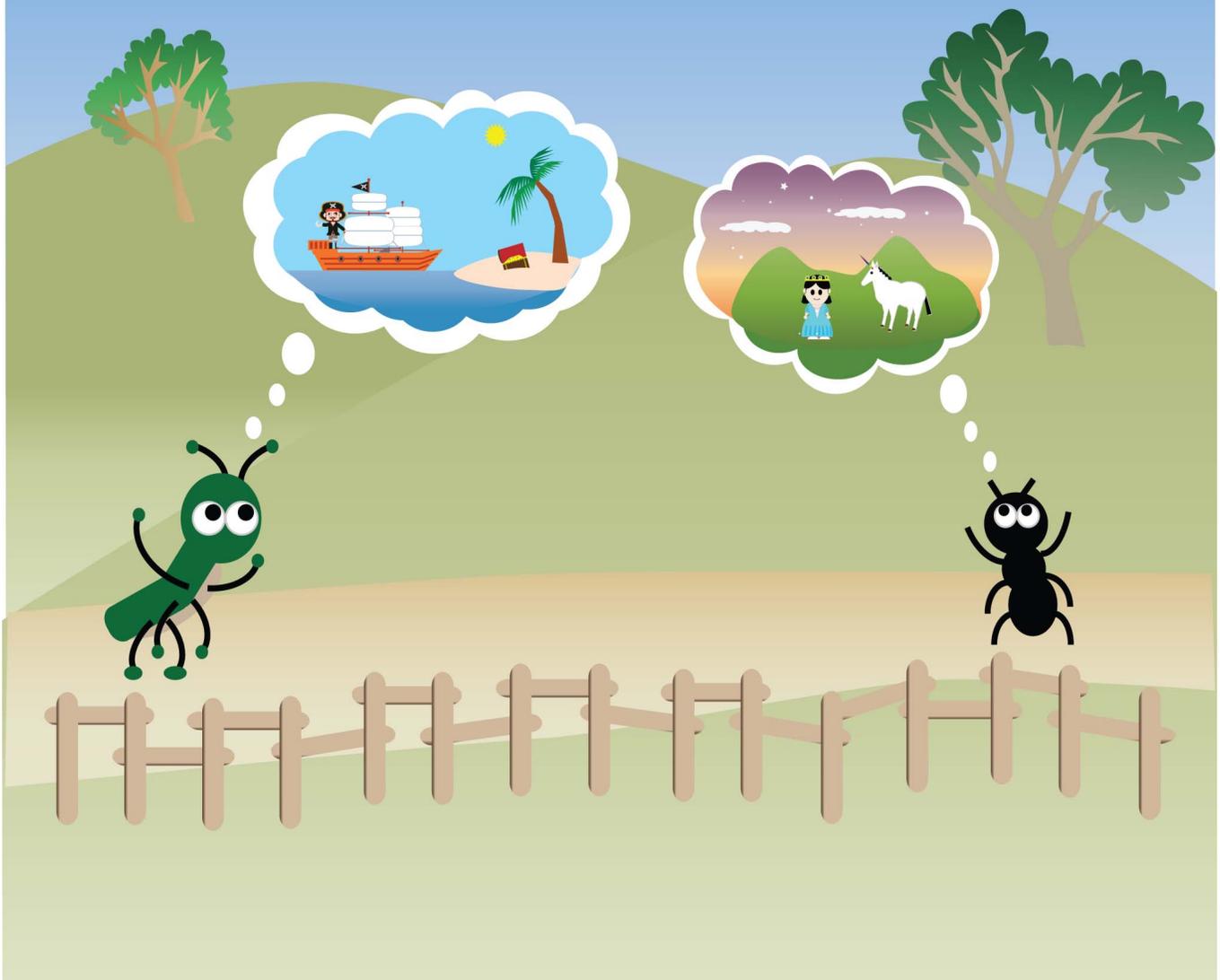




# StoryStarter™ Workbook

*Learn to tell a story in just 7 steps!*



# CONTENTS

## **Part A. About this workbook**

## **Part B. Telling your story in 7 steps.**

1. Characters
2. Challenges
3. Motivation
4. Setting
5. Obstacles
6. Climax
7. Closing

## **Part C. Building a book with StoryJumper**

1. About StoryJumper
2. Creating a new story
3. Props
4. Scenes
5. Photos
6. Adding text
7. Reviewing your story
8. Creating your book cover
9. Sharing your story
10. Ordering your books

We welcome your feedback! Please send your comments and questions to [\*\*support@storyjumper.com\*\*](mailto:support@storyjumper.com)

## Part A. About this workbook

Ready to start your story? Whether you have an idea already, or need some help, the StoryStarter™ workbook is designed to help you get going.

1. Before you start, print a copy of the Work Sheet found at the end of this workbook so that you can write down your story notes and ideas as you go along.
2. As you complete each of the 7 steps, you may find that you want to go back and change an idea you had earlier. That's okay –the best writers usually change their ideas over and over again until they have something they really like.
3. If you get stuck on a step, try thinking about a different one for a while, and then come back later. Sometimes you'll find that filling in other parts of your idea will help you get unstuck.
4. When you're finished with your worksheet, you're ready for some real fun in Part B – building a book on the StoryJumper.com website.

### For Teachers:

The StoryStarter™ workbook is a tool for teaching students the creative writing process. The goal of the workbook is to coach students in building the 7 primary components of a story (Character, Challenge, Motivation, Setting, Obstacles, Climax, and Closing). Finishing the 7 steps will give students complete story arcs that they can then develop into rich, detailed stories. You can also adjust the material to fit the needs of your class. Here are just a few ideas you can use to mix things up:

1. Group Story I: Split the class into small groups and have them work on each step in teams and brainstorming ideas together. After each step, have the class share the results and vote on which team's idea to use.
2. Group Story II: Split the class into two groups. After each step, have the teams trade worksheets, and then have them continue, building on the other team's progress.
3. Character Building: Have your students create trading cards using their characters. Use the questions in the **Character** section to develop attributes. Collect all the cards and mix them in a hat/bag. Have students select a card(s) at random from bag. Take it a step further by dividing the cards between Hero/Villain groups.
4. When the students have completed their worksheets, they are ready to begin building their books on the StoryJumper website. Follow the instructions in Part C for creating a free online version of their story that they can share with friends and family.

## Part B: Telling your story in 7 steps.

### Step 1. Character

Let's get started! First, your story needs a character. Who is this story about? Here are some things to think about when creating your main character:

- Your character doesn't have to be human. It can be an animal or a fantastic spirit. It could also be a rock, a computer circuit board, or a puff of smoke. Use your imagination - sometimes the simplest objects in our everyday lives have stories to tell. Like that pencil eraser over there... *Did you see how it was looking at the sharpener?*
- Once you've created one character, you probably want to create more characters -- friends, enemies, heroes, villains, and so on.
- Perfect characters are boring. To create tension in the story, give your characters weaknesses and flaws. If you use the character's weaknesses to get the character into even *more* trouble, the tension will build, and you'll have a better story. (We'll cover the importance of story tension more in the next step.)
- Remember, to keep your story believable, your character should react to events in the story according to the personality you've given them. For example, if a tiger is running loose through the neighborhood, we'd expect a curious character to have a very different reaction than a lazy one.

