

WEEKDAY WONDERS



Content developed by the
Tennessee Aquarium
Education Department



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Nature on the Page: Day 4

This week, your young scientist will get inspired by nature and the world around him or her to write a storybook. Scientists will explore the elements of a good story: defining characters, settings, and events, and developing a plot (and plot twist!) At the end of the week, young scientists will have a chance to put all the parts of the storybook together into a book.

These curated activities are listed in a suggested sequence but may be done in the order that works best for you and your young scientists. Learn more about this series in the [Introduction to Weekday Wonders](#).



Question of the Day

How can a story show action?



Daily Nature Journal

Ask your young scientists to spend some time outside today completing their daily nature journal. Use the [Guide to Nature Journaling](#) to support them with journaling each day.



Nature Journal

Tell your young scientist that today's activities focus on one of the most important parts of a story—the climax. This is the most exciting, amazing, or suspenseful part of the story. It is the part of the story where the solution to a character's problem becomes clear.

To practice, write the following on slips of paper for your young scientist. Then tell him or her that a boy named Matthew has a problem. Have your scientist put the slips in order from the least interesting way to solve the problem to the most interesting way.

Problem: Matthew needs money to buy his friend a birthday present.

Solution 1: Matthew's mother gives him the money.

Solution 2: Matthew enters a writing contest and wins money as a prize.

Solution 3: Matthew finds money in a wallet on the street.

Solution 4: Matthew does extra chores around the house to earn money.

Solution 5: Matthew decides to make a present with items he already has, so he does not need money after all.

Tell your young scientist that there is no correct answer to the order, but that he or she should think about what will make an interesting story. For example, many people would not consider a story to be interesting if it starts with Matthew needing money, asking his parents for it, and them giving it to him.

Once your scientist has ranked the possible solutions, have him or her brainstorm possible solutions to the following problem.

Problem: A small frog needs to get to the other side of a pond.

Ask your scientist to write down as many possible solutions as s/he can think of. Then put a star next to the two or three your scientist thinks are the most interesting.



A Picture is Worth 1,000 Words

Gather 3 to 5 picture books, and choose a page or two from each book with lots of action in the illustrations. Cover the words on those pages with paper or post-it notes.

Tell your young scientist that sometimes books use the illustrations, or pictures, to tell the details of a story. Ask your young scientist to look at the images, paying careful attention to the action drawings. Have him or her describe or write down the actions that they see in the illustration.



Taking Action

Write down about 10 action words on slips of paper and put them in a container. Some good examples might be run, jump, push, splash, or fly.

Have your scientist choose a slip and read the word. He or she should then act out the action, paying careful attention to what his or her body parts do. For example, when your scientist is running, his or her legs are far apart.

Once your scientist has practiced the action, have him or her draw a quick illustration of the action. Tell him or her to think about how different body parts might be positioned. For example, if the action is running, the picture should show the legs apart.

Your scientist should also consider the effect of the action on other items. For example, if the action is splashing, not only would the picture show the character moving, but also flying water drops to show its movement.



Nature Journal

Remind your scientist that as the week goes on, the Weekday Wonders activities are helping to build a story book. Have your scientist make a plan for the book. To do this, he or she should write the main events in the story on separate small pieces of paper.

For each event, your scientist should add in details about the following.

- the type of picture s/he will need to draw
- any information about the setting for the scene
- the plot twists that happen
- the problem and how it is solved.

Have your scientist put the events in order so that he or she will be ready to put the whole book together tomorrow.