

Storytime Prompts

»»» for *teaching values* «««
to young kids... the *fun way!*

Add your own personal touch to these stories with details about the characters' names and preferences that your child will relate to. You can make it silly too –these are just basic ideas to form your own stories around! As a bonus, kids will learn empathy - because when they put themselves in the characters' shoes it's easier for them to relate to others' feelings. You can change up the stories by telling them from a different character's perspective the next time. And remember, it doesn't have to be complicated! Your child will enjoy having time with you most of all – and sometimes *simple* is the best way to convey a message you want them to remember.

Caring for Others

•**Tell a Valentine's Day story** about a child making a special gift for someone he loves (Mom, Dad, siblings) and explain what love means by your definition. Discuss how when we love someone, we treat them with care and want to serve them. Talk about other ways we can serve others and show them our love.

•**A child witnesses** another kid at school/daycare/the park that is being mistreated in some way. Talk about how that makes him feel. Go through the decision-making process and all the things he could do to help the other child. End the story with him taking some type of loving action to help the other child. Discuss that helping others is a way we can show them we care – and it brings us joy as well.

•**A child has** a sick relative, so he thinks about the different ways he could help them. He and his mom make a care package and take to the relative's house. They leave it on the front porch along with a special get well card the child draws for the relative. Discuss the joy in making someone's day better when they're sick.

Patience

•**Tell about a special beach vacation** a family has planned. Every morning, the child wakes up and asks if it's vacation day yet. It's so hard to wait! Describe how the family counts down the days then tell about the trip in detail and how it was worth the long wait.

•**Tell about a child with** a new sibling on the way. Discuss how he makes a special book for the new baby by drawing a new picture each day about all the fun things he wants to do and teach the baby once the baby arrives. This helps to pass the time while they wait. Describe the child's reaction when he finally meets his new sibling.

•**Tell about a child who** is really excited about seeing a new movie coming to the theater. The family marks the movie date on the calendar and he checks it every day. When the day finally comes, they have a family fun day: first playing at the park, then dinner at his favorite restaurant. After they watch the movie together, they talk about their favorite parts all the way home and what they will do for their next family fun day.

Being Polite/Respectful

•**Tell about a child who** has a really fun video game (or something else a kid might obsess over). When company arrives – a favorite playmate -- he doesn't want to put the game down and talk to them. The company leaves and he realizes he missed playing with his friend and he feels sad. Discuss how it feels to be ignored and how the next time, he remembered to make his company feel welcome and had so much fun playing with his friend.

•**Tell about a child who** has a cold and keeps coughing and sneezing all over everyone. His mom draws a picture for him of little "germ bugs" and how they fly in the air when you don't cover your mouth. They talk about how we don't want others to feel icky like we do when we're sick – so we want to keep those bugs from flying around and landing on others. We also have to be sure to wash our hands a lot when we're sick. They then have fun making more artwork and inventing stories about the evil "germ bugs". His mom makes him a special soup to make him feel better and make the bugs go away.

Being Helpful

•**Tell about a child who** has chores to do each day – taking out the trash and putting away the dishes. He decides one day he doesn't want to do chores anymore. So his mom decides she doesn't want to do hers anymore either! She decides to skip cooking dinner and washing the laundry. He doesn't think it's a big deal until he has to fix his own supper and has no clean clothes to wear the next day! The family discusses how everyone has to help out and do their part. Just like a car won't run without all the parts, a family doesn't work well unless everyone works together!

•**Tell about a child who** has a new family move in next door. His mom makes a meal to welcome them. He thinks about what he could do to be helpful and decides to write down a list of all of his favorite places to visit in town and the addresses. He brings his list to the new neighbors who also have a child his age! He is excited to help the new neighbors learn about their new town – and make a new friend too.

•**Tell about a child who** goes on a camping adventure in the woods with his Dad (or grandpa). They have a lot of work to do to get the campsite ready. He has to help put the tent up, gather supplies for a fire and get everything ready for the evening. They go fishing and bring some fish back for dinner. His Dad tells him how thankful he is to have such a big helper and how their trip wouldn't have been a success without him.

Humility, Honesty

•**Tell about a child who** gets the highest grade on a reading test and receives a cool sticker for doing so well. He brags to all his friends about all week until they get tired of hearing about it – especially his best friend who has more trouble with reading. He notices his friend feels sad and realizes that he shouldn't have bragged about his test score. He talks to his teacher who reminds him that we have to remember others' feelings and how everyone has different things they are good at. It's ok to celebrate an achievement – but we should celebrate others for who they are and point out their special qualities more often than pointing out our own. This is the best way to make friends – by appreciating them!

•**Tell about a child who** really wants to win the prize for guessing the correct number of gumballs in a jar at school. They are only allowed to guess one time, but when the teacher isn't looking he puts extra guesses into the box. He wins the contest, but then feels guilty about it. He talks to his mom and they discuss why he feels bad. He confesses that he didn't follow the rules. She asks him what he thinks he should do and he decides to tell the teacher. The teacher forgives him and tells him she's proud that he told her the truth. He doesn't get to keep the prize but he learns that being honest feels much better than a prize he didn't earn.