Is your character usually happy, or gloomy? Polite or rude? Clever or arrogant? Punctual or late? Careless? Generous? Sleepy? Irritable? Spacey? Try writing down 5 words that describe your character on your worksheet.

The more you develop your characters biography -- or *back story* -- the more believable the character will be.

Imagine if you were to interview your character. What kinds of questions would you ask? What kinds of questions might you *not* ask? Write down your questions and see how your character begins to develop.

If you're stuck, look at the next page for some sample questions. You can also try changing these questions slightly and see how your character's reaction might say something different about his or her personality.

If you were interviewing your character, how would he or she answer the following questions?

1. *What is the scariest thing in the world?*
2. *What is a secret you wouldn't want anyone to know?*
3. *Why do you believe that broccoli has magical powers?*
4. *What are you really good at?*
5. *Why do you always sign your mail with the letters "S.U.R."?*
6. *What are you really bad at?*
7. *What is something you wear that is important? How does it help you?*
8. *Who is your best friend? How did you meet?*
9. *Who is your arch enemy? How did this come to be?*
10. *What is your special power? When were you were afraid to use it?*
11. *What is a funny expression you like to say? What does it mean?*
12. *What are you most proud of?*
13. *Why do dogs run away when they see you?*
14. *Have you ever wished you could be someone else? Who?*
15. *What is something you always forget?*
16. *Why are you unable to spell your own name?*
17. *What makes you nervous? How do you react when this happens?*
18. *Why are enchiladas your favorite food?*
19. *Who would you never want to be stuck in an elevator with?*
20. *What is something you think about all the time?*
21. *What is the biggest lie you ever told? To whom?*
22. *What is the best present you ever received?*
23. *If you could go anywhere, where would it be?*
24. *What one word would you use to describe yourself?*
25. *Why does your front tooth wiggle?*

## Step 2. Challenge

Every great story involves a problem or challenge to be solved by the characters. An interesting challenge is what turns a boring list of everyday events in to an interesting and exciting story for your readers. The challenge creates tension.

- No matter how interesting your character and settings are -- you need an interesting problem to solve or your story will be B-O-R-I-N-G. For example:
  - **Boring:** "Captain Fantastico woke up one morning, got dressed, brushed his teeth and went to school."
  - **Better:** "Captain Fantastico woke up one morning, got dressed, and brushed his teeth. On his way to school, he realized he'd left his lunch money on kitchen table. His stomach was already grumbling. How was he going to eat lunch?"
  - **Awesome:** "Captain Fantastico woke up one morning with a terrible headache and found that his arms had been tied into knots. No doubt this was the work of his arch enemy Dr. Futzengrapz. To make things worse, his lunch money had disappeared from kitchen table... again."

Challenges can be general or specific.

- In *Cinderella*, the heroine has the general challenge of survival with her evil stepsisters, and then a very specific challenge of figuring out how she'll get to the Prince's dance.
- In *Star Wars*, Luke Skywalker has a general challenge of escaping his boring life and then a specific challenge of finding Princess Leia. Then as soon as he's escaped with the Princess, he learns he has another specific challenge: Blow up the Death Star to save the rebel alliance.

Try coming up with a few challenges that your characters might struggle with, and write these down on your worksheet. If you need some ideas to get started, try asking some "What if...?" questions. See the next page for a list of examples:

For example, what if your character...

- discovers suddenly that vegetables can talk.
- all the water in the ocean has disappeared.
- finds that all clocks have stopped.
- discovers a tree that grows money.
- has something stuck up their nose and can't get it out
- best friend is wearing a really embarrassing hat, but nobody will say anything
- ate way too much for lunch and now cannot get off the couch.
- has to fly to Paris, but is freaked out about getting on a plane.
- is convinced that the manhole cover in front of the supermarket is a teleporter.
- discovers a phone that can call every person in the world at the same time.
- is given the power to become an animal for one day.
- wakes up and can magically speak fluent German
- gets stuck on a deserted island with only a knife, a book and a box of matches.
- friend gets very sick, and must find the only cure -- the root of a magic jungle  
plant.
- finds a time-machine with three 'time-jumps' left in it.
- must give a speech to the citizens of \_\_\_\_\_ about the importance of honesty.
- wakes up to find him/herself floating on a boat in the middle of the ocean
- finds a cave in the backyard that leads to an ancient Mayan ruin.
- learns that walking a certain way on the sidewalk can bend time.
- is invited to tea with the Queen of England but loses the invitation.
- is walking down a city street and sees a tiger on the loose.
- is at the mall and sees \_\_\_\_\_ stealing a pair of sunglasses from a store.
- opens an old library book to discover a treasure map.
- receives a mysterious message claiming that stop signs are actually sleeping  
aliens that will soon wake up to begin an invasion of earth.
- invents a machine that turns clouds into cotton candy
- meets a gnome in the forest that can talk with trees and rocks.
- brand new cell phone falls into the toilet.
- gets in a huge argument with \_\_\_\_\_ over which pizza toppings they should  
order.
- discovers that a great uncle has left \$10,000 in his will, on one condition:
- finds a light switch that turns out all the lights in the world.
- accidentally receives an ancient coin from a vending machine. Rubbing it  
sends your character back in time.
- discovers that certain parts of the Yellow Pages contain magic spells.
- comes home and realizes that everything in the house has been replaced with  
an exact copy of the original.
- finds a sinister message scrawled on the border of a \$1 bill.
- discovers that the most valuable \_\_\_\_\_ from his vast collection is missing
- believes that his dentist is actually a foreign spy.
- finds a strange pair of shoes beneath the tree in the field.
- tries to write a birthday poem for \_\_\_\_\_ that includes the word 'orange'.
- draws a picture that is mistakenly sold at auction for \$1,000,000.
- discovers that the neighborhood bully is extremely scared of \_\_\_\_\_
- wakes up to find s/he can no longer talk normally, but can only sing in a loud  
voice.
- accepts a dare to spend a night in a haunted house.
- goes searching around the world to learn why donuts have holes.
- finds a dark tunnel under the kitchen sink that leads to a world of white infinity.
- gets lost in the desert with only a shovel and an ice cream cone.
- dares someone to eat an entire plate of sushi

- \_\_\_\_\_ is asked to rescue the Golden Phoenix statue from a hideous blob monster.
- \_\_\_\_\_ gets lost in the jungle trying to find an Aztec ruin.

## Step 3. Motivation

Your character needs motivation to solve the problem. Why must your character confront this challenge? What is the outcome your character hopes for?

