

Bedtime Story Script for Kids

A gentle bedtime story for children of roughly four to nine, written to be read aloud by a parent or recorded. Nothing frightening, nothing to solve.

12 min · 5 segments

Twelve minutes, five segments. Written for a tired child and a tired adult — short sentences, no jeopardy, and a soft landing.

BEFORE YOU RECORD

- Warm and unhurried, but not sing-song. Children hear a performed “storytime voice” as a signal that something exciting is coming, which is the opposite of the goal.
- Nothing frightening, nothing lost, nobody in trouble. No jeopardy at any point — not even mild.
- Short sentences throughout. A tired four-year-old cannot hold a subordinate clause.
- The repeated goodnight line is the sleep cue. Say it identically every time — children rely on the pattern.

01. Settling in

1 min 30

[speak to the child directly here, then move into the story and stay there]

Are you comfortable? Wriggle about until you are, and then we'll start. *[pause for 15 seconds]*

Let your eyes close if they want to. You don't have to. You can just listen. *[pause for 15 seconds — soften the voice from here]*

This is a story about a little boat called Pip, who lives in a harbour where everything goes to sleep at night.

02. The harbour

3 min

[simple, concrete images — things a child can picture immediately]

Pip is a small wooden boat. She is blue on the outside and yellow inside, and she has a little rope at the front that ties her to the harbour wall.

All day, Pip bobs. Up and down. Up and down. The water lifts her, and sets her back, and lifts her again. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

Tonight the sun has gone down. The sky is going from orange to purple to dark blue, the way it does.

And one by one, everything in the harbour is getting ready for bed. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

03. Everyone says goodnight

4 min

[the repetition is the technique — same rhythm, same phrasing, every single time]

First the seagulls. They fold their wings and tuck their heads down on the roof of the harbour shed. Goodnight, seagulls. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

Then the fishing boats. Big ones, with their ropes wound up neat and their lights switched off. Goodnight, fishing boats. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

Then the crab that lives in the wall. He goes backwards into his hole, the way crabs do, and pulls a little stone across. Goodnight, crab. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

Then the harbour cat, who has found the warmest step and curled into a circle with her tail over her nose. Goodnight, cat. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

And the lighthouse, far out at the end, who doesn't sleep at all. He just turns, and shines, and turns, and shines, so everyone else can. Goodnight, lighthouse. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

04. Pip goes to sleep

2 min 30

[slowest part; the rocking rhythm in the sentences should match a rocking boat]

Now it is only Pip left awake. *[pause for 20 seconds]*

The water is very still. It lifts her, and sets her back. Lifts her, and sets her back. *[pause for 25 seconds]*

Her rope is tied tight, so she can't float away. She is exactly where she is meant to be. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

Goodnight, Pip. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

05. And you

1 min

[very quiet; no goodnight by name at the end — the last line should trail off and stop]

The lighthouse turns. The water lifts, and sets her back. *[pause for 30 seconds]*

And everyone in the harbour is asleep. *[pause for 40 seconds]*

Even you. *[stop speaking; let the recording run 30 more seconds, then fade]*

USAGE

Free to use. Record this story, publish it under your own name, and keep whatever you earn from it. No credit required. Written for children of roughly four to nine — please keep it free of jeopardy if you adapt it.

Record it with Hilite — hellohilite.com

Studio-quality audio from your laptop mic. Free to start.