

Getting Started with



Inclusive Stories



A practical guide to planning your first storytelling session and building confidence over time.



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Welcome to Inclusive Stories.

Inclusive Stories bring stories to life through animation, narration, sound, movement and sensory experiences.

They are designed for learners of all ages and abilities, and they can be used in simple or more developed ways depending on your setting.

If you are new to sensory storytelling, this is a comfortable place to begin. Choose one story, create a calm routine, use a few meaningful props and give learners time to explore. There is no single right way to tell an Inclusive Story.

Story Explorers.



The learners, children or adults enjoying and responding to the story.

Storytellers.



The adults, practitioners, parents, carers or learners helping to tell the story.

With Inclusive Stories You Can.

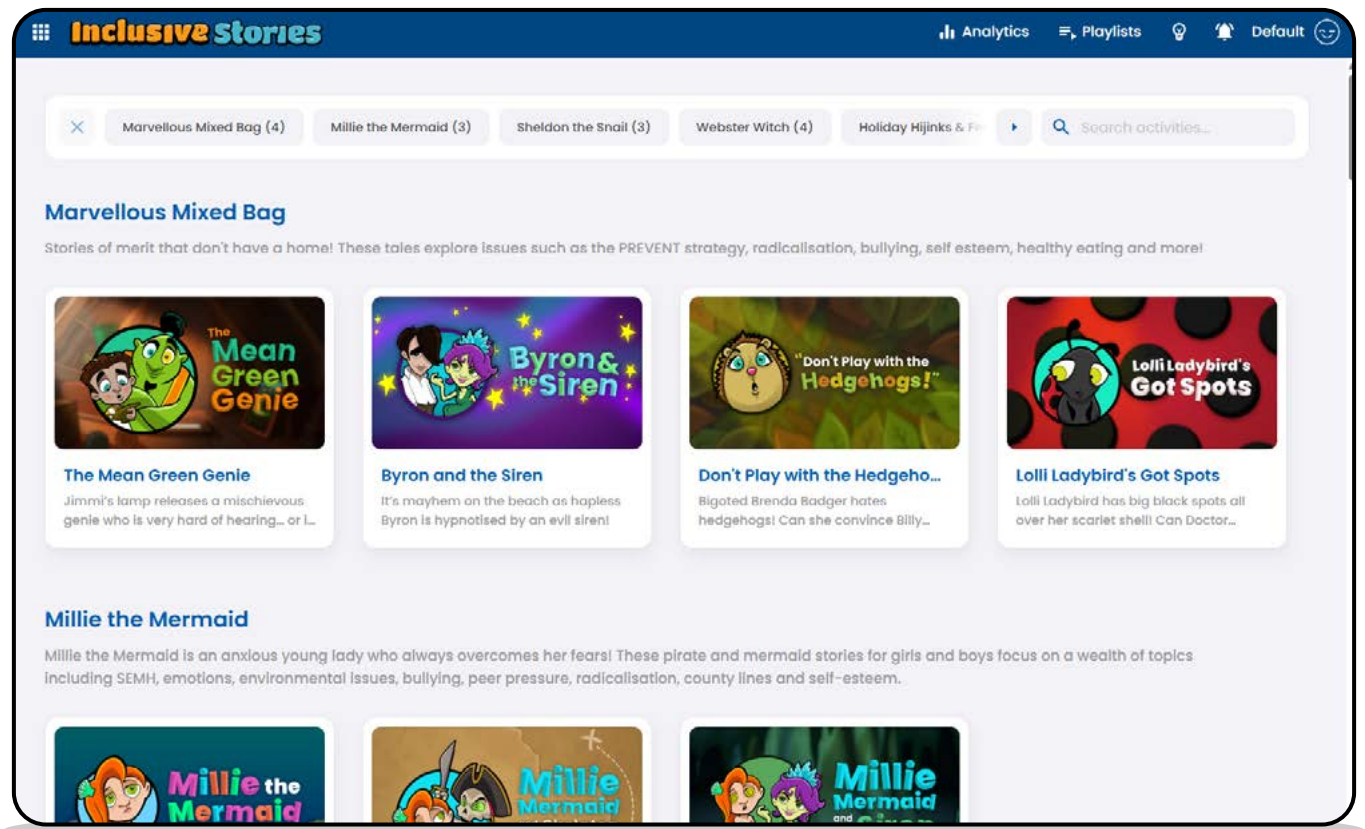
- **Create shared story experiences** for one learner, a small group or a whole class.
- **Support communication**, sensory exploration, cause and effect, attention and anticipation.
- **Use touch, mouse, switch or eye gaze** access so learners can take an active role.
- **Build routine**, confidence and familiarity through repetition.
- **Extend stories with printables**, symbols, props, assessment sheets and cross-curricular ideas.

