

Illustrate a Famous Book!

In the best picture books, the illustrations bring as much meaning to the story as the words themselves. But what if your child couldn't see the pictures? In this activity, she'll listen to a story without looking at it, and create her own images. Not only will she get a kick out of becoming the "new illustrator" of a famous book like *Where the Wild Things Are*, or *The Little Engine That Could*, but she'll get some major reading comprehension help along the way.

What You Need:

- Picture book
- Paper
- Pencil
- Crayons or markers.
- Stapler, string, or brass clips



What You Do:

1. Pull out an unfamiliar book and sit down somewhere comfortable with your child. Without opening the book, look at the cover. Ask your child what the picture makes him think of. What's happening in it? Looking only at the picture, ask him to predict what he thinks the story will be about.
2. Now tell your child you're going to read him a story, but just this one time, he won't be able to look at the pictures. Instead, ask him to use his imagination, and come up with images in his mind while you read.
3. During the reading, stop periodically and ask questions. For example, "Why did Sally go outside when her mother said not to?" Try to incorporate questions that require kids to make predictions as to what will happen next.
4. Once you've finished the book, tell you child he's going to illustrate it! Now's the time for discussion. While adults can often remember what happened in a story long after they've finished reading it, this is a skill that young kids need help developing. Give your child some prompts. Ask what happened first and then let him draw it. Ask what happened next, let him draw it, and so on. As he finishes each picture, help him by writing some text below his illustration, using the words your child used when he retold it to you.

Bind the story and make a cover. If he likes, you and your child compare his version to the original and see what's different. Don't forget to take your new illustrator's creation over to grandma's house for some well deserved bragging! He's earned it.

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