

Step 1: Find a story

Take a story that you already know.

Find a folktale or fairy tale (traditional tales are in the 398 section at the library)

Ask your parent or grandparent to 'give' you a story.

Find a story in a book or on an audio tape or CD.

Tip

Start with a very easy story.

Once you know one story you can use that story as a model for learning to be a storyteller and gradually develop more complex skills.

Step 2: Craft the story

Practise the story by yourself.

Then practise the story in other situations. (Tell it to the dog, the cat, to family or neighbours.)

Each time you tell the story look for the areas that might need improvement.

Is it too long? Is it too short?

Are you speaking too fast or too slow?

Is a section of the story boring for the audience?

Are there questions left unanswered for the audience?

Tip

You do not have to remember the story exactly the way it was told/read to you. This is your version of the story so you might choose to change some of the elements. The important thing is that you end up with a story that has a beginning, a climax and an ending.

Step 3: Tell the story

When you feel the practice stage is over tell the story to a larger group.

Perhaps volunteer to tell the story at the local kindergarten or library. (Make sure you identify what age group suits your story.)

Tell this story as much as possible and you will (almost without realising it) fine tune your telling skills in the process.

Tip

Continue to ask yourself questions until you feel comfortable in the telling of the story.

Can the people at the back hear you?

Do you vary your pace?

Do you pause when appropriate?

More tips:

When you are comfortable in front of an audience with your first story repeat Steps 1, 2 and 3 with another story, and after that another story and so on. Each time you learn a new story you will also learn new storytelling skills. Action is the most important element of being a successful storyteller. The more you do it the better you become.

Continue to develop your skills by watching other storytellers and speakers. Learn from them. If you feel a teller/speaker is very good take a mental note of what makes that speaker appealing to you and use similar techniques yourself. If you feel the teller/speaker is not good take a mental note of what makes that speaker unappealing to you and remember not to use those techniques.

How to learn the story

Different methods suit different people. Here is one method you might like to try.

- 1: Read the story (or listen to it) several times to become familiar with the story.
- 2: Write down the main elements of the story in no more than 10 short points
- 3: Tell the story (to yourself or others) using your list of points. Tell the story again and again until you can tell it without using your list of points.

(To tell a story it is best to fully understand the story and this sometimes means researching the story to understand the background/context.)