Sometimes this is obvious, sometimes not. For example, if your main character is a fox, and his challenge is to help some chickens get across the river, the reader needs to understand why the fox wouldn't just eat the chickens instead, since that's how a fox would naturally behave. Perhaps the chickens have promised the fox something in return for helping them? Or maybe the fox is afraid that the farmer will catch him if he eats the chickens.

Making your characters act against their nature can build great tension, but it has to be believable to your reader. Here are some ideas that might motivate your character:

Perhaps your character...

1. is bored with life on the farm.
2. doesn't want parents to discover \_\_\_\_\_.
3. doesn't want to be picked on anymore
4. needs medicine to cure an illness
5. wants someone to like him/her
6. wants to sleep really badly
7. is stuck living with a dreadful aunt
8. wants to protect the magic spell book
9. can't stand injustice
10. wants to know more about...
11. doesn't like chicken.
12. is in love with the monster
13. wants to eat candy
14. wants to be famous
15. likes sapphires
16. is super hungry
17. is tired of the rain
18. wants to destroy the planet
19. just wants to be happy
20. feels like something is missing

## Step 4. Setting

Your story needs a setting. Where and when does this story take place?

- Is the setting important to the story? If not, don't spend too much time on it. For example, if the story is about two rocks in a shoe box, you probably don't need to spend a great deal of time describing the box, since your reader can easily imagine what that looks like.
- If the setting is important, you want to show the reader what it would be like. For example, if you're setting your scene in the back alleys of Paris in July of 1777, you should help the reader understand what this would be like (hint: hot, stinky, dangerous).
- Sometimes the setting is so important that it resembles another character in your story. For example, in a story about a penguin trying to cross Antarctica, the bird might encounter 'angry winds' and 'desperate loneliness' of never-ending nights. In other words, the reader would sense that the setting itself has emotions just like the characters.

Here are some different ideas for settings:

1. The palm of your hand
2. The lake at the city park
3. An enchanted swamp
4. The top of the Empire State Building
5. The crypt of the Pharaoh Scorpion
6. Deep space
7. An underground ant hive
8. The Sea of Tranquility
9. The school playground
10. Ed's Fortress of Doom
11. Your backyard
12. The refrigerator
13. The ice planet Krasternök
14. A table top
15. Albatross Island
16. The secret lair of Dr. Fugenzatz
17. Inside a rainbow
18. A haunted house
19. Pookaberry Junction
20. Ancient Greece

## Step 5. Obstacles

So now you have your character, the setting, and the problem, and the motivation to solve that problem. These parts are usually told in the first section of your story, sometimes in just a few pages. Until the climax, the *rest* of your story is detailing the *obstacles* – the things that get in your character’s way. This will make up most of the pages in your story.

Imagine the following:

**Character:** Mouse  
**Setting:** House  
**Problem:** Find Cheese  
**Motivation:** Hungry

It’s simple and boring. But what happens when you add obstacles?

**Obstacles:** Giant Mouse Trap, Three-legged Cat, Turbo Vacuum

Now it’s getting interesting! Obstacles create tension and make the story fun for your reader.

Obstacles often come in sets of three. Try including at least this many in your story to start. For example:

- Using our Star Wars example again, Luke has three main obstacles:
  - Find Ben Kenobi and figure out what R2D2 is squawking about.
  - Rescue the Princess from the Darth Vader.
  - Blow up the Death Star and save the Rebels.
  
- In the final scenes of Indiana Jones & the Last Crusade, to gain access to the cave of the Holy Grail, Indy must:
  - Kneel at the entrance of the cave so he doesn’t get sliced in half.
  - Step on the correct letters to spell “the name of God” so that he doesn’t fall into a bottomless pit.
  - Take a leap of faith on to the invisible bridge that crosses a chasm to the cave.

Did you notice that both of these examples use 3 obstacles? This is a nice number that allows your story to develop, but also keeps the reader interested. Try using 3 for your story idea, and then add more if you think you need them.

Also, remember the character flaws that made the Challenge more interesting? Your character should be transforming as the story progresses, getting a bit

stronger, braver, luckier, smarter, etc. By the end of the story, the reader should feel that the character has grown or changed into a better person. Obstacles present your character with a chance to grow.

Here are just a few different ideas from which you can create obstacles. What happens if your character...?

1. gets hand stuck in a jar?
2. gets amnesia?
3. gets locked in a closet?
4. gets stuck in a tree?
5. loses all the money?
6. is double-crossed?
7. falls into a well?
8. gets chased into a cave?
9. runs out of time?
10. can't swim?
11. runs out of batteries?
12. gets lost in a maze?
13. is too cold to move?
14. steps on a gnome?
15. sneezes loudly?
16. must climb Mt. Terror?
17. is chased by a giant eyeball monster?
18. encounters a slippery banana peel?
19. hands are stained blue?
20. horse runs away?
21. slips on the ice?
22. must eat sushi?
23. there's no electricity?
24. can't turn off alarm clock?
25. does not like eggplant lasagna?
26. drops cell phone in the toilet?
27. can not find x-ray goggles?
28. parachute has a hole in it?
29. map falls in a river?
30. rips a big hole in pants?
31. crab pinches toe and won't let go?
32. awakens a giant?
33. is questioned by the police?
34. spills hot coffee?
35. breaks a tooth?
36. is harassed by birds?
37. has song stuck in head?
38. eats the last power biscuit?
39. can't wake up?

40. gets a speeding ticket?

## Step 6. Climax

After getting past the last obstacle, your character finally confronts the challenge. The tension you have been building in your story is released.

The climax is the point at which your characters also confront their own weaknesses. If they are naturally timid, then they may become very courageous at the climax. If they tend to lie, then they will need to tell an important truth. The climax of the story is the proof that your character has really transformed.

The climax is also a great time to reveal an unexpected twist in your story. Just make sure it's believable. If a giant bird suddenly swoops out of nowhere to carry away your villain, your ending will suffer. The best endings often have predictable results, but are achieved in an unpredictable way.

For example, you may remember that in the climax of *The Incredibles*, the family battles with the evil character *Syndrome*. Though the Incredibles all have super-powers, it is *Syndrome's* own cape that does him in. Earlier in the story, we learn that Mr. Incredible's costume designer refuses to use capes because they are too dangerous. So, while the ending is unpredictable, it's satisfying because we were introduced to the idea of capes long before the climax. It also reinforces the dangers of vanity – a theme that is repeated throughout the story, and a weakness that gets Mr. Incredible into trouble in the first place.

The climax generally follows one of these patterns:

**Realization:** Your character has put together the clues in the story and has figured out what happened. This type of climax works well for mysteries.

**Resolution:** Your character is up against the very last obstacle and -- through the confrontation -- a transformation takes place. (*The Incredibles* example above fits this pattern.)

**Choice:** The character is faced with making a difficult decision. Should he capture the villain or escape with the gold? Should he tell the truth and face the consequences or lie and escape unharmed?