Meet the author.

Inclusive Stories were created by Pete Wells, an award-winning SEN teacher and author with over 20 years of experience creating multi-sensory stories. His aim was to combine the warmth of sensory storytelling with modern access methods and flexible teaching resources.



What are **Inclusive Stories** ?



The Inclusive Stories library lets you browse by collection, search for stories and open resources from each story.

Inclusive Stories are interactive, multi-sensory stories for learners with a wide range of special educational needs.

Each story uses simple language, professional narration, animation and repeated structure to help learners understand what is happening and anticipate what comes next.

The stories can be used as they are on screen, or enhanced with real sensory resources such as objects, textures, lights, sounds, movement, tastes or smells. This helps make the story concrete, memorable and meaningful.



What skills learners can develop.

✓ **Attention and engagement.**

Learners can attend to animation, sound, narration, props or shared interaction.

✓ **Cause and effect.**

Learners can press, touch, look or activate a switch to move the story on and see that their action has an effect.

✓ **Anticipation and sequencing.**

Repeated story structure helps learners recognise what comes next, wait for favourite moments and follow a sequence.

✓ **Communication and choice making.**

Learners can request more, reject an item, choose a prop, comment on what they see or use AAC to join in. You could do this after each line of the story, at key moments, or at the end. Symbols for AAC are included for each story.

✓ **Sensory exploration and regulation.**

Props, textures, smells, sounds and movement can support sensory discovery, tolerance and emotional readiness.

✓ **Motor and access skills.**

Learners can practise switch timing, touch access, eye gaze, reaching, grasping, pointing or moving with purpose.

✓ **Social interaction and shared attention.**

Stories can support turn-taking, peer interaction, shared laughter, co-active play and group participation.

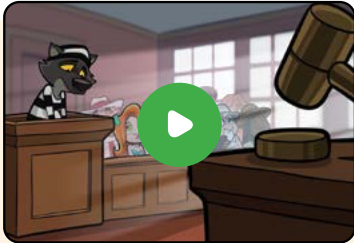
✓ **Understanding real-world themes.**

Stories can introduce themes such as kindness, friendship, personal hygiene, online safety, bullying, stranger danger, emotional regulation, SEMH, PSHE, independence and wellbeing.



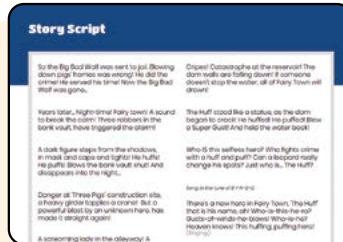
What comes with each story?

Every Inclusive Story includes a set of resources. You do not need to use them all in one session. Pick the parts that help you support your learners today.



Interactive Story

The animated and narrated story. Learners can progress the story using their chosen access method.



Story Script

Printable lines and suggested props to support repetition, anticipation and shared storytelling.



Delivery Notes

Author guidance on the story, props, learning opportunities and different ways to tell it.



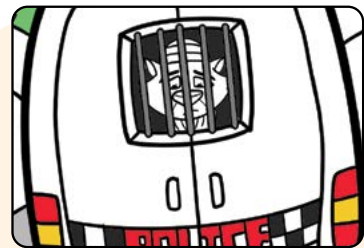
Assessment Materials

Recording sheets for engagement, communication, interaction and progress over time.



Symbols for AAC

Keyword lists to support communication aids, symbol boards, choice making and simple sentences.



