The listening picnic

Ages 4–8, with a grown-up · 10–15 minutes · Talk, draw, point or pass.

Different favourites. One big blanket.
Bring a pencil and your imagination. Crayons are welcome too!

1. **Choose:** you and your grown-up each draw a picnic favourite. Invent a wonderfully silly surprise together for the third box!
2. **Listen:** take turns explaining your choices. Grown-ups join in too. Ask, “What do you like about it?” Let each other finish.
3. **Make room:** fill the big blanket with everyone’s ideas.

My favourite

Your favourite

Our silly surprise

Our everyone-welcome picnic blanket
Add everyone’s choices. Leave a little space for a new guest.

One thing I learned about your choice…

Play again: a tiny dragon joins the picnic. What might they bring?
Make it simpler: each person points to or draws just one choice.

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Website activity, separate from the books. No names or uploads needed.

Make a little story

Ages 4–8, with a grown-up · 15–20 minutes · Talk, draw, point or pass.

Pick a character and a muddle. Tell, draw or act your four story moments. A grown-up can write your words.

> **Need a spark?** A serious sock · a sleepy pigeon · a teapot
> A missing spoon · a mixed-up message · a picnic on the moon

Our story is called:

1. Meet someone

Our character wants to…

2. Add a muddle

But then…

3. Try something

So they tried…

4. Find an ending

And in the end…

Give it a voice: the child tells the story; the grown-up adds sound effects. Swap roles and change one detail for a new adventure.

> **A little more:** add a speech bubble or change the ending.
> **A little less:** choose a toy and act out just “wanted… but… so…”

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Wonder together

Ages 4–8, with a grown-up · One question at a time · Talk, draw, point or pass.

Choose one card, then follow the story. Take turns pointing to a card, or ask a grown-up to cut them apart. No scoring and no need to use them all.

LOOK CLOSELY

What caught your eye?

Point to a tiny detail. Can your partner find it?

GUESS TOGETHER

What might happen next?

Invent two possibilities. Read on when you are ready.

ASK A CHARACTER

What would you ask them?

Use a toy voice to imagine their reply.

SWAP PLACES

Could someone see it differently?

Tell one moment through another character's eyes.

TRY SOMETHING

What could they try now?

Act out a small next step or ask a toy for help.

MAKE A SOUND

What would this scene sound like?

Choose a gentle sound, a gesture or a quiet pause.

> **Grown-ups, play too:** let your child choose the first card, then share your own idea. A gesture, a drawing or "I'm not sure" is welcome. Anyone may pass or ask to read on.

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A question for every story

Ages 4–8, with a grown-up · One question at a time · Draw or tell; writing is optional.

Use one with a Willowwick opening or the whole book. Free opening excerpts: **willowwickbooks.com/read-and-watch**

Everyone Must Agree Day

Can we like different things and still enjoy being together?

The Race Without a Finish

What would make Sports Day fun, even if you did not win?

The Screen That Shouted

What else would you want to know before deciding what happened?

When Mum and Dad Said No

If your first plan could not happen, what might you try instead?

The Missing Christmas Star

What little things might make a celebration special for a character?

The Bigger Table

How could we make room for two different ideas?

The Boo That Grew Too Big

How can you tell whether everyone is enjoying a surprise?

Your turn to ask!

Draw or tell a question for the grown-up.

> Wonder about the characters; nobody needs to share a personal experience. Different answers can sit happily side by side.

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A little story circle

Ages 4–8, with a grown-up · 10–15 minutes · Talk, draw, point or pass.

You need: these two sheets and pencils. Try it as a family, a pair or a small group. Everyone may speak, point, draw, listen or pass.

1. Listen to a beginning

> A bright little leaflet arrived with the post
> and landed by Toby's half-honey, half-toast.
> "Our green needs a plan!" read the Mayor's new sheet.
> "Bring all your ideas to the hall down the street."
> "A goal!" Rosie cried. "We could practise till tea!"
> "A garden!" said Maisie. "With a bench by a tree!"
> "And somewhere for snacks," Toby said. "That sounds best."
> Pickle kept hoping for crumbs from the rest.
>
> Opening from The Bigger Table · Words by Joshua Hall

2. Notice and wonder

What did Rosie, Maisie or Toby hope for? Choose one idea. What would you like to ask that character?

3. Make a green together

On sheet 2, each person adds an idea for an imaginary village green. It could be a garden, a goal, a snack spot or something surprising.

Can two ideas share the space? Add a path, a quiet corner or different times to play. Leave a patch for an idea you have not had yet.

4. Keep one thing

Choose a detail or a question to remember. Passing is fine. Thank one another for listening.

> **Make it simpler:** draw just one thing or place toys on the green.
> **Try more:** add a sign, a speech bubble or a new visitor’s idea. Your plan is your invention, not a guess at the book’s ending.

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Website activity, separate from the books. No names or uploads needed.

Our green has room for…

Ages 4–8, with a grown-up · 10–15 minutes · Draw or tell; writing is optional.

Make an imaginary village green. Everyone can add one idea. Draw a route between two places and leave room for a thought still to come.

Our village green: draw, label or place toys here.

An idea I heard…

Two ideas could share the space by…

A question we still have…

> **Bring it to life:** the child leads a two-finger walk around the green. The grown-up plays a curious visitor: “What can I do here?” Swap roles and explore again.

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A little Christmas welcome

Ages 4–8, with a grown-up · 10–15 minutes · Talk, draw, point or pass.

You need: these two sheets and pencils. A grown-up reads; children can talk, point, draw or listen. No book purchase is needed.

1. Enjoy the busy beginning

> In Willowwick, Christmas began with a clatter:
> the kettle, the scissors, a splatter of batter.
> Dad folded paper. Mum warmed up the pot.
> Toby stacked toast till it wobbled a lot.
> Rosie cut stars with a snip and a bend.
> One spare chair stood ready in case of a friend.
> They packed all their ribbons and stepped through the door.
> Pickle checked under the table once more.
>
> Opening from The Missing Christmas Star · Words by Joshua Hall

Make a little sound: whisper “snip” or tap a gentle kitchen rhythm. What else can you hear in your imagination?

2. Choose one thing to wonder about

- What did you notice first?
- Who might the spare chair be for?
- What could make that visitor feel welcome?

3. Invent a welcome on sheet 2

Imagine a neighbour, a talking fox or a snowperson with cold toes. Offer two things they could choose to do. Ask what they would like.

> **Make it yours:** draw one visitor, add a speech bubble or act out an invitation with toys. Everyone may pass. Families celebrate in different ways; you can imagine this story without sharing your own traditions.

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Make a welcome of your own

Ages 4–8, with a grown-up · 10–15 minutes · Draw or tell; writing is optional.

Who will visit? Invent someone and draw their welcome. There is no need to guess what happens in the book.

Our imaginary visitor
Draw them here. What might they say?

What would you like to do? Offer two choices. Listening or watching can be a choice too.

They could choose…

Or they could…

We would ask our visitor…

Our invitation begins: “Come and…”

> **Act it out together:** one person is the host, the other the visitor. Try your invitation, then swap roles. What if the visitor brings a different idea?

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