If you want to test whether your climax is successful, read your story aloud to a friend, and then stop just before the resolution and put the story down. If they demand to hear the ending, you have a good story!

## Step 7. Closing

You're almost there! Finally, your story needs an ending. After the climax, there are usually some loose ends to tie up. Here are some questions you might try to answer:

1. Has everything been resolved? Is it clear what will happen to your important characters after the story ends? For example, do they live happily ever after?
2. How does your main character feel about the result?
3. How have your characters transformed? Here are some examples:
  - a. The Dr. Seuss's greedy *Grinch* becomes generous and loving when he realizes there's more to Christmas than just presents.
  - b. In the final scenes of *Pinocchio*, the puppet transforms physically into a boy, while his character also makes the final transformation from being a liar, and into someone that is trustworthy and brave.
  - c. Across all seven of the *Harry Potter* books, we see Harry, Hermione and Ron grow-up -- from small children into young adults. In each book, they learn life lessons about trust, honesty and friendship.

You should also think about a theme for your story. Is there a message or special point? Stories are often more interesting and memorable if we learn something from them. Because the theme depends heavily on the outcome of the story, it's usually much easier to decide on a theme *after* you've completed the 7 steps, and then go back and work the theme into the other parts of your story.

Here is a list of themes you might try to include in your story:

1. good vs. evil
2. the importance of friendship
3. the problems with selfishness
4. the rewards of sharing
5. the danger of revenge
6. the consequences of bullying
7. the importance of honesty
8. achieving one's goals
9. respecting authority
10. travelling and journeys
11. following the rules
12. peer pressure
13. the value of taking risks
14. man vs. nature
15. man vs. machine

Another way to work on including a theme is to consider proverbs and their meanings. Proverbs can be helpful because they communicate important life lessons and themes very concisely. Here's a short list:

1. The grass is always greener.
2. Look before you leap.
3. A stitch in time saves nine.
4. If it's not broken, don't fix it.
5. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
6. Don't make a mountain out of a molehill.
7. Don't put all your eggs in one basket.
8. The nail that sticks out gets hammered down.
9. Many hands make light work.
10. Barking dogs seldom bite.
11. It's darkest just before the dawn.
12. Don't cross a bridge until you come to it.
13. Don't burn your bridges.
14. The early bird gets the worm.
15. Don't change horses mid-stream.
16. All good things must come to an end.
17. Don't judge a book by its cover.
18. Don't cut off your nose to spite your face.
19. Rome was not built in a day.
20. Birds of a feather flock together.

Do any of these sound like a theme in your story?

## **NEXT STEPS**

Now it's time to start writing. If you've filled out the worksheet, congratulations! You already have your entire story line (or *story arc*) ready to go! In the next section we'll show you how to build your story on the StoryJumper creator platform.

# Part C. Building a book with StoryJumper

## 1. About StoryJumper

StoryJumper is a website that allows kids to build their own books. You can easily create cover pages, add text, upload drawings or photos to illustrate your story, and you can use the StoryJumper clipart gallery, too. When you're done, you can order your own professionally published hardback book!

The next section will show you how to build a new story online, and the share and publish your creation. We'll also give you some tips for editing your story and making it better.



## 2. Creating a new story

To get started, first visit the StoryJumper site ([www.storyjumper.com](http://www.storyjumper.com)). If it's your first time, click the **sign-up** in the upper right to create an account. It's fast, safe and free to get started.

Important: If you're **under 13**, please use your parent's or guardian's email address so they can let us know that it's ok for you to use the site. Also, please do not use your **real** name.

Please create a **free account** so you have a place to keep your stories!

choose a **user name**:   
*(do not use your **real** name)*

pick a **password**:

re-enter the **password**:

your **birthday**:   
*(Why do we ask for your birthday?)*

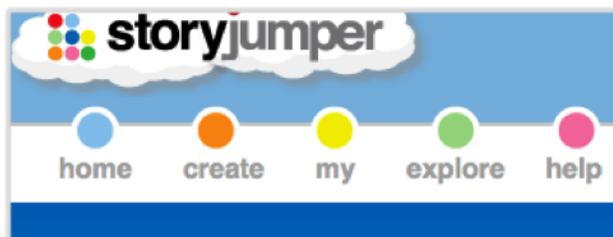
Email we can reply to   
*(we will mail your a link to activate your account)*

I agree to the StoryJumper [Terms of Service](#)

**create**

*Already a member? [Click here.](#)*

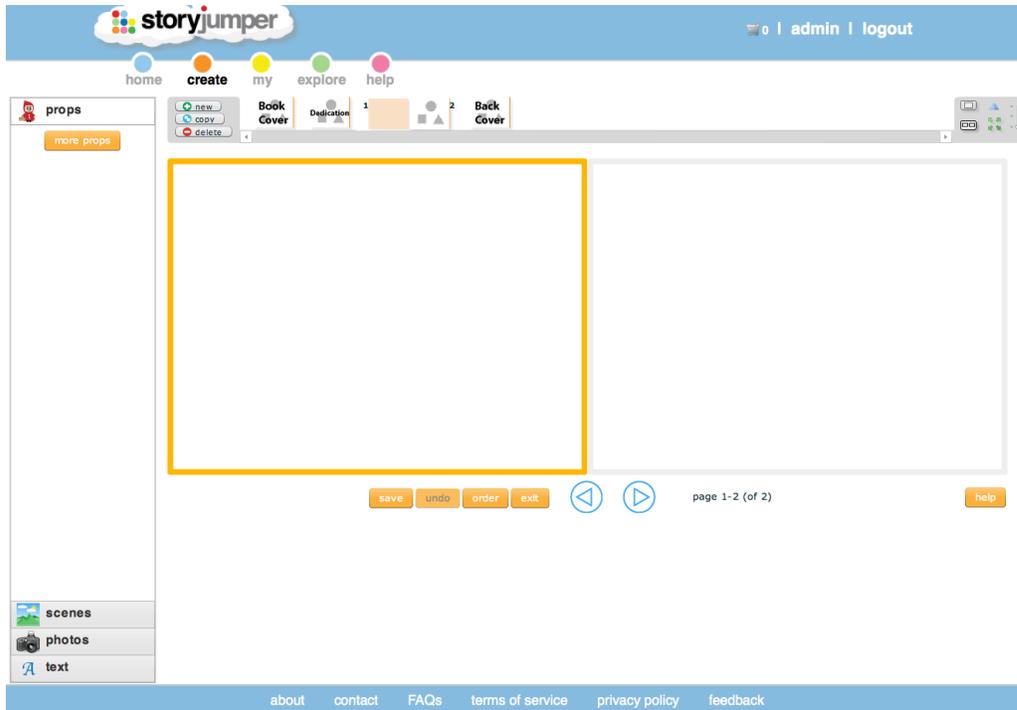
Once you've created your account, click the **create** button at the top of the page:



Select the very last radio button "**Custom (Empty)**" and click on the big orange **Create** button to the right:



You're in the Story Creator! Let's take a look around. Your screen should look something like this:



## Pages and Navigation

At the top of the screen you'll see the navigation bar.



