How to make a story with AI with your kid, step by step

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A parent's walkthrough of making a story with AI for kids on Peabody, from picking ideas and a mood to reading the first pages together, plus tips for better stories.

Making a story with AI on Peabody (peabody.kids) takes about a minute. Your child taps or types a few ideas, picks how the story should feel, and taps Make it! The first three pages appear in seconds, ending on a question, and the rest of the story is written right after, at your child's reading level. It's free through the end of 2026, with no sign-up.

Here's the whole thing, step by step, with a few tips from watching kids do it.

Before you start

You need any phone, tablet or computer with a web browser. Nothing to install, and no account. If your child can't read yet, sit with them: every line Peabody says has a button that reads it aloud, but the story itself is made for reading together at that age.

Step 1: Open Peabody and tap "Make my own story!"

Go to peabody.kids. The front page is Peabody's library. Tap Make my own story! (or any book), and Peabody makes your child a reader on that browser, with a random face and a pen name. It may ask "What shall I call you?": that's optional, a made-up name is perfect, and if they skip it Peabody picks a fun one. No email is asked for.

Step 2: Tap the sentence they can read

The first time, Peabody shows a handful of sentences, from very easy to fairly hard:

- "I can see you."
- "He came to eat, and it was good."
- "Because it was cold, we found five green hats."
- "The old gate gave a long creak, and something tapped in the fog."

Your child taps the hardest one they can read comfortably, not the hardest one they can puzzle out. That becomes their starting level. Kids often aim high; it's fine to nudge them one easier. The level can be changed later with the small button, and Peabody shows a range of levels from Pre-K up.

Step 3: Pick some ideas

This is the fun part. The page shows idea bubbles in three kinds, so a handful always makes a story:

- Someone: a robot who collects socks, a grumpy unicorn, a wizard who forgot a spell
- Somewhere: an underwater city, a castle in the clouds, grandma's house
- Something happening: a potion that goes wrong, a treasure map, a box that won't open

Eight are drawn from more than 670 each time the page opens, and More ideas draws another eight. Your child can tap a few and also type their own in the idea box. If they can't type yet, they can tell you and you type it for them.

Tip: two or three ideas make a better story than ten. A who, a where and a what is a great recipe.

Step 4: Pick a mood

"How should it feel?" Your child picks one: Funny, Happy, Exciting, Adventure, Silly, Magical, Mystery, Cozy, Intense, A bit sad, and Spooky when their scariness setting allows it.

The mood steers the writing: mystery brings clues and a surprise answer; cozy keeps things soft and calm. It never makes a story scarier than the child's setting.

Step 5: Tap "Make it!"

Before anything is written, Peabody checks the ideas for safety. If an idea is off-limits, Peabody suggests something else kindly ("let's make it a spooky mystery instead!") and nothing is written. Otherwise, the story starts cooking, and Peabody's thinking lines change every couple of seconds while it does.

Step 6: Read the first three pages together

In a few seconds the opening arrives: a title and three short pages, checked and safety-screened like any story. They end on a hook, a question about what happens next, and your child can guess. This is a great moment to stop and ask, "What do you think happens?"

Meanwhile, the rest of the story is being written behind the scenes, word for word from that same opening, and screened again before it's shown.

Step 7: Read the whole story, and the words inside

Every story carries practice words:

- Early readers (Pre-K to 1st grade) get sight words, each used at least twice, with short pages of nine words or fewer.
- Readers from 2nd grade up get five vocabulary words, each used at least three times.

Before the story there's a quick warm-up on the words; after it, a short word check and four to six questions. Each has a Skip button. Tap a new word to hear it. More on that in how Peabody tracks the words your child knows.

Step 8: Read it to someone

When a child finishes their own story, they get a Read it to someone! button: big type, one page at a time, easy to follow from the couch, with the story's words up big at the end. Peabody never listens; the audience is you. See why your child reading aloud to you matters.

Tips for better AI stories with kids

- Let them lead. It's their story. Resist the urge to "improve" the ideas.
- Ask one question. "What does the robot want?" or "What goes wrong?" gives the writer something to build on. A want and a problem make the best stories.
- Use a feeling. "A dragon who is scared of the dark" beats "a dragon."
- Keep personal details out. No last names, addresses or school names in the idea box. Peabody's screens catch contact details, but it's a good habit to teach.
- Three a day is plenty. Each child can make up to three new stories a day. Rereading a favorite to someone new is just as good practice.

What happens to the story afterwards

Your child's story goes on their shelf under My books, ready to reread. If they use Peabody without an account, their stories stay private: they're never put in the public library. Every story also gets a story number. Once it has passed the safety screens, a gentle or spooky story can be read by anyone with the number, so your child can tell a friend "go to peabody.kids, story 1234." More in sharing a story by number.

Questions parents ask

How long does it take to make a story with AI on Peabody?

About a minute to pick ideas and a mood. The first three pages appear within seconds of tapping Make it!, and the rest is written right after.

Can my child make a story if they can't read or type yet?

Yes, with you. Idea bubbles are tap-only, every line Peabody says can be heard with the button, and a grown-up can type ideas for them. Pick the easiest sentence so the story has a few words a page.

How many stories can my child make?

Up to three new stories a day, free through 31 December 2026. Reading and rereading are unlimited.

Does my child's name go into the story?

Only if they want it there. The name Peabody uses is the one your child chose when it asked "What shall I call you?" (a made-up name is perfect), or the fun one it picked for them. Peabody checks that box for a real full name and wipes one before it is sent. That name is kept with their reader on Peabody. On the make page, Put me in! lets the hero have it; turn it off and the hero comes from their ideas alone. Ideas with contact details are caught by the safety screens.

Free at peabody.kids/blog/make-a-story-with-ai