



Active Story Time

Rainbow Pear Pie

Before we begin:

Read through the notes below and then have a quick glance through the script so you know what you are letting yourself in for. Read the bold italic sections before you start. These are the extra instructions to you, some of which will be helpful to know before you begin reading the story.

Don't read the bold italic sections out loud. Everything else in normal text is to be read out loud, but feel free to *ad lib* or change the words to sound more natural for you.

An 'active story' can be done on the spot if you don't have much space, it can be taken outside, or it can even meander through the house if you want it to. In my house, we sometimes use the stairs as mountains, for example. You can also use props if you like.

The story below is written out as a script for you to read aloud. I have included names but when I do this activity with my own kids, I let them choose their own names and then I try to remember them throughout the game.

The best thing to do is to use this script loosely because in my experience, once the kids are involved and warmed up, they just love to *ad lib*. As long as they are running, jumping and using their imaginations, I reckon it's a win! Those of you doing this with younger, bossier children might find that the story goes off on some serious, high-energy tangents. Slightly older children enjoy the structure of the scripted story more. Just go with it and try to bring the story back on track when you can ... Or don't: I mean, who really cares as long as everyone is having fun?!

Top tip: Obviously, all kids are different so this activity won't be for everyone. Some might like the idea but will need some encouragement. In my experience, most children (even tweens) will embrace this sort of thing if they see the adult joining in and being silly and ridiculous, so if you can possibly muster the energy to join in, then go for it, but only if you want to. Just take it as it comes and if it's a success, please do let me know.

Optional props:

For this story, you may wish to have a dressing gown cord or other prop to act as a 'rope'. You may also like to find a basket, bucket or box before you start, along with an assortment of socks or cuddly toys to throw into it. This works just as well without props though.

Rainbow Pear Pie: The Script

Today we are going on an adventure and I want you to imagine that you are a little pixie called Clem.

You live in a travelling village with your fellow pixies and you are all pretty excited because tomorrow is Bicklebee. Bicklebee is the biggest party of the year. There's going to be dancing and singing and games; there'll be leaf boat races and tug of war and vine jumping; there will be cake and sandwiches and little sun berry sweets and – the best thing of all – there's going to be lots of Rainbow Pear Pie.

But that's all tomorrow. For now, you need to get a good night's sleep. So, lie down in your tent, snuggle into your sleeping bag and close your eyes. Just drift off to ...

Hang on, those clown bugs outside are being extremely noisy with all their chirping. They've woken you up. Never mind. Stretch out your arms and legs, do a big yawn and try to get comfy again. That's it, just ...

Oh, those clown bugs! Jump to your feet. Now run to the tent opening and call out to them to be quiet.

That's it. Now, come on back to bed and try to get some sleep.

Oh, what now?! Somebody is whispering. They need your help.

You sit up.

It's Dolkan. Dolkan is your best friend. I suppose you had better go and see what she wants. Take a few moments to wake yourself up. Stretch out your arms and legs, wiggle your shoulders and move your head from side to side. Now jump to your feet, take a wide squat and wiggle your bottom from side to side: that's the pixie wake-up wiggle. Now lift one knee to your chest and then the other. Wave your hands in the air ...

And do ten big star jumps to make sure you are really awake. Go!

Alright, run to the tent opening again and hurry outside.

Dolkan looks glum. 'It's the clown bugs,' she says sadly. 'They got into the store tent and they've eaten every single Rainbow Pear. There are none left for the pies tomorrow.'

This is not good news. It won't be Bicklebee without Rainbow Pear Pie. But you know exactly what to do. The Rainbow Pears grow, as you might expect, on a rainbow tree on a rainbow hill on the other side of ... you guessed it, a rainbow. All you have to do is travel to the other side of the rainbow to collect some more. Are you ready?

Right, before we set off, let's make sure we are warmed up for our journey:

Take as long as you like over the following exercises and add others if you like or get your child/children to add their own warm-up moves.

- Roll your shoulders;
- Circle your arms;
- Circle your hips;
- Kick your heels to your bottom;
- Take a couple of lunges.
- Now, stand with your legs wide. Bend down and touch the ground and then reach up to the sky. Do that again twice more.
- Now, ten star jumps;
- Ten high knee runs;
- Ten star jumps;
- Ten high knee runs.

Okay, we are ready for our adventure. You just need to pack your bag. Run around quickly and collect everything you need to take with you.

You might want to cheer them on during this bit: get them to jump up high to reach things, dip down low, tell them to run faster, mime getting dressed, etc.

Alright, good job. Dolkan is ready; you're ready. Put your backpack on and we are all set.

First things first, we need to get across the cloud-grass plain. The clown bugs are chirruping loudly in the long, hissing grass and even though you are annoyed with the pesky bugs for eating all the pears, you don't want to hurt them. So, you're going to have to lift your knees very high, right to your chest, as you walk across the plain.

Take as long as you want on this, and either do it on the spot or travel it depending on your space.

We're lucky the moon is out tonight so we can see where we are going.

Phew, we've reached the other side.

I probably should have warned you this before, but Dolkan does get a bit pumped up on these adventures. She likes to celebrate every achievement with a few high jumps – tuck jumps to be precise – ten of them. And she wants you to join in. Go!

Well done. From here, it's a short sprint to that forest over there. Let's go.

Again, you can do this on the spot if you don't have room to actually run. Maybe do high knee runs if you are staying on the spot.

STOP!

We've reached the forest but the brambles are too thick. We need to open up a tunnel through them. We'll have to use our magic. Do you know how?

Here is a bit of a freestyle section. Do some sort of energetic magic spell-making: a dance or a series of high energy moves works well or just an energetic mime. You could make it up or get them to improvise.

It worked! Look, the tunnel has opened up. It's pretty dark in there and the brambles can be vicious but if you follow my instructions, you'll get through alright. So, onto your hands and knees and start crawling ...

The brambles are getting lower. Quick, down to your belly and slither ...

It's opening up a bit now so jump to your feet and scurry to one side to escape the thorns ... now to the other side ...

Good. Quick, down to your belly again. That's it ...

I can see the end of the tunnel now. Just a quick crawl and ...

We're there! Brilliant!

Jump to your feet again. Oops, back to your tummy ... to your feet ... to your tummy ... to your feet.

Sorry, I thought I saw an owl. Owls sometimes mistake us pixies for mice. I think we're fine now, though, so let's keep going.

We've got to cross this river next. There are ten lily pads to get to the other side but they are quite far apart so you'll have to jump or leap or hop from one to the other.

Again, if you need to do this on the spot, that's fine. Count with them ...

... and ten. Well done.

Oh! Oh no! You dropped your pack in the water back there. You'll have to go back and get it. Come on, let's leap across the lily pads again.

Choose how many you go back.

That's it. Now pull it out. Phew, it's heavy. You must have packed quite a lot! Never mind; let's get to shore again.

Count again and wait for them to finish their leaping.

We're all dripping wet. We'll have to use our magic to get dry again. Come on.

Do your spell dance again or a different one.

That's better. Oh, Dolkan is much happier now she is dry, and yep, thought so, she wants to celebrate with some more jumps. Tuck jumps again – ten of them. Go!

You are doing so well, and look, over there it's the night-sky rainbow. Isn't it astonishing? Can you smell it? It smells like roses and candy floss and strawberry ice cream. What can you smell?

It's just another quick run to get to it. Let's go ...

We made it! Now all we need to do is climb up the rainbow, slide down the other side and gather the pears that grow on the rainbow tree on the rainbow hill over there. Nothing to it.

Now, everyone knows that near the ground, you can't touch a rainbow. Your hand just slips right through. But what most people don't know is that further up, just out of reach, rainbows are spongy and a little sticky, a bit like marshmallows.

You'll need to jump to see if you can grab onto a spongy bit of rainbow and pull yourself up. Ready? One, two, three ... Hmm, not quite high enough. Let's try again. One, two, three ... Better, but we're still not quite there. I know, let's throw a rope up and see if it sticks. One, two, three, throw. It worked. Let's climb.

Here's where you get to freestyle again. You can climb the stairs, slither on your bellies, or do high knee runs with arms above your head as if you are climbing a rope.

You can talk about what the rainbow smells like or comment on the stars.

When you get to the top, it's time to slide all the way down. You can mime this in any way you like. If you have the room, get the child/children to run around. Then do a big jump off of the rainbow at the end.

That was so much fun! Oh look, Dolkan is excited again. Ten big tuck jumps, everyone ...

Alright, Dolkan, that's enough. We have work to do. We need to gather the pears. We're lucky because lots of them have already fallen from the tree so all we need to do is gather them up and throw them in the basket. We need to be quick though. It's nearly morning and the kitchen pixies still need to bake the pies in time for the party.

Here is where the socks and basket come in. You can set this up as you wish. For example:

- ***The child/children can just run around miming picking stuff up and putting it in the basket.***
- ***You can throw socks or teddies at them and they have to catch them and try to throw them in the basket.***
- ***If you have space (maybe outside) you can prepare beforehand and spread the socks/ teddies/balls around the garden and get them to fetch them.***
- ***You can have a timed race or a competition to see who can get the socks in the basket***

from furthest away.

Fun add on: every now and again, tell them to get down on the floor because there is an owl coming.

Right, well, I think we have enough. Let's use our magic to send the fruit back to the village.

Do your spell-making moves again.

And now it's time for us to get home. Look, the horizon is turning pale purple. It's going to be a beautiful day. Shall we head back?

First, we need to throw up our ropes and climb the rainbow as fast as we can ...

Excellent. Now for the fun bit. Let's sliiiiidde ...

Big jump off at the bottom. And yes, okay, Dolkan, we can do ten more tuck jumps ...

Now hurry, let's run to the river and leap back over the ten lily pads. Oh, you lot are so clumsy. You've dropped your pack again. Quick, let's hop back to get it and now hop back to shore again.

Phew, keep going. Through the tunnel:

Crawl ... Jump to your feet and scurry to one side ... Now scurry to the other side ... Uh oh, low brambles. Get down on your tummy and slither ... Last bit: crawl to the end ...

And we're through. Jump to your feet and run as fast as you can to the cloud-grass plain.

This is the final stretch. Get those knees up to your chest and wade all the way through the grass. I can see your tent on the other side and those pesky clown bugs have finally stopped chirruping so you might get a little bit of sleep before the party starts.

Ah, we're home. Mission accomplished! Well done. Just take a big stretch up in the air and then down to your toes, wiggle your hips from side to side and shake out your hands and legs.

Add in more stretches or a relaxation session here if you want to.

And now, crawl back into your tent and go to sleep. It will be Bicklebee in the morning.

The End.

Fun add on: if your child/children aren't tired enough or are in play mode, put some music on for them to dance to at the Bicklebee party.