Clicking on the page icons will allow you to move between pages, including the covers and the dedication page. The creator always loads page 1 of your book whenever you start.

To add a new page to your book, click the **green new** button.  
To duplicate or copy an existing page, click the **blue copy** button  
To delete a page, click the **red delete** button

Once your story is more than 10 or 12 pages long, use the scroll bar or arrow keys to move through your book.



At the end of the navigation bar, you'll find a few other useful tools.



Single page view



Double-page view



Expand the page to fit window



Zoom in/out of page



Flip scene (we'll explain **scenes** in a later section)

Underneath the pages of your book, you will also find some important buttons:



The **save** button will save your work to your account. If you don't have an account yet, you will be asked to create one. We recommend that you save your work often.



If you mistakenly delete a prop or scene, or make edits to your illustrations that you don't like, you can use the **undo** button to take back these steps. Note that **undo** does not work inside text boxes.



When your book is ready to order, you can start the process and preview the book with the **order** button. Note that your story must be 16 pages or more for book printing.

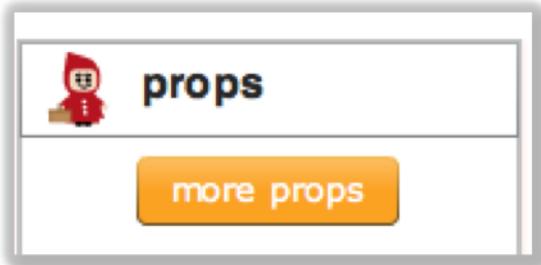


The **exit** button will take you out of the creator tool. You will be given the option to save your story or exit without saving.

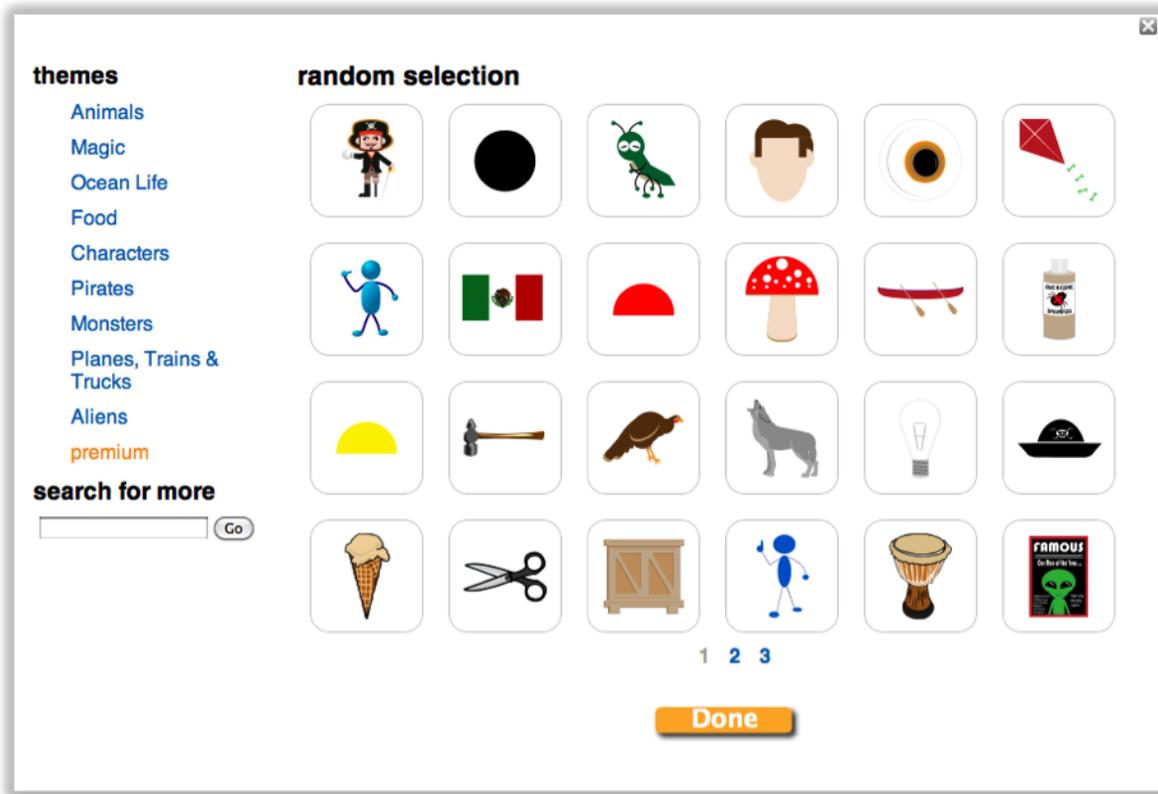
### 3. Props

StoryJumper has a bunch of fun art (**props**) that you can use to illustrate your story. First we'll show you how to find props, then how to use them.

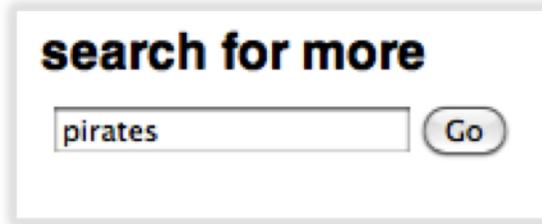
If you look at the left-side of your browser, you'll see a collection of tabs. At the top is the **props** tab. It should already be open, but if not, click on it.



You'll notice that it's empty. That's because you need to go and find some **props**. Go ahead and click on the **more props** button. Now you see a screen that looks like this:



This selection is just a few props selected at random to give you some idea of what's in the prop collection. However, let's say that you are writing a story about pirates. You can search for more 'pirate' related props using the **search more** feature.



You can also find popular prop **themes** by clicking on the blue links on the left.

Once you've found what you're looking for, clicking on a prop will add it to your **props** tab. You can continue to search and add until you've found everything you need. Then click the **done** button at the bottom of the screen.