Printables

Crafts, games, masks, puppets, worksheets and mark-making resources to extend the story.





Cross Curricular Ideas

Lesson ideas, activities and recipes that link the story to practical learning and wider topics.



Chooselt Maker Share Codes

Activities that help learners show understanding and practise choice making or cause and effect.



Story Graphics

Images for displays, flashcards, sequencing, digital books or physical story books.



All Resources

A single download containing the supporting materials for the story.



Who is... The Huff?

Silly Superheroes

Subtitles: Disabled

DESCRIPTION

In a town filled with famous fairy tale characters, a mysterious, windy, wolfish new superhero emerges from the shadows. He'll huff... he'll puff... he'll BLOW the criminals down! Who could he possibly be? In this tale of redemption we discover that a leopard, or indeed a wolf, really can change their spots!

RESOURCES

All Resources
115.42 MB

Story Script
262 KB

Delivery Notes
673 KB

Show More

Each story page brings the story and downloadable resources together in one place.

Before you choose your first story.

A first session can be very simple. Start by choosing one story that feels manageable, enjoyable and relevant to your learners.



1: Learner interests.

Pick a story that links to your topic, learner interests, a sensory goal or a communication focus.



2: Your session type.

Decide whether you are using the story one to one, in a small group or with a whole class.



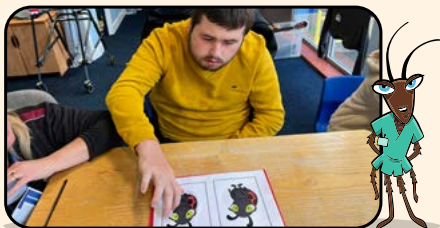
3: Sensory needs and preferences.

Consider any props, sounds, textures, smells or movements learners may enjoy or find difficult. Each story comes with Delivery Notes with prop suggestions.



4: Curriculum or topic links.

Choose a story that supports your current theme, PSHE focus, communication goal or class topic.



5: Keep it simple

For your first session, choose a story that only needs a few easy-to-prepare resources.

Helping learners feel ready for story time.

Before starting an Inclusive Story, take a moment to think about how learners are feeling and what they may need to feel settled, safe and ready to engage.

Some learners may need time to adjust to the space, the screen, the sound, the props or the people around them. Others may need movement, a familiar object, reduced noise or a clear visual cue before they are ready to join in.

You might support regulation by:

- Giving learners time to settle into the space.
- Using a familiar story-time cue, such as a phrase, song, sound or object of reference.
- Checking lighting, volume, seating and positioning.
- Reducing background noise and unnecessary talking.
- Offering movement or sensory breaks where needed.
- Introducing props slowly and respectfully.
- Watching for signs that something is enjoyable, uncomfortable or overwhelming.

When learners feel regulated, they are more likely to attend, anticipate, communicate, explore props and take an active role in the story.

The aim is not to create a perfect environment. It is to create a story experience that feels safe, predictable and responsive.

Before you begin your first session.

☒ **Use this quick checklist to get ready:**

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Open the story and check how it plays. | ☐ Set the learner's access method if they are using touch, switch, eye gaze or mouse access. |
| ☐ Read the Story Script. | ☐ Prepare any AAC symbols, choices or communication aids. |
| ☐ Skim the Delivery Notes for prop ideas and delivery tips. | ☐ Decide what you want to notice, such as attention, anticipation, communication or response to a prop. |
| ☐ Choose one to three props. | ☐ Think about regulation and routine to help your story explorers feel settled before story time begins. |
| ☐ Check sound, screen position and seating. | ☐ Keep the first session simple. |
| ☐ Choose who will control the story. | |

Choosing an access method.

