

# THE ART OF STORYTELLING

As an accompaniment to the 'Art of Storytelling' podcasts, this poster provides a summary of the key considerations and core components central to creating an engaging, interactive, and beneficial story experience.



## Pace & Rhythm

Pace refers to the tempo and rhythm at which a story unfolds. Storytellers should reflect on how they use pace to complement a story's scenarios and evolving events. Increasing pace can build energy, momentum, and excitement. This can be useful when building to a crescendo. Slowing down can generate intrigue and create a sense of calm.



## Volume

It's important to use volume in a way that meets the demands of the story and complements the nature of the character being portrayed. A 'tiny, timid mouse' is likely to speak in a quieter voice compared to a 'big noisy elephant.' Volume is a powerful tool for provoking curiosity. When the storyteller drops the volume and speaks quietly, children become intrigued, leaning into the story.



## Purposeful Pauses

Using pauses effectively can help build suspense. Pausing on the cusp of an exciting point in the story can encourage children to anticipate, imagine, and predict what might happen next. Likewise, pausing following an exciting or funny moment provides children with an opportunity to process what they've just heard, reflect on events, and react emotionally.



## Pitch

Pitch refers to the highness or lowness of the storyteller's voice. Varying pitch is a great way to differentiate between characters and bring them to life. When used effectively, pitch can convey the emotional context of events in the story. Higher pitch may portray excitement, fun, and energy. Lower pitch can convey seriousness or sadness.



## Tone

Tone is fundamental to expression and influencing how a statement or message will be perceived and understood. It is central to conveying emotion, allowing children to connect with characters, empathise with them, and become invested in the story. Effective and appropriate use of tone can profoundly enhance the story's emotional impact.



## Gesture & Expression

Effective use of gesture, expression, and body language can bring stories and characters to life, making them more engaging whilst enhancing comprehension. Facial expressions can help children engage with characters and themes, developing their capacity to recognise and understand different emotions.



## Plan & Prepare

Read a book through first prior to reading it with children. Through familiarity with the story, it's possible to consider how best to present the characters, and use tone, pitch, volume, gesture, and pauses effectively. Planning affords opportunity to prepare any props, puppets, or other interactive elements. Feeling prepared can be a huge confidence booster!



## Puppets & Props

Through providing visual and tactile representation of abstract concepts, props and puppets can support comprehension of complex ideas. Introducing props and puppets provides opportunity for children to actively participate in the storytelling process, making story more interactive. Puppets in particular can serve as relatable characters through which children can express and explore their emotions.



## Practice & Confidence

To successfully incorporate all of the previously discussed elements and hone your storytelling craft doesn't happen overnight, it takes experimentation, trial and error, and above all; practice! Storytelling can be a nerve-racking experience. However, confidence comes from familiarity. The more practice you put in, the more familiar you'll become. Even highly-skilled, confident storytellers were novices at one point.