*Tip: Though the library is always growing, sometimes you may not find the props you need. If you don't find any results for what you're looking for, you might try to construct what you need out of shapes (search for "shapes"). Another option is to try adjusting your storyline to fit the props that you can find. You can also upload your own drawings, which we'll cover later in the*

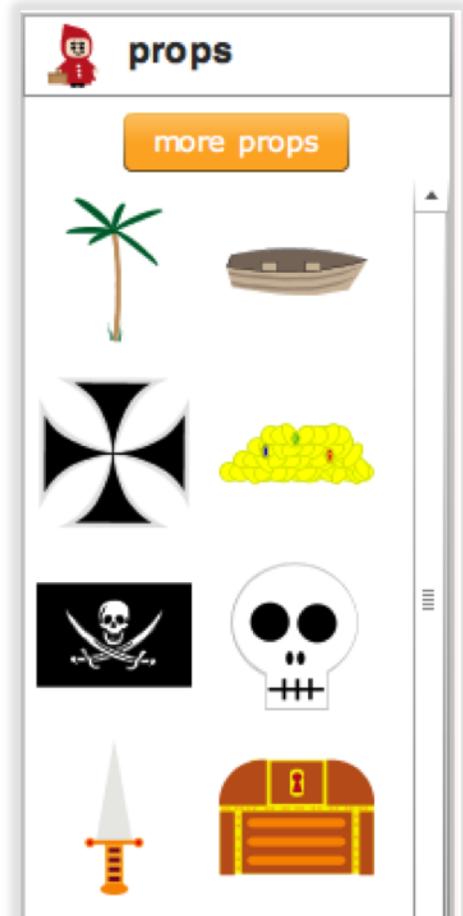
*scenes section.*

Now your **props** tab should look more like this:

### Adding Props

Now that you've selected the props you need, it's time to add some to your story. First, click on the page you want to place the prop. (The page should be highlighted with an **orange** border.)

Once the page is selected, just click once on the prop you want to add, and the prop will jump over to the page (you don't need to drag it.). The creator tool will place it close to the center of your screen so that it's easy to find.



Now that you have a prop on your page, you'll notice it's surrounded by an orange box, and several blue buttons. These buttons are prop **controls** (If you don't see these, just click the prop on the page and they'll reappear)



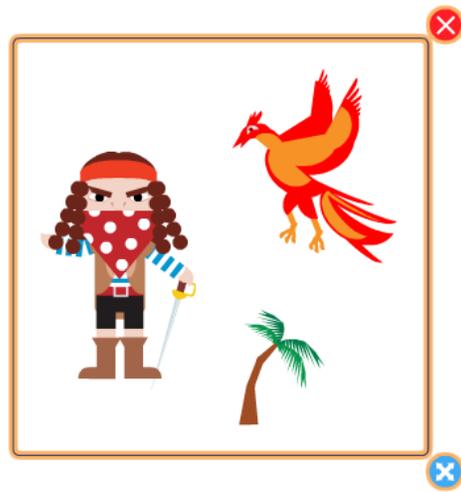
Each control let's you change the way the prop looks on the page.

Here's how they work:

<b>Resize</b> 	To change the size of your prop, click-and-hold the button while dragging across the page.
<b>Rotate</b> 	To rotate your prop, click-and-hold the button while dragging it. This will make your prop spin in a circle.
<b>Flip</b> 	To flip your prop to the left or right, just click this button once.
<b>Forward</b> 	When one prop is behind another, click this button to move it ahead (or on top) of the other prop.
<b>Back</b> 	When one prop is in front of another, click this button to move it back (or behind) the other prop.
<b>Copy</b> 	Clicking the copy button will duplicate the selected prop on the page. This is useful for quickly creating many versions of the same art.
<b>Delete</b> 	Clicking the delete button will remove the prop from the page.

You can also select a several props as a group. Just click-hold into an empty area on the page and drag your mouse across the props you want to select. To release the group, just click into an empty area again.

(\*Note that only text boxes cannot be grouped with props)



## 4. Finding Scenes

StoryJumper also has backgrounds or **scenes** that you can use to illustrate your story. You'll find the scenes tab just under the **props** tab.

Just like props, you can search for scenes by clicking the **more scenes** button and searching for the background you need.

However, unlike props, **scenes** cannot be re-sized, rotated or moved around.

If you want to flip a scene from left to right, use the flip control in the page navigation bar.



= flip scene

If you want to delete a scene, click the blue [clear](#) link next to the **more scenes** button.



## 5. Photos

Photos can be used as scenes or as props. When used as a scene, your photo will fill the entire page with a fixed position. When used as props, you crop (cut) the section you want to put on the page. Once added, it will behave just like a prop (for example re-sizing, rotating, etc.).

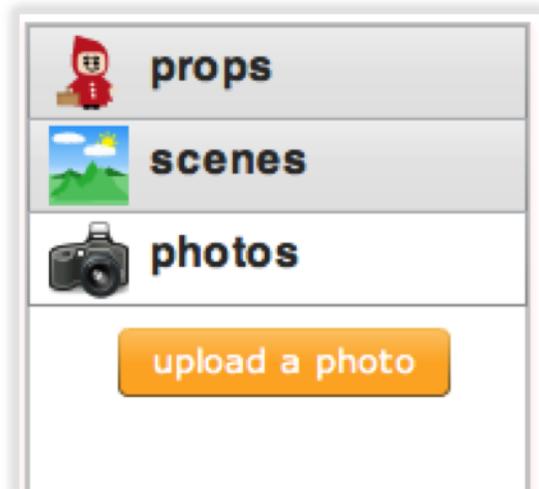
*Tip: For scenes, whenever possible use photos with landscape (wide) dimensions instead of portrait (tall) dimensions. That way you can use more of your photo on the page.*

### Uploading Photos

To get started, you'll need some photos. You can upload from your computer, and soon you'll also be able to import from sites such as Flickr, MySpace, FaceBook, and others.

(Important: For privacy, your photos are **not** shared with other users unless you grant permission. Other users can only read your stories if you change your Sharing preferences (read more about Sharing in step 9)

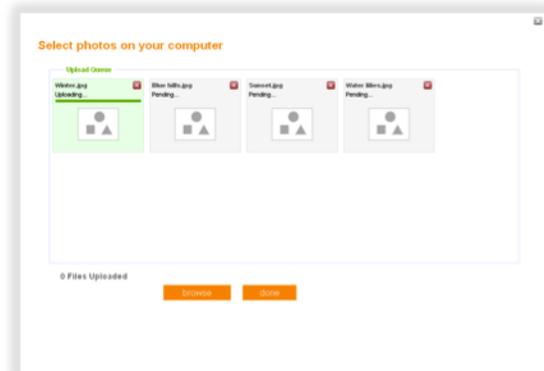
1. Start by opening the **photos** tab and clicking the **upload a photo** button.
2. Click the **browse** button at the bottom of the screen to find images on your computer.



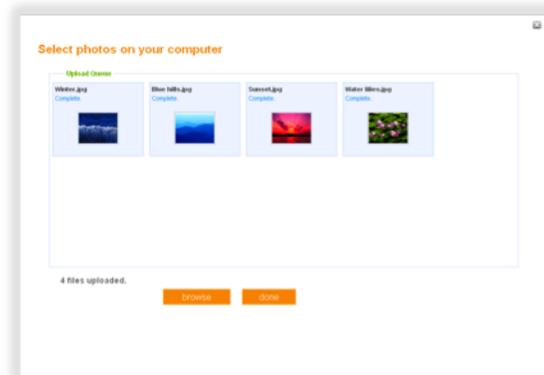
3. Select the images you want to upload. You can select multiple images at one time by holding the **shift** when selecting.