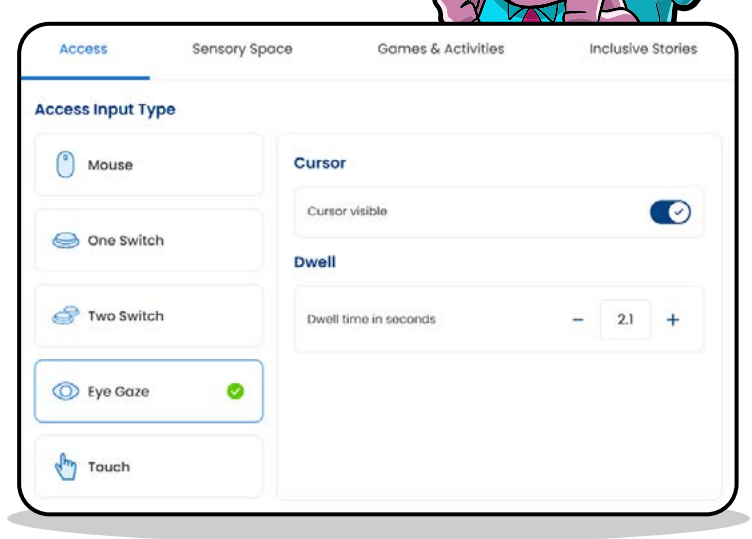
Inclusive Stories can be accessed in different ways.

Start by selecting the access method that is most consistent and comfortable for the learner.

You can set this in a Student Profile or change it inside any activity using the settings (cog) icon.



A good starting point is to choose the access method the learner can use most comfortably right now. You can always switch methods later as confidence grows.



Supported access methods.

Mouse.

Useful on laptops, desktops and interactive screens. The story progresses when the screen is clicked at the prompt.

Touch.

Useful on tablets and touchscreens. The learner touches the screen when the story is ready to move on.

One Switch.

Useful for learners using switch access. The switch moves the story on when the prompt appears, replacing the return key or spacebar.

Eye Gaze.

Useful for learners using eye gaze technology. The learner looks at the play icon when prompted.

Note: You can also turn off the reward music that plays at the end of each story. This can be useful for calmer or more regulating sessions.

Using Student Profiles.

Student Profiles help you save access settings for each learner, so stories are ready to use with the right input method.

This helps you keep the story experience consistent, especially if different adults support the same learner, or you have different learners using different access methods.

This feature also includes **Student Analytics**, which allows you to monitor your learners' progress over time.

You'll find more detail on **Student Profiles** and **Playlists** later in this guide.

Your first Inclusive Story session.

Settle into story time.

Use a familiar cue such as music, a phrase, object of reference, visual timetable or lighting change. Give learners time to feel comfortable before you begin.

Start the story together.

Press play, or invite the learner to start using their access method.

Pause and give time.

After each part of the story, give learners time to look, listen, process and respond.

Introduce the prop or sensory experience.

Offer the prop slowly and respectfully. Watch for acceptance, interest, rejection or anticipation.

Repeat the lines.

Repeat the story line that links most closely to the sensory prop or experience.

Offer a communication opportunity.

This could be a choice, a symbol, a switch, eye pointing, a vocalisation, a gesture or a simple “more” or “finished”.

Move to the next part of the story.

Let the learner activate the next part where possible. This supports control, access skills and cause and effect.

Notice what happens.

Look for small responses: a change in breathing, stilling, smiling, reaching, looking, vocalising, waiting or repeating an action.

Stop when it feels right.

You do not need to finish the whole story. A successful first session might be one section, one prop or one shared moment.



A simple storytelling routine.

Many learners find predictable routines reassuring.

A consistent story routine helps story explorers understand what is happening now, what might happen next and when it is their turn to respond.

- Use a familiar cue, such as a phrase, song, sound, object of reference or visual timetable.
- Keep the environment calm enough for story explorers to attend to the story and props.

- Place props where storytellers can reach them easily and story explorers can see or anticipate them.
- Give story explorers enough time to look, listen, touch, move, vocalise or respond in their own way.
- Repeat the same story over several sessions so familiarity, anticipation and confidence can build.
- If they're able, allow the story explorers to access the story independently to build their familiarity.

After the story: observe, reflect and repeat.

After your first Inclusive Story session, take a few moments to think about what happened. Start with the small moments that stood out.

Inclusive Stories are designed to be repeated. A learner may be quiet or passive during the first session, then begin to show recognition, anticipation or stronger responses as the story becomes familiar. Progress may be subtle, so it helps to notice changes over time.