• **This child is known as** the “best” singer in his class until a new kid joins the choir and amazes everyone. He learns to celebrate others' talents and they end up being great friends.

Persistence

•**Tell about a child who** gets a new bike for his birthday but it doesn't have training wheels. He has to learn how to ride the bike and though it's frustrating, he keeps trying every day until he's able to ride it – and he's so proud of himself when he finally learns how.

• **Tell about a child who** picks out a new pair of shoes with laces at the mall. He's so proud of his new shoes but he wants to learn to tie them on his own. His mom shows him a neat trick for tying them and they work on it together every day. Finally, one day he's able to do it on his own! He can't wait to show his friends his new skill.

•**Tell about a child who** invents a time machine and goes back in time to see the dinosaurs. Talk about the animals he sees and what it's like traveling through time. Then – oops – the time machine breaks down and he has to figure out how to fix it so he can get home to his family! He works really hard and comes up with a plan, fixes the machine and gets home just in time for dinner. 😊

•**Tell about a child who** wants to learn how to swim but is afraid of the water. His mom takes him to swimming lessons and it's scary at first – but each day he learns something new and he becomes more brave in the water. By the end of the summer, he's jumping off the diving board and he's so glad he learned how to swim.

Being Considerate/ Polite

•**Tell a story about a child** taking a trip to the zoo. He's excited to see the animals but he's having a hard time moving from exhibit to exhibit (sound familiar?). It's a very crowded and his mom explains that the other visitors would like to enjoy seeing the animals up-close too. Finally they reach his favorite exhibit, the snakes, and there is a group of kids standing in front of the glass for a long time. He tries to see the snakes but he can't get close enough. He finally understands that we all have to take turns and consider others too.

•**Tell about a child** who is helping his mom prepare the after school snacks. He has a lot of fun helping in the kitchen. He gets the cookies off the shelf and there's just enough for everyone to have two cookies but he REALLY wants three. They're his favorite cookies ever. He asks his mom if he can please have three – no one else will know! They talk about what it would feel like if he decided not to share. He decides he should be considerate of his siblings and share the cookies.

•**Tell about a child** who loves to talk. He is very friendly and wants to talk to everyone he sees. But sometimes he wants to talk while others are talking – he tends to interrupt. He has a friend over to play and his friend has a really exciting story to tell him. Halfway through, he interrupts and tells his own story. His friend doesn't want to play with him anymore. He thinks about what he did and apologizes and asks his friend to tell the rest of his story. It was really amazing! They take turns telling silly stories the rest of the day and he learns how important it is to listen to others.

Forgiveness, Grace

•**This child loves to** play with blocks and build tall towers and castles. He is so proud of his creations but he gets so angry when his baby sister knocks down his towers. He wants to scream and tell her to go away. His mom explains that the baby thinks she's playing with him. She looks up to him and wants to do everything he does. She doesn't mean to destroy his creations. He takes a few minutes to calm down and he decides to forgive his sister and spends the rest of the day playing with her and showing her how all his cool toys work. He feels pretty important because he has a baby sister that loves him and looks up to him.

•**Tell about a child** who has a best friend at school, but one day he makes a mistake. He tells another student that his friend's outfit is really ugly and his friend overhears it. It makes her really sad. He tries to pretend he didn't say it, which makes the friend even more upset. He goes home and talks to his mom and she asks him what he thinks he should do. The next day, he apologizes to his friend. He knows what he said was hurtful. His friend forgives him and they have fun playing together at recess.

•**Tell about a thunderstorm** one night and a child who lets the outdoor dog in the house because he's worried about him. When they wake up in the morning, there's a big hole in the couch! He tries to cover it up but his mom soon finds it and asks him about it. He admits to what happened. She is sad about the couch but understanding that he cared for the dog. They make a plan for next time to let the dog in the garage instead.

Being Responsible

•**Tell about a child who** loves to watch TV. Talk about his favorite shows and why he likes them. He gets very angry when his siblings – or parents – try to turn the channel when it's their turn to watch something. He explodes and yells at everyone. Mom lets him have a little quiet time in his room and then they talk about how we will often feel angry about something, but we have to be responsible for our feelings – we can't act out and treat others unfairly because of how we feel. They decide to play with the trains on the train table for a while and he remembers that it's also fun to do other things than watch TV!

•**The library is** this child's favorite place to visit. Discuss how fun the library is and all the types of books the child likes to read. But one day he leaves his book in his baby sister's room and the baby tears up the cover. He makes excuses to his mom, who teaches him that it's important to be responsible for the things we borrow. They find a safe spot to put their library books in from now on.

•**Tell about a child who** leaves his coat outside after his mom reminds him to bring it in. The next day it's time to leave for the a trip to the store and he can't find his coat. He looks everywhere. He remembers leaving it outside – but when he goes to get it, it's gone. He's really sad that he lost his good coat and for now, he has to wear his brother's hand-me-down coat that's two sizes too big. How embarrassing!