Kindergarten reading: free stories for first words, safe and short

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Free short stories for kindergarten readers and a free AI story maker that keeps words few and gentle. What a kindergarten story looks like and how to read one.

For kindergarten reading, the stories on Peabody (peabody.kids) are a few short words a page, built from sight words and words a beginning reader can sound out. There's a free library of them that anyone can read, and a free AI story maker that writes a new one at the same level from a child's own ideas. Both are free through the end of 2027 and need no sign-up. They're built to be read together: a grown-up reads along and the child joins in on the words they know.

What a kindergarten story looks like

A story for a child just learning to read isn't a smaller version of a bigger story. It's built differently:

- One short sentence a page, usually six words or fewer.
- Sight words like the, and, see and can, the small common words children learn to read on sight.
- Words to sound out, like hop, mud and big, where each letter makes its usual sound.
- A line that repeats, so a child can predict and join in.
- One small idea, with a calm ending.

Peabody's early stories have pages of nine words or fewer, and each practice word shows up at least twice, so a child meets it again inside the same story.

Free kindergarten-level stories to read now

These are Peabody's own stories, written for the library and measured in code to find the level they really read at. Anyone can open them, with no account.

- A Bath for the Birds: Nell makes a bird bath from a tin pan, and the first bird flies away.
- A Boo for Bea: Max tries to stop his baby sister's crying, one idea at a time.
- Dot and the Log: a little duck wants a seat on the sunny log, and hopping isn't working.

Each is a good first read-together story, and short enough to read twice. If your child is a little younger, the Pre-K floor of the library has stories with just a few words a page, like Ben and the Blocks.

How to read a kindergarten story together

Reading with a young child isn't a test. A few small habits keep it warm:

1. Point as you read. A finger under each word shows that print goes left to right.
2. Let them take the words they know. If they know the or see, pause so they can say it.
3. Don't correct every slip. Say the word, and keep the story moving.
4. Reread a favourite. The second read is where a child is often quickest to join in.
5. Stop while they still want more. Five minutes is plenty.

For more, there's a post on sight words in stories, not flashcards.

How the AI story maker fits kindergarten

For children who want a story of their own, Peabody has an AI story maker. A child taps idea bubbles instead of typing, picks a mood like silly or cozy, and a story is written at their reading level. For a five-year-old, that means:

- They don't need to type or read much. Idea bubbles are drawn from a big pool of kid-friendly ideas.
- They pick the level, kindly. They tap the sentence they can read, from "I can see you." upward. It isn't presented as a test.
- Stories are gentle. Children using Peabody on their own are capped at gentle stories in the early grades.
- Every idea and story is screened before a child sees it, and kindergartners never chat with the AI.

You can read about the whole thing on the free AI story generator page, and about Peabody as a set of tools on the free AI learning tool for kids page.

What this is, and isn't

Honest limits, so you know what to expect:

- Peabody can't hear your child read. Nothing is recorded or scored by ear. A grown-up listening matters more than any app.
- Reading levels are estimates. They're a neighbourhood, not an address.
- It isn't a phonics program, and it doesn't diagnose or assess a child. If you're worried about a child's reading, talk to their teacher and ask about a reading assessment.

Try it tonight

Open peabody.kids, tap into a story from the library, or tap Make my own story! and choose a few ideas together. Read the first pages side by side.

Questions parents ask

Is Peabody free for kindergarten children?

Yes. Peabody is free for everyone through 31 December 2027, with no sign-up and no card.

Does my child need to be able to read already?

No. The earliest stories are for reading together, and every Peabody bubble can be read aloud with a button. That voice is the browser's own speech, and Peabody never listens.

Is it safe for a five-year-old?

Every idea and story is screened before a child sees it, kindergartners never chat with the AI, and stories for young readers stay gentle. No system is perfect, so a grown-up nearby is still the best safety feature.

Does my child need an account?

No. One tap makes a reader on that browser, with no name, email or password.

Free at peabody.kids/blog/free-ai-stories-for-kindergarten