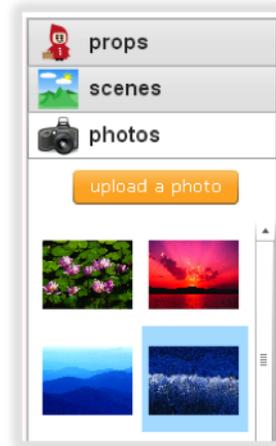
4. Your images will begin uploading immediately. If you want to upload more images, you don't have to wait! Just click the **browse** button again and find more photos to add to the list.



5. When you're finished, just click **done**.



6. Your photo tab now has images. Now you'll decide how you want to use them in your story. When you click on an image, you must choose between **prop** and **scene**.



## Cropping Photos

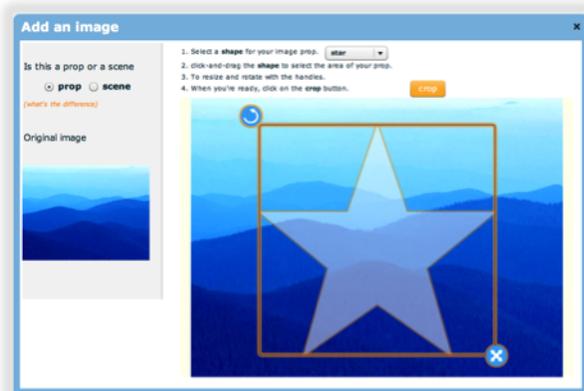
7. To create a background with your image that will cover the entire page, choose the **scene** option.

Move and resize the white rectangle to select the area you want for the page, and then click **done**.



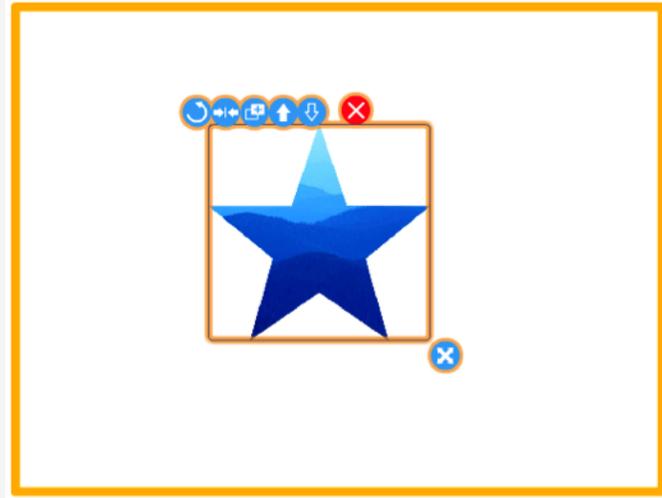
8. Or, choose the **prop** option if you want to be able to move your image around, or want to use special cropping shapes, such as square, oval, star, or face.

First choose a shape from the drop-down menu, and then resize and orient the transparent area for your selection. Then click **done**.

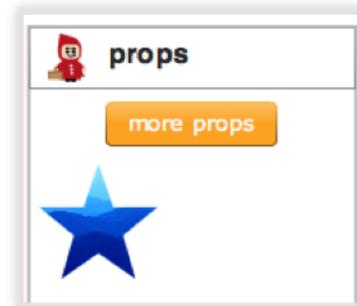


9. You can see a preview of your cropped image before it is added to your page. If you don't like it, click **redo** to re-crop the image. Otherwise, click **done**.

10. Now the **scene** or **prop** image will automatically appear on the highlighted page.



11. If you want to use your cropped **prop** or **scene** on another page, just check your **props** and **scenes** tabs and you'll find them there.



12. You can even use your art in other books, too. Just click on the **more props** button, and then click the orange **my photo props** link on the left-hand side of the search page.

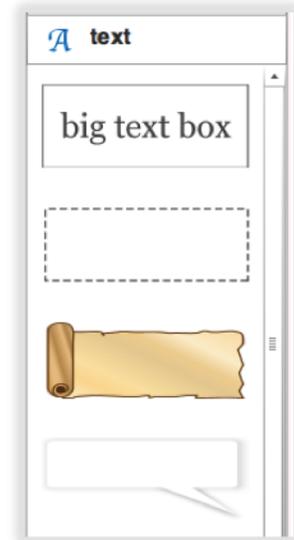
## 6. Adding text

Finally, at the bottom of the tabs, you'll find one for entering the text of your story.

In the creator, you have the freedom to move and format text however you like. There are two types of text boxes, and each have different features: **big text box** and **labels**.

### Using the big text box

The **big text box** is the very first option in your text tab. You'll want to use this when you are creating a page full of sentences and paragraphs. Clicking this option in the tab will place a box in the middle of the selected page that behaves like a text editor, such as Microsoft Word. You'll see some familiar controls such as resize and move forward/back. You'll also see some new ones:



<p><b>Fill</b></p> 	<p>Clicking the <b>fill</b> button lets you select a background color to fill the text box.</p>
<p><b>Font</b></p> 	<p>Highlight the text you want to change and then click the arrow to select a new font.</p>
<p><b>Font size</b></p> 	<p>Highlight the text you want to change and then click to select a new font size.</p>
<p><b>Font styles</b></p> 	<p>Highlight the text you want to style and then click <b>B</b> for <b>bold</b> text or <i>I</i> for <i>italics</i>.</p>
<p><b>Font color</b></p> 	<p>Highlight the text you want to change and then click to select a color from the pop-up.</p>
<p><b>Text alignment</b></p> 	<p>Highlight the text you want to align and then click Left, Center, Right or Justified</p>

## Using Labels

Labels are much like props, except that you can enter text into them. If you resize them, the text will automatically shrink or expand to fit the surrounding artwork.

Labels are good for short bits of text, such as naming the location on a map, entering a specific date, or conversation between characters:

For most stories, you'll want to do most of your text in the big text box, and use the labels when working with illustrations and photos.

*Tip: For best results, try to pick one font style and size for your story and stick with it. Too many changes will make your story difficult to read.*



## Step 7. Reviewing your story

After finishing your story, you should review what you've written and polish it up so that it's easy to read. Here are some tips for editing your story.

### 1. **Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar.**

Yes, they're all really important. Check your story for all three of these, ideally one at a time so that you can really focus.

### 2. **Read it aloud.**

The fastest and simplest way to catch errors in your story is to read it out loud – even if you're by yourself. Sentences that seemed natural when you first wrote them may no longer fit. You'll also catch some additional errors that a spell-check or grammar-check might not find. (for example “to” vs. “too”, or “they're” vs. “their”.)