You might reflect on:

- Which part of the story gained the most attention?
- Did the learner look, listen, reach, smile, vocalise, move, still or show anticipation?
- Did they respond to a sound, prop, movement, smell, texture or visual moment?
- Did they use their access method to move the story on?
- Did they communicate a choice, preference, request or rejection?

- Did they show interest in another person, a shared prop or a turn-taking moment?
- Was there anything that felt overwhelming, uncomfortable or too fast?

Use what you notice to shape the next session.

You might repeat the same story, focus on one favourite moment, reduce the number of props, give more processing time, change the access method or add a simple communication choice.

A successful session might be one shared smile, one clear look, one switch press, one moment of anticipation or one confident choice.

When you repeat the story, keep the routine familiar. This helps learners feel secure and gives them more opportunities to understand what is happening, predict what comes next and take a more active role in the story.

When you are ready, you can use the assessment sheets and Student Analytics to help capture these observations and look for patterns over time.

What does success look like?

A successful first session does not need to mean completing the whole story. It might be one clear look, one smile, one moment of anticipation, one switch press, one choice or one shared interaction.



Assessment and progress.

The assessment and recording sheets are there to help you notice, evidence and plan. They can be used for a single learner, a group, one session or repeated sessions over time.

Assessment and recording sheets.

01 - Individual Assessment Sheet

Which Inclusive Story? Individual Assessment Sheet

Student Name	Date	Staff Name
Engagement Part 1	Engagement	Realisation
Top Hat		
Ticking Clock		
Word and Logic		
Logic Maze		
Wordling		
Stump		
Real Logic		
Anticipation and Persistence		
Engagement Part 2		
Wordling		
Stump		
Real Logic		
Anticipation and Persistence		
Engagement Part 3		
Wordling		
Stump		
Real Logic		
Anticipation and Persistence		

Engagement Scale

1	2	3	4	5
Initiation	Anticipation	Realisation	Persistence	Initiation

Notes and Next Steps

Individual Assessment Sheet.

Record responses to each part of a story during one session.

02 - Group Assessment Sheet

Which Inclusive Story? Group Assessment Sheet

Group	Date	Staff Name
Engagement Part 1		
Top Hat		
Ticking Clock		
Word and Logic		
Logic Maze		
Wordling		
Stump		
Real Logic		
Anticipation and Persistence		
Engagement Part 2		
Wordling		
Stump		
Real Logic		
Anticipation and Persistence		

Engagement Scale

1	2	3	4	5
Initiation	Anticipation	Realisation	Persistence	Initiation

Notes and Next Steps

Group Assessment Sheet.

Capture responses and peer interaction for several learners in one session.

04 - Group Engagement Sheet

Which Inclusive Story? Group Engagement Assessment Sheet

Group	Date	Staff Name
Engagement Part 1		
Top Hat		
Ticking Clock		
Word and Logic		
Logic Maze		
Wordling		
Stump		
Real Logic		
Anticipation and Persistence		
Engagement Part 2		
Wordling		
Stump		
Real Logic		
Anticipation and Persistence		

Engagement Scale

0	1	2	3	4
Initiation	Anticipation	Realisation	Persistence	Initiation

Notes and Next Steps

Engagement Sheets.

Record exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence and initiation.

05 - Communication Story Student Assessment Sheet

Which Inclusive Story? Communication Story Student Assessment Sheet

Student	Date	Staff Name	Communication Method
Engagement Part 1			Initiation, Anticipation, Realisation, Persistence, Initiation
Top Hat			
Ticking Clock			
Word and Logic			
Logic Maze			
Wordling			
Stump			
Real Logic			
Anticipation and Persistence			
Engagement Part 2			
Wordling			
Stump			
Real Logic			
Anticipation and Persistence			

Engagement Scale

0	1	2	3	4
Initiation	Anticipation	Realisation	Persistence	Initiation

Notes and Next Steps

Communication Story Sheets.

