cream cone or pretend to eat an ice cream cone.

Credits/Thank you

I was first introduced to sensory storytelling during my time at Mencap, the UK's leading charity for people with intellectual disabilities. I joined their project called *Bags of Ability* as a Sensory Storyteller, where my role involved visiting daycares, schools, and community centres to lead workshops for children and their parents or caregivers. I loved working with children and using this sensory storytelling approach to support their early literacy and speech development skills. The importance of working alongside parents and caregivers to strengthen their storytelling skills and confidence was an unexpected outcome for me and one I really valued. During this project, I trained with Dr. Nicola Grove, founder of OpenStorytellers, and she taught me the importance of telling stories with children, instead of telling stories to children. *The Storytelling Project at SAAAC* was inspired by my work and training at Mencap. Meeting and working with Geetha Moorthy, Founder and Executive Director of The South Asian Autism Awareness Centre has been a tremendous opportunity. Geetha understands and celebrates the importance of the arts in education, and with her support and encouragement *The Storytelling Project at SAAAC* was born.

Thank you to our Program Partners: The Ontario Arts Council and Unity for Autism. These great organizations believed in our project and provided funding to make it possible.

A heartfelt thank you to the following believers and collaborators: Geetha Moorthy, Mike Lake, Jillian Pearson, Koby Barhad, Leyland Cecco, Jean Hage and the team at The SAAAC Autism Centre.

Carrie Hage

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About

Carrie Hage

Carrie is an actor, artist educator and facilitator with a specialization in working in accessible arts programming. After completing her Masters in Applied Theatre at Goldsmith's University, London, UK in 2013, she worked for two years as a youth program coordinator and sensory storyteller for Mencap, the UK's leading charity for people with intellectual disabilities. In Toronto, Carrie has collaborated on arts-education projects with Young People's Theatre, Story Planet, PAONE, L'Arche Toronto, and the Toronto District School Board, and most recently with the South Asian Autism Awareness Centre.

Booklet

Adapted by Carrie Hage

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The South Asian Autism Awareness Centre (SAAAC)

SAAAC was created with the intention of inspiring families in need of access to autism services, with a special focus on serving culturally and linguistically diverse families in need of support.

The organization looks to create positive change through:

- Encouraging lifelong development of the children, youth, and adults they serve through diverse therapies and programs
- Empowering parents through education, training, and peer support networks
- Engaging communities through meaningful volunteer experiences and fostering greater understanding and acceptance of autism
- Providing access for all through community engagement and knowledge sharing

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