# Questions to ask your child after reading: 30 that start real conversations

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Reading comprehension questions for kids that go beyond "did you like it?", sorted by type, plus how Peabody's after-story questions and nightly word prompts work.

The best questions after reading are short, open, and about the story your child just read: "Why did she do that?", "What would you have done?", "What do you think happens next?" They show you whether the story made sense, and they turn reading into a conversation instead of a quiz. Peabody (peabody.kids) asks four to six questions after each new story a child reads, and suggests one question for grown-ups each night about one of the story's words. It's free through the end of 2026.

Here are 30 questions you can use with any book, sorted by what they help with.

## Before you ask: three ground rules

1. One or two questions is plenty. Five questions in a row feels like a test.
2. Wait. Count to five in your head before helping. Thinking takes time.
3. There are no wrong answers to "why" and "what if". Ask what in the story made them think so, and enjoy the answer.

## What happened? (checking the story made sense)

1. Who was the story about?
2. Where did it happen?
3. What was the problem?
4. How did they fix it?
5. What happened first? And then?
6. Can you tell me the story in three sentences?

If your child can't answer these easily, the book may be a little too hard. Try one a level easier and see if the conversation changes.

## Why? (reading between the lines)

1. Why do you think she did that?
2. How did he feel at the start? How about at the end?
3. What changed for the character?
4. What clue told you something was going to happen?
5. Was the character being a good friend? How do you know?
6. What did the character learn, even if nobody said it?

## What next? (predicting)

1. What do you think happens next?
2. What would happen if the dragon had said no?
3. If there were one more page, what would be on it?
4. What would you have done instead?

Peabody uses this one built in: every story's opening ends on a hook question, and your child can guess what happens next before reading on.

## Words (vocabulary in context)

1. Was there a word you didn't know? What do you think it means?
2. Can you use [word] in a sentence about your day?
3. Show me [word] with your face or your hands.
4. Where in the story did [word] happen?
5. What's another word the author could have used?

The last few are close to the questions Peabody's grown-up view suggests each night, one at a time, about one of the story's words.

## You and the story (making connections)

1. Has anything like that ever happened to you?
2. Who does this character remind you of?
3. Would you want to be friends with them? Why?
4. What was your favourite part? Why that part?
5. What part would you change?

## The author's choices (for older readers)

1. Why do you think the author started the story there?
2. Which sentence was your favourite? Why?
3. Was there a part that was funny on purpose? How did the author make it funny?
4. What's the title about? Would you have picked a different one?

## How Peabody asks questions

After each new story a child reads, Peabody asks four to six questions about it. They're written along with the story by Peabody's AI and checked before they're shown. Like the word check, they have a Skip button: questions should never stand between a child and the next story.

Peabody's stories also quietly practise a couple of reading concepts each, like a word that sounds like its meaning, or a clue planted early that pays off later. One follow-up question is about that concept, without ever naming it. See what a short story can quietly practise.

For grown-ups with a free account, Peabody suggests one question to ask tonight, about one of that day's words, worded differently each day: "Ask them what cautious means," or "Ask them to show you enormous with their face or hands."

An honest note: Peabody uses answers to help tell whether books fit a child's level, but it doesn't give a comprehension score, and it can't tell you how well your child understands everything they read. A conversation with you is better at that.

## Make it a habit, not a quiz

- Ask while reading, not only after. A quick "Uh oh, what do you think she'll do?" mid-story keeps it light.
- Answer your own questions too. "My favourite part was when the goat climbed the fence. What was yours?"
- Let them ask you one. Kids love being the questioner.
- Stop while it's still fun. One good question beats ten dutiful ones.

Need a story to start with? Pick one from the free library, sorted by reading level, or make one with your child's own ideas.

## Questions parents ask

### What questions should I ask after my child reads?

Mix one "what happened" question (who, where, what was the problem) with one "why" or "what next" question. Keep it to one or two, and wait a few seconds before helping.

### How can I check my child's reading comprehension at home?

Ask them to tell you the story in three sentences, then ask why a character did something. If they struggle with both, try an easier book. For a real assessment, ask their teacher.

### Does Peabody ask comprehension questions?

Yes, four to six after each new story, written with the story and checked before they're shown. Children can skip them. Peabody doesn't turn the answers into a score.

### Are the questions read aloud?

Peabody's own lines can be heard with the button using your browser's built-in speech. For early readers, a grown-up reading the questions aloud works best.

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Free at peabody.kids/blog/questions-to-ask-after-reading