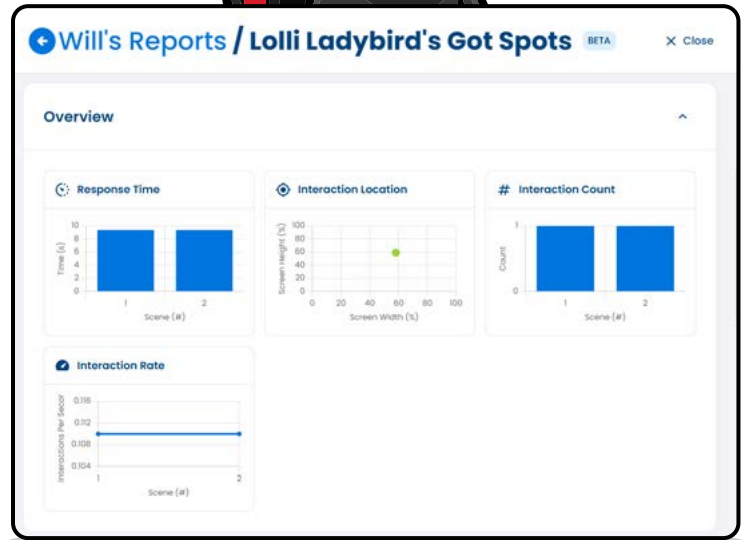
Record what a learner communicates, how they communicate and what support was used.

Student Analytics.

Student Analytics can help you look more closely at how learners engage with Inclusive Stories over time.

It sits alongside your own observations and the assessment sheets, giving you another way to notice progress, patterns and next steps.

For Inclusive Stories, Sequential Reports show how learners interact with each story session. This can be useful when progress is subtle, such as a quicker response, a longer moment of attention, increased anticipation, more confident access or stronger engagement with a repeated part of the story.



Student Analytics can show:

Session Summary.

A quick overview of each session, including which stories were played, when they were accessed, how long learners participated and their overall engagement.

Scene-by-Scene Breakdown.

A closer look at each part of the story, including response times, accuracy and interaction patterns. This can help you understand how a learner moves through the story and where they may need more time or support.

Insight Trends.

A broader view of progress across multiple sessions, helping you spot changes in response speed, engagement and interaction over time.

Scene-Level Reports.

Detailed reports for individual learning steps, including visual snapshots and key performance information. These can help you review specific moments in the story and track progress in more detail.

Use Student Analytics together with what you notice during the session.

Some progress will show in the data, but other important moments may be seen through observation, such as shared attention, anticipation, communication, choice making, tolerance of a sensory experience or a more confident response.

Together, your observations, assessment sheets and Student Analytics can help you reflect on what worked well, what to repeat and what to try next.

Ways to tell an Inclusive Story.

Inclusive Stories can be adapted to suit your learners, your space and the purpose of the session. These approaches can be used on their own or combined.



Whole Class Story.

Create a shared group experience. Have enough props to reduce waiting time and consider letting a learner control the story.

Individual Story.

Use one-to-one sessions for personal targets, access practice, sensitive topics or a calmer sensory experience.

Communication Story.

Add symbols, communication aids or choice-making opportunities so learners can comment, request, reject or describe.

Call and Response.

Use repeated phrases, sounds or words to build attention, listening, memory and confidence.

Movement or Location Story.

Set up areas of the room, outdoor space or sensory stations to represent parts of the story.

Massage or Regulation Story.

Use gentle, agreed touch or regulation-focused activities only where appropriate, safe and welcomed by the learner.

Choosing stories by theme.

Inclusive Stories are organised into collections, making it easier to find a story that fits your topic, learner interests or teaching aim. You can also search by story name or theme in the product.

Marvellous Mixed Bag.

A broad collection covering themes such as diversity, communication, kindness, safety and wellbeing.



Around the World.

Stories that explore places, cultures, kindness, travel and friendship.



Millie the Mermaid.

Stories with emotional journeys, seaside themes and opportunities to explore anxiety, bravery and peer pressure.



Fairies of Windy Wood.

Outdoor and nature-linked stories for forest school, environmental learning and shared exploration.



Sheldon the Snail.

Stories that often support functional skills, time management, sequencing and perseverance.



Gerry Germ.

Stories focused on hygiene, health, routines and everyday personal care.



