Free AI story generator for kids: children's stories at their reading level

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Peabody turns a child's ideas into a short AI-written story at their reading level, screened for safety, with practice words inside. Free through 2026.

Peabody (peabody.kids) is a free AI story generator for kids. A child taps a few ideas, picks how the story should feel, and Peabody writes a short story at the level they actually read. The first three pages show up in seconds. Every idea and every story is screened for safety first, and each story carries a handful of practice words. It's free through the end of 2026, and there's no sign-up: one tap and your kid is reading.

There are a lot of AI story generators. Most are built for grown-ups who want a story for a child. Peabody is built for the child to read, which changes almost every decision underneath it.

What makes a story generator good for kids?

A story generator for adults only has to be clever. One for children has to do four more things:

1. Write at the child's reading level. A brilliant story a child can't read is a story a grown-up reads to them. That's lovely, but it isn't reading practice.
2. Stay safe without a grown-up hovering. Kids type surprising things. The tool has to catch problems before a child sees them, and redirect kindly rather than scold.
3. Never become a chat. A child shouldn't be talking back and forth with an AI, or with strangers.
4. End. A story should have a last page and a clear stop, not an endless feed.

Peabody was built around those four. Here's how each one works.

How Peabody writes a story from a child's ideas

On the Make a story page, a child can type an idea, or tap idea bubbles instead. Each time the page opens it draws a fresh mix of eight from more than 670 kid-friendly ideas (someone, somewhere, something happening), like a dragon who loves to bake, an underwater city or a backpack that's bigger inside. A button draws more. Then they pick a mood: funny, happy, exciting, adventure, silly, magical, mystery, cozy, intense, a bit sad, or spooky.

The story itself is written by an AI model, Claude Haiku from Anthropic. Peabody asks for the opening first: the title and three short pages that end on a question, so there is something to read within seconds of the tap. The rest of the book is written right after, pinned word for word to that opening so nothing changes under the child's feet.

Children can make up to three new stories a day. Reading is unlimited.

How it matches your child's reading level

The first time a child makes a story, Peabody shows a few sentences and asks them to tap the one they can read, from "I can see you." to "Above the timberline, the wind turned cold and the clouds began to build." That pick becomes their starting level, and the library opens on that floor too. A small button changes it any time.

Then code, not the AI, measures every story. Peabody checks sentence length and how many of the words are uncommon, using published readability formulas, and works out which level the text really reads at. For the youngest readers it counts words per page and sight words instead. You can read more in what "reading level" really means.

An honest note: measuring isn't the same as guaranteeing. Readability formulas wander by about a grade on a short story, so Peabody treats a level as a range, not a precise score.

The practice words inside every story

This is the part that makes Peabody a reading app and not just a story toy.

- Early readers (Pre-K to 1st grade) get stories built from sight words, the short, common words like the, said and was that children learn to read on sight. Each target word appears at least twice, and pages have nine words or fewer.
- Readers from 2nd grade up get five vocabulary words in each story, each used at least three times, so the meaning builds from context.

Before the story, a quick warm-up asks about the words cold. After it, a short check and four to six comprehension questions. A child can skip any of these; they're never a wall. Peabody only counts a word as "sticking" once it's right in the warm-up on three different days. The details are in how Peabody tracks the words your child knows.

How every story is kept safe

Every story goes through several screens before a child sees it:

- An idea screen before anything is written. Ideas that are clearly off-limits get a kind redirect from Peabody, never a scolding.
- Hard limits in the writing instructions: nothing sexual or romantic, no gore, no self-harm, no drugs, no profanity, no real brands or celebrities, no contact details, and no stories where keeping secrets from grown-ups is the clever move.
- Code checks on the finished text for contact details, links and a profanity list.
- An AI safety screen that passes, flags or blocks the story and labels how scary it is, with a second opinion from a stronger model whenever it isn't a clear pass.
- Anything still in question is held for a person to review and shown to no one until then.

Kids who use Peabody without a grown-up's account are capped at gentle stories until 1st grade and never go past "spooky". The full picture is in is an AI story generator safe for kids?

Not an open chatbot

The idea box is one-shot: ideas go in, a story comes out. There is no chat with an AI. With other kids it's tap-only phrases from Peabody's own list, except in the Dungeon Dweller game's online co-op, where every typed line is screened first and a grown-up chooses who their child can type to. Peabody the mascot talks in short, pre-written lines, and every line can be read aloud with the button for kids who can't read yet. That reading voice is the browser's own speech, and nothing is recorded. A button in a few boxes turns speech into typed words: the browser's own speech recognizer is tried first, which in browsers like Chrome and Safari may send the sound to the browser maker to do that, and where it is missing a small speech model (Whisper) runs on the device instead. Peabody never records or receives audio.

What it costs, and why it's free

Peabody is free for everyone through 31 December 2026, with no card. Aaron, the Colorado dad who built it, pays for every story. What comes after 2026 isn't decided yet, and nobody will be charged without choosing to pay.

Try it in two minutes

1. Go to peabody.kids and tap Make my own story!, or tap any book in the library.
2. Tap the sentence your child can read comfortably.
3. Pick a few idea bubbles and a mood, then Make it!
4. Read the first three pages together while the rest is written.

Prefer to start with something already written? The free library has Peabody's own stories from Pre-K to 8th grade, no account needed.

Questions parents ask

Is Peabody really free?

Yes. Peabody is free for everyone through 31 December 2026, with no card and no sign-up. What happens after that hasn't been decided, and you'll hear well before anything changes.

What ages is it for?

Peabody never asks a child's age. Stories run from very first words (a few words a page, best read with a grown-up) up to middle-school levels. The free library covers Pre-K to 8th grade.

Which AI writes the stories?

Claude Haiku, a model from Anthropic. Code measures each story's reading level, and separate safety screens check every idea and every story before a child sees it.

Can my child make unlimited stories?

Each child can make up to three new stories a day. Reading the library, rereading their own stories and math practice are unlimited.

Does my child need an account or an email?

No. One tap makes a reader on that browser, with a random pen name and face. Peabody asks for no name, no email, no age and no password.

Free at peabody.kids/blog/free-ai-story-generator-for-kids