

Alice and the Suitcase
Story Retelling Protocol & Scoring instructions
Australia / New Zealand versions

Introduction

The child listens to the story – Alice and the suitcase.

The story has been audio-recorded by a female speaker specifically for use in Australia / New Zealand. The story should be played for the child on a PC. Ensure the quality of sound is acceptable. The child is told:

“I brought a book to show you. I have it on my computer. We can’t read this book as it is has no words, but I have recorded the story. Let’s look at the book and listen to the story. I will ask you some questions about the story afterwards”.

Start the PDF, so that the title page of the book is visible to the child. You can remove the Slide information on the right hand side by clicking this little icon



Click on the first page to start the general instructions. The child will hear the following instructions:

“This story is called Alice and the suitcase. Click to go to the first page. Each time you hear the sound of the bell (bell sounds), click to go to the next page. Let’s begin”.

Each child is asked questions about the story, immediately following the first storytelling to evaluate story comprehension. The responses to the story comprehension questions should be tape-recorded and scored. To reduce the influence of story comprehension on the child's retelling performance, the child should be provided with the correct information, if the child's answer is clearly incorrect or if the child fails to answer the question.

The child is asked to listen to the story twice, approximately 10 minutes apart, before being asked to retell the story without the support of pictures. Because of logistical difficulties utilising a naïve listener (see Westerveld & Gillon, 1999/2000), it was decided to mimic an uninformed listener situation by creating a real communicative purpose. The child is therefore told:

“Let’s listen to the story a second time. Afterwards I would like you to tell the story, so that other children can listen to your story next time”.

Listen to the story together. Put the computer aside before asking the child to tell the story.

“OK, now it’s your turn to tell the story. Let’s start at the beginning”.

If the child does not start telling the story spontaneously, one or two of the following prompts can be used:

- *“What was the story about?”*
- *“What happened in the beginning?”*

- *“Just use your own words”.*
- *“Just tell me what you remember”.*

The following prompts are used to encourage the child to continue telling the story:

- *“And then?”*
- *“Anything else you can remember?”*

If there are interruptions you may repeat the child’s last utterance, e.g.

- *Alice went upstairs. And then?*

Do NOT provide the child with the next event. Do NOT ask prompting questions even if the child starts midway through the story. The aim is to find out what the child can do without specific prompting.

Remember to thank the child for telling the story!

Story used in the Story Retelling Task – Alice and the Suitcase

One Monday morning, Alice watched her parents leave for work.
It was school holidays, so Alice had to stay with her 80 year old Gran .
Gran loved knitting scarves.

Alice didn't think her Gran would want to play with her.
So she wandered off to have a look around Gran's house.
She thought about going outside.
but it was raining.

When Alice got back to the lounge Gran was fast asleep.
Alice got bored, so she decided to explore the rest of the house.
She quietly went upstairs and noticed a half-open door.

She peeped inside and saw an old leather suitcase.
Alice opened it and found dress-up clothes, old jewelry, and photobooks !
She climbed in to have a better look.

Alice woke up.
someone yelled her name.
'Alice, where are you?
It was very dark and Alice got a little scared.
Then the suitcase opened.
Gran seemed very happy to find her.

Mum and dad were waiting downstairs.
Alice asked if she could stay the night.
There were so many treasures left to explore.
Mum and dad thought that was a great idea.
They thanked Gran for looking after Alice and went home.

Alice and the Suitcase – comprehension scoring

If the child's answer is unclear, ask for clarification / elaboration, e.g., "why?" or "is there any other reason"?

No.	Questions	Prompt	Correct	Incorrect
1	Who is the story about?	If child says: a little girl, ask: "what's her name?"	Alice	
2	Why did Alice have to stay with her Gran?		Because it is school holidays and her parents have to work	
3	Why did Alice get bored?		nothing to do, no one to play with	had to stay with Gran because she wanted to play It was raining Gran was knitting
4	Why did Alice go upstairs?		To explore To find something to do	Because she was bored
4b	What did Alice find upstairs?		A suitcase	
4c	What was in the suitcase?		Jewelry, old clothes, photobooks	
5	Why did Alice get scared?		She woke up and it was dark	
6	Who found Alice?		Gran	
7	What did Gran do?		Took her downstairs as her parents were waiting.	
8	Why were Alice's parents waiting downstairs?		To pick her up/ take her home	
8b	Why did Alice not go home with her parents?		Alice wanted to stay the night to play with the suitcase.	