Webster Witch.

Humorous sensory stories with strong opportunities for props, sound, colour, movement and practical activities.



Silly Superheroes.

Stories linked to physical development, helping others, behaviour and positive actions.



Holiday Hijinks and Festival Fun.

Stories linked to celebrations, festivals, birthdays and seasonal moments.



Torrid Tales for Terrible Teens.

Age-appropriate stories exploring topics such as online safety, growing up, keeping safe and relationships.



Myths, Legends and Fairy Tales.

Familiar tales and traditional story structures with an Inclusive Stories approach.



Set up Student Profiles.

Student Profiles help you personalise the experience and keep sessions consistent.

They are especially helpful if different adults support the same learner, or if you are working across teaching and therapy.

Use a profile to keep access choices and preferences consistent, and to make it easier to pick up where you left off.



Why Create a Student Profile?

- **Consistent experience:** Profiles remember access method and key settings.
- **Time-saving:** No need to reconfigure settings each time.
- **Supports independence:** Learners can access their preferred setup with less adult input.
- **Tracks progress:** Profiles link directly to Student Analytics for meaningful progress tracking.
- **Works across titles:** Profiles apply to all HelpKidzLearn products.
- **Manage groups:** Create groups for classes, therapy groups or specific cohorts.
- **Use playlists:** Assign grouped activities to individual learners.
- **Share information:** Keep support consistent across staff teams.

It's easy to get started.



Step 1:

Log in to your HelpKidzLearn Hub account.



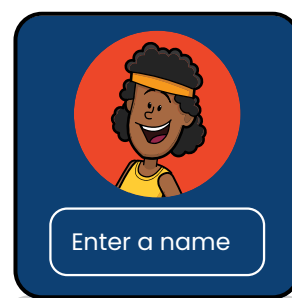
Step 2:

Click the profile image on the top right to select profiles.



Step 3:

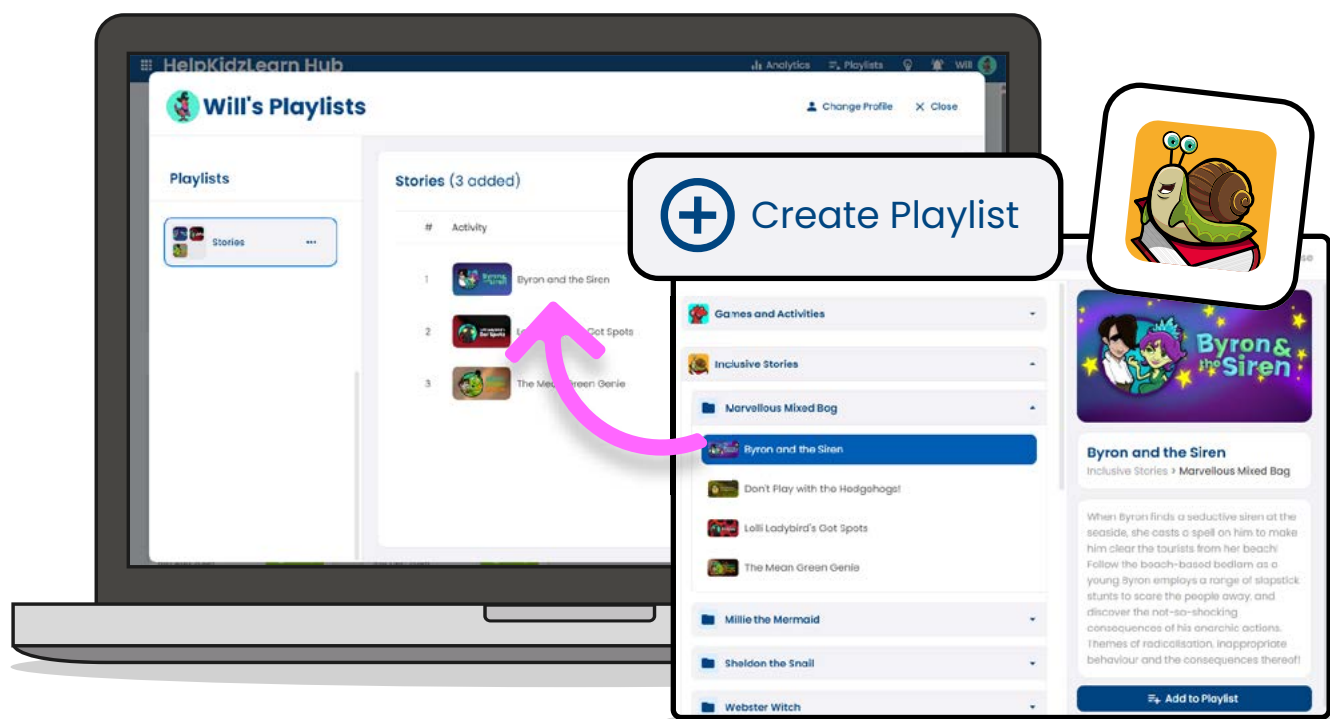
Select Create Profile.



Step 4:

Add a name and set the access method.

Student Playlists.



Playlists let you group activities together so they are ready when you need them.

They are useful for short sessions, structured routines, specific targets and topic-based learning.

For example, you might create a Webster Witch playlist or choose stories based on themes.

Why Use Playlists?

- **Time-saving:** set up once, use again and again.
- **Structured sessions:** start with a familiar activity, build to a target task, and end with a predictable finish.
- **Flexible:** group activities by collection, theme, or lesson objective such as PSHE.

Playlists can support:

- **Personalisation:** match activities to a learner's interests and goals.
- **Consistency:** access settings apply when used with a Student Profile.
- **Progress tracking:** use alongside Analytics to reflect on engagement and next steps.
- **Mixed learning:** combine Inclusive Stories with Games & Activities, Sensory Space, Chooselt Maker and other HelpKidzLearn content.

Inclusive Stories in practice.

Green Fold School, Bolton, UK.



In Caitlin's classroom, **Webster Witch's Wacky Weather** was brought to life with sensory resources including water sprays, umbrellas, torches and snowballs.

As the story repeated throughout the week, pupils began to anticipate what would happen next.



“

By the end of the week, they'll all know when the snowballs are going to be thrown in the story. They'll all know when the water spray is going to be there.

Caitlin McNiven – PMLD Teacher.

”



Read the full case study
[helpkidzlearn.com/
resources/case-studies](https://helpkidzlearn.com/resources/case-studies)

St John's Primary School, Isle of Man.



Lauren and Fran share how their school uses Inclusive Stories to help children with complex needs connect, respond and take part in sensory-rich experiences.

Small responses like a smile, a look or a movement are celebrated as powerful moments of communication and inclusion.



“

They're so engaged in the activities and the children love exploring the sensory props that go alongside each story.

Lauren Callow – SPC Manager.

”



Read the full case study
[helpkidzlearn.com/
resources/case-studies](https://helpkidzlearn.com/resources/case-studies)

Top tips for storytellers.



✓ Give processing time.

Pause, repeat and allow learners to respond in their own way.

✓ Repeat the story.

Familiarity supports anticipation, confidence and deeper engagement.

✓ Keep language clear.

Use the script and avoid unnecessary background talk during the story.

✓ Be consistent.

Use the same cues, rhythm and routine so learners know what to expect.

✓ Stay responsive.

Follow the learner's lead. If they are engaged, stay with it. If they need a break, pause.

✓ Promote interaction.

Look for moments between learner and prop, learner and adult, and learner and peers.

✓ Offer choices.

Choice-making can support communication, control and confidence.

✓ Keep it positive.

Every story session should feel safe, respectful and enjoyable.

New to Inclusive Stories?

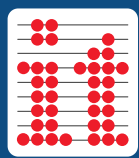
If you have not tried Inclusive Stories yet, you can explore the stories and resources with a free HelpKidzLearn trial.



Sign up for a 14-day free trial of Inclusive Stories and its full range of resources.

You'll gain access to the full Inclusive Stories collection, organised into 12 categories to support communication, sensory exploration, functional skills and wider curriculum themes.

Start your free trial



HelpKidzLearn™

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