Little starts, wonderful stories

18 cards. 216 starting combinations. A story only you could tell.

1. Pick three cards

Choose one character, one place, and one little problem. Lay them in a row. Swap any card that does not feel right today.

2. Wonder out loud

Start with ‘One day…’ and take turns adding a sentence. What does your hero notice? Who could help? Anyone can draw, make a sound, or pass their turn.

3. Find a cozy ending

Solve the small problem, then decide where everyone goes afterward. A quiet homecoming makes a lovely last line.

One possible adventure

A snail with an empty pocket arrived at the kitchen inside a cloud. The moon was sitting by the mixing bowl. “I have lost my favorite hat,” it said. The snail looked under a spoon. The moon looked behind the flour. Then they heard a tiny sneeze. A puff of cloud was wearing the hat! “May we have it back?” asked the snail. The cloud nodded. “My ears were chilly.” So they folded a tea towel into a little cloud hat. The moon put on its own hat, and the snail tucked a warm biscuit into its pocket for the journey home.

Print, cut, share

Print at 100% on the matching paper size. Black-and-white printing works well. Ask a grown-up to cut along the dashed outlines. Keep the three kinds of cards in separate piles.

You may print, copy, and share this pack free of charge for personal, classroom, and library activities. You may adapt the prompts for those activities. Keep the Wonder Machine credit on copies; do not sell the pack or its cards.

Who is in your story?

Choose one character. Give them a name, a favorite thing, or a funny habit.

CHARACTERS 1/6

A snail with an empty pocket

The pocket is just big enough for one tiny treasure. What might fit inside?

CHARACTERS 2/6

A dragon who whispers

Their quietest whisper makes a little cloud. What do they want to say?

CHARACTERS 3/6

A robot who collects giggles

Each giggle goes into a different jar. What sound does the smallest jar make?

CHARACTERS 4/6

A fox with a very long scarf

The scarf has a knot for every friend. Who might add the next knot?

CHARACTERS 5/6

A child with a paper crown

The crown is decorated with something unusual. What did they draw on it?

CