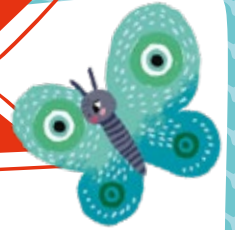




HOW TO USE STORYTIME IN THE CLASSROOM: A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



Thinking of subscribing to Storytime for your school, but not sure how to get the best from it in your classroom? Read on for some inspiration.

We have hundreds of school subscribers across the UK and many more around the world who, along with their pupils, look forward to getting Storytime every month. When we chatted to these teachers, head teachers and primary English leads, we were delighted to hear how many engaging and inspiring ways in which Storytime is being used.

We've compiled their suggestions, along with our own ideas, to give you a helpful guide on how to use Storytime in your school.

1 GUIDED READING

Divide your class into small groups by ability level. You could have a guided reading session with one small group per day, ensuring that the whole class has had a session by the end of the week, or it can be done in one big session using extras TAs or reading volunteers. Let the children in each group choose a story they like best from Storytime and make sure they each have a copy. As they read the story quietly to themselves, go around the group asking individual children to read short sections aloud and ensuring that each child can read any challenging words and comprehend their meaning. Also ask questions at the end to check understanding, and discover what children can deduct or predict from the text.

2 SHARED READING

You can use Storytime to share stories with a whole class of children or smaller groups who can't yet read the magazine independently, but need to be stretched and challenged. Storytime is a great way to introduce younger children to slightly longer texts, more complex words and ideas, and how a story is constructed – especially as it features familiar fairy tale and fables. The illustrations for each story enhance understanding of the text and are also good starting points for discussions and predicting what might happen next. Hearing you reading stories also helps children to model an expressive reading style and improve their own oracy. However, do make it an interactive session, checking understanding of the story along the way, encouraging questions, and picking out individual words or phrases on the whiteboard to explore them further.

3 1-TO-1 READING

Sessions with individual children who might be struggling or reluctant readers reap huge benefits. Where books fail because they feel too daunting or overwhelming, short stories in an illustrated magazine format succeed. And if one story isn't working, there are several different stories to choose from in every Storytime magazine. 1-to-1 reading sessions can also be assigned to TAs or reading volunteers, who can offer guidance, support, reading strategies and focused attention. These sessions can take place in class or in a quiet area, such as a library.



4 PEER-TO-PEER READING

Also called paired reading, partner reading, or buddy reading, this is when older and more confident readers (years 5 or 6, for instance) are paired with younger children and either read to them or listen as the younger child reads, helping them if they get stuck. There's a lot of evidence that this is a really effective (and money-saving) way to improve whole school reading. As a result, in 2018, Storytime launched its Reading Buddies Scheme with a whole pack to help you get peer-to-peer reading started in your school, including tips, a progress card, certificates, activities and more. It is currently being used in schools across the country and you can download it for free here: <http://www.storytimeforschools.com/readingbuddies/>

5 INDEPENDENT READING

For years 5 and 6 upwards, find some time in the curriculum to allow the whole class to just drop everything, sit down and read the book or magazine of their choice. A reading session where there are no questions, no analysis and no comprehension can have a hugely positive effect on attitudes to reading, allowing children to view reading as something pleasurable, rather than a chore. We've found that Storytime comes into its own in this situation, as it's possible to read one or two self-contained stories in a short session, rather than part of a chapter of a book, which might be forgotten by the next session. For this reason, we're stocked by many school libraries, wishing to offer a range of reading materials to children.

6 WHOLE-CLASS READING

A good old-fashioned story time session, where children just sit and listen to you reading a story might not bring the tangible reading results of the approaches listed above, but it offers many benefits, including class unity, immersion and calm. Also, it might just be the only time some of the children in your class ever have a story read to them, which in turn creates positive associations with reading. For not-so-confident readers, you could always use the same story in your next guided reading session – or divide the class into groups after your Storytime session and ask them to discuss the story and answer questions as a team.

We hope you've found this helpful and if you have any further questions, don't hesitate to contact the Storytime team at hello@storytimemagazine.com



In the meantime, for more reading styles you can use with Storytime – from choral reading to fill-in-the-gaps – see our blog, **5 Reading Styles That Work:** <https://www.storytimemagazine.com/news/inside-stories/5-reading-styles-that-work/>