



**From stories  
to creative  
roleplays -  
also in your  
own language**

A love of language starts in loving arms\*. Reading is a pleasant shared activity for a parent and child, and it also develops the child's language and speech, listening and focusing skills and vocabulary.

By telling stories, you can also make it easier for the child to join play groups at a playground, day-care centre, family day care, club, library or courtyard.

The contents of children's games and the relationships created when they play can be enhanced, even across language boundaries, with a story diploma, family stories or the story-crafting method, where an adult writes down the story told by a child word for word.

## Let's tell stories and fairy tales!

### INSPIRE

An inspiring storyteller inspires children to wonder, leaves room for them to ponder and react, encourages them to share their experience and does not explain the story in too much detail.

The child gets to influence how interesting storytime is through breaks, the adult's playful gestures and questions as well as looking at the pictures together. What thoughts and feelings did the story evoke? The lesson or key message of the story develops in the child's consciousness, and gradually the different pieces find their places.

### TAME THE STORY

You should tame the story before telling it by familiarising yourself with the plot and creating a series of mental images about the situation and characters. It is enough to learn a few typical sentences by heart. You do not need to repeat the text word for word. The storyteller's own mental image tempts the child's imagination, when they trust it.

### REPEAT

The basic elements of an interesting fairy tale or other story include:

- The "Once upon a time..." framework (pretending that it might have happened once)
- a clear plot and characters
- struggle between good and evil
- the hero overcomes obstacles
- a happy ending.

A child gets excited about a story that has something relevant to their current thoughts. You should read or tell it to the child for as long as they want to hear it again. Fear is fascinating, but the story must not be too exciting, as all children react differently. The child must not be left alone with fear.

### WHERE TO FIND STORIES?

The list of books of the Story diploma, which playfully encourages storytelling, specifies the languages in which each book is available at libraries. This means that a group of children can choose a book that families can read in their native language at the same time. This way, familiar stories help create a foundation for shared imagery in creative role-playing games – even across language boundaries.

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Stories connected to family items and photographs interest children and are already “tame.” Such stories, when shared in a group of children, can also provide material for shared games.

Imaginary stories that children invent themselves can also serve as starting points or added flavour for the group’s creative games. In the **story-crafting method**, for example, the adult says: “Tell a story or fairy tale, just the way you want it. I will write it down word for word, just the way you tell it. When the story is complete, I will read it out to you so that you can fix it if you want.” In the story-crafting method, the adult does not anticipate or guide the course of discussion or assess the story. The storyteller gets to decide what they want to tell, how they want to tell it and what they want to leave out.

## Enrich play with stories and fairy tales!

### PARENTS CAN SUPPORT PLAY

Parents can share their observations about what inspires the child about stories. This helps address the topics that interest each child based on stories that have become familiar to the whole group.

The stories are repeated through drawing, singing, dancing and other methods at day-care centres, clubs, playgrounds and libraries during story hours in different languages. This helps children find different perspectives on the events of the story, expand their outlooks and inspire each other.

This way, the building blocks of storified play between children and adults can be created from stories that inspire the children the most, including by adjusting them or combining elements from different stories. Building together with children by negotiating – an imaginary situation

- characters that each child chooses themselves
- rules to guide how the roles are implemented
- a preliminary storyline that starts evolving in play.

### PLAYGROUNDS AND DAY-CARE CENTRES CAN SUPPORT PLAY

In storified plays of children under school age, professional educators throw themselves into the play in costumes, playing imaginary characters. Because more and more games played by young children lack older children to pass on play traditions, an adult’s input is needed.

As characters, adults have the opportunity – while supporting children’s initiatives and mutual interaction – to discreetly introduce surprising and challenging twists in the game and help children who have trouble joining in to also participate.

The following day, you discuss what really happened and brainstorm an inspiring continuation, which carries the dramatic plot twists, with the children for next time. Professional educators of children under school age actively participate in developing the game’s storyline and environment, negotiating the rules of the game, side by side and as equals with the children.

It is a game, not rehearsing a play. Respecting the child’s ideas and listening to them – grasping the beginnings created by the child – is the precondition for good games. At first, adults find it hard to step into their game role and play it out believably, but practice makes perfect. A game and a fairy tale have a very similar structure. Transferring the imaginary world of a well-chosen fairy tale into a game is one of the most effective ways of promoting play. •



#### Narrative Play

<https://bit.ly/2HFMAIL>

#### time travel

[www.Aikamatkalla.fi/en/](http://www.Aikamatkalla.fi/en/)

#### Storycrafting

<https://bit.ly/2RZqKo0>

Lähde: Hakkarainen, P. & Bredikyte, M. 2013.  
Kehittävän leikkipedagogiikan perusteet.

Helsinki

HYVINKÄÄ 

PORVOO  BORGÅ



Julkaistu 2018 Etelä-Suomen  
aluehallintoviraston rahoituksella.

Merkityksellinen Suomessa -toimintaohjelman  
tavoitteita tukeva Satukaravaani-hanke /  
Helsingin, Hyvinkään, Kirkkonummen ja  
Porvoon kirjastot ja varhaiskasvatus