# Free AI tutor for kids: what it can do, and what it can't

Peabody blog · Reading · updated 2026-10-18

What an AI tutor for kids can honestly do and can't, and how Peabody's free stories, word warm-ups and math practice compare to a chat tutor. Free through 2027.

An AI tutor for kids can explain an idea another way, give practice and check answers, but it can't replace a teacher or hear a child read. Peabody (peabody.kids) isn't a chat tutor: children don't talk with its AI at all. It's a free reading and math practice tool that works like a patient helper, with stories at a child's level, word warm-ups, comprehension questions and math problems that adjust. It's free through the end of 2027, with no sign-up.

## What do people mean by "AI tutor"?

The phrase covers two quite different things:

- A chat tutor: you ask a question, it answers, and you can go back and forth.
- A practice tutor: it gives a child material at the right level and checks what they did.

Peabody is the second kind, and we'd rather say so than borrow the first kind's name. Each has its place.

## What an AI tutor can do well

- Give unlimited patience. It will explain a fraction a fourth time without a sigh.
- Adjust the level. A good practice tool makes problems a little harder after a right answer and easier after a miss.
- Check an answer instantly, so a child isn't practising a mistake all evening.
- Make practice feel like something else, such as a story or a game.

## What it can't do

Honesty matters more here than anywhere:

- It can't hear a child read. Fluency, how a child decodes a tricky word, and where they stumble all need a person listening. Peabody records nothing and scores nothing by ear.
- It can't diagnose. No app can say a child has a reading or learning difference. If you're worried, ask the teacher about a reading assessment.
- It can be wrong. A chat tutor can state something false in a confident voice. Keep a grown-up in the loop.
- It can't notice a child's mood. A teacher or parent sees a sagging posture. An app doesn't.

- It can't replace school. It's extra practice.

## What Peabody does as a practice tutor

## Reading

A child taps the sentence they can read comfortably, and stories start at that level. Code measures each story's level, so it's checked rather than guessed. Levels are estimates, and a short story can wander by about a grade, so Peabody treats a level as a range. After a story:

- A warm-up asks about the practice words before reading, and a short check asks after.
- Four to six comprehension questions follow a new story. A child can skip any of it.
- A word counts as "sticking" only after it's been right on three different days. A miss puts it back to "practising".

The grown-ups' page shows which words are sticking and which are still practising, plus a question to ask tonight. There's more in how Peabody tracks the words your child knows.

## Math

Math practice is made and marked by code, not AI, so every answer is checkable. Each right answer makes the next problem a little harder, and each miss a little easier. A wrong answer gets a worked answer with a picture. See free times tables practice.

## Questions, but not a chat

If a child wants to ask "why", the best tutor is you. Questions to ask after reading has ideas that don't need an app.

## Why Peabody isn't a chat tutor

We chose this on purpose. A chat with an AI can wander anywhere, and children type surprising things. The idea box on Peabody is one-shot: ideas in, a story out, with every idea screened first. There is no chat with an AI. Between children it's tap-only phrases from Peabody's own list, plus the Dungeon Dweller game's co-op chat, where strangers get emote faces only and every typed line between family and approved buddies is screened first. For more on that, see An AI reading app for kids, with no open chatbot.

## How to use it like a tutor

1. Let the child pick the level, and move it up or down if a story's too hard or too easy.
2. Do the warm-up cold. It's a snapshot of what they remember, not a test.
3. Read the first page together, then let them carry on.
4. Look at the grown-ups' page once a week. It shows words, stories and a question to ask.
5. Talk to the teacher if something worries you. Peabody can show you words and stories, in plain terms, but a teacher can assess.

For the overall picture, the free AI learning tool for kids page lists everything inside, and the free AI story generator page covers the stories. Or open the library and begin.

## Learn more elsewhere

- Stanford SCALE: the evidence base on AI in K-12: a 2026 review: of more than 800 papers, about 20 were strong causal studies, and hint-giving tutors did better than answer-giving chatbots.
- Common Sense: AI chatbots and your child, by age: no chatbots at 5 and under, limited use beside a grown-up from 6 to 12, supervised use for homework from 13.
- National Student Support Accelerator: Stanford's research centre on tutoring, human and AI.

For about seventy more, checked and sorted by who they're for, see where to learn about AI.

For math in particular, see AI math tutor for kids: what it can do, what it can't, and free options. If your child wants to use ChatGPT itself, ChatGPT for kids sets out OpenAI's age rules and parental controls as of October 2026.

## Questions parents ask

### Is Peabody an AI tutor?

Not a chat tutor. It's reading and math practice that adjusts to a child, with AI used to write and screen stories. Children don't talk to the AI.

### Can an AI tutor teach my child to read?

It can give practice at the right level. Learning to read needs a person listening and a school's guidance. Peabody can't hear your child read.

### Is it free?

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

### What ages is it for?

Peabody never asks a child's age. Stories run from first words to middle-school levels, and the math page starts at 2nd grade.

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Free at peabody.kids/blog/free-ai-tutor-for-kids-what-it-can-do