### 3. **Watch for passive voice.**

Using passive voice usually makes your sentences sound weaker and less interesting. What is passive voice? It's when the subject of your verb is on the receiving end of the action. It's easier to understand with an example:

Passive:

*“The ball **was hit** by John.”*

Active:

*“John **hit** the ball.”*

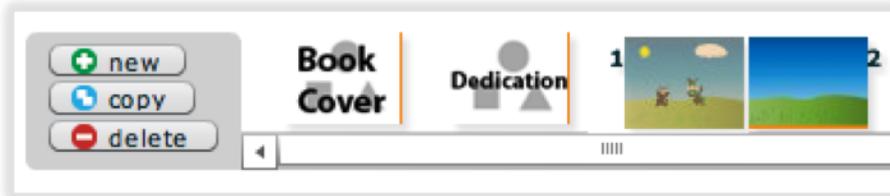
In the first sentence, it sounds like John is having something done to him that is out of his control, while in the second example, John is in control and his action is powerful. The easiest way to find passive voice in your story is to look for the following verbs: *am, is, are, was, were, be, being, been*. Anytime you see another verb after these words, it's probably passive voice.

### 4. **Say it with less**

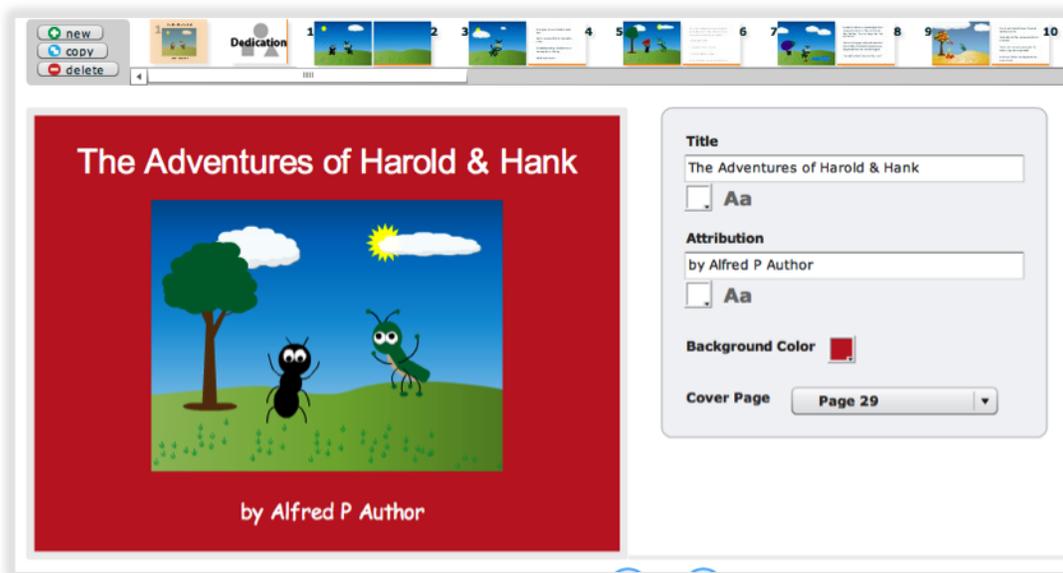
The best writing communicates more with fewer words. Poetry is a great example of this since it can communicate such an amazing range of emotion and imagery in so few words. As you review your story, look for words, sentences -- possibly even whole pages -- that aren't helping tell the story, or are telling the reader what she already knows.

## Step 8. Creating your book cover

When you're finished writing your story, it's time to create your book cover. The StoryJumper creator makes it easy. In the navigation bar, click on the **Book Cover** page (the very first box).



1. Start by giving your book a title. Whatever you type in the **Title** box will be printed across the top of your book's cover.
2. Next, you can add an **attribution**, such as "by Jimmy Smith". Or if you don't want an attribution, you can just delete the text.
3. If you want to change the text font, click on the "Aa" buttons.
4. Select an image for your cover. The creator picks the first page of graphics automatically. Click the **Cover Page** drop down to change it.
5. Finally, select your background and text colors. Your front cover is done.



6. Next, select the **Dedication** page from the navigator. This is the place to write a special message to someone that inspired you to write your story, or as a congratulations note if you're making the book as a birthday gift.
7. Your last step is to use the navigator to scroll all the way to the end of your story to the **Back Cover** page. Here, all you need to do is select another image. Try selecting a different image than your front cover, perhaps something that shows your character encountering one of the obstacles in the story. This will interest your reader more when they are looking at the book cover.
8. Click the **exit** button and save your changes.



Now your book is ready to share and order!

## Step 9. Sharing your story

You can share your StoryJumper stories online with anyone you choose.

### The Adventures of Harold & Hank

A re-telling of Aesop's Fable "The Ant and the Grasshopper" -- with a modern twist. Hank the grasshopper plays all day, while his friend Harold toils to save for the future. But what happens when winter comes?

35 pages, created by denali

more: [ant](#) [grasshopper](#) [seasons](#) [saving](#)

Share this story:

Privacy setting: **PRIVATE**  
(change)

[SHARE](#) [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#)

[Find other stories to read](#)

hardcover \$28.80 [1](#)

[add to cart](#)

Did you know that you can use StoryJumper to build your own book?

You can make adventure stories, fairy tales, treasure maps, photo books, calendars... whatever you can imagine!

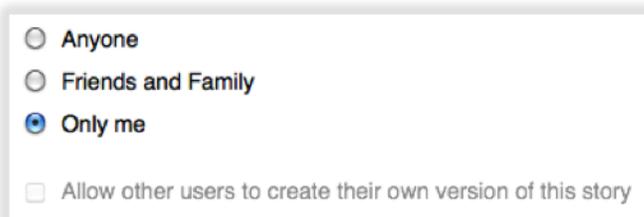
[create](#)



On your story page, find the **Share this Story** section and click the [change](#) link:



On the next page there are three options and one checkbox:



For any story you create, your privacy setting will automatically be **“Only Me”**.

To share with people you know, choosing the **“Friends and Family”** option will allow you to email a link that they can click to view your story.

If you'd like for your story to be considered for inclusion in StoryJumper's library of public stories, choose **“Anyone”** and click **save**.

Finally, StoryJumper has a special feature that allows people to copy, change and re-mix stories that other users have written. If you would like to allow other people to use, copy, or change your story idea, click on the checkbox.

## **Step 10. Ordering your book**

**(coming soon)**

## StoryStarter™ Worksheet

<p><b>1. CHARACTER:</b> Who is your main character, and what is your character like?</p>	
<p><b>1. CHALLENGE:</b> What challenge or problem must your character solve?</p>	
<p><b>3. MOTIVATION:</b> What is motivating your character to solve the challenge?</p>	
<p><b>4. SETTING:</b> Where and when does your story take place?</p>	
<p><b>5. OBSTACLES:</b> What obstacles stand in his/her way?</p>	1.
	2.
	3.
<p><b>6. CLIMAX:</b> How does he/her finally solve the challenge?</p>	
<p><b>7. OUTCOME:</b> What is the outcome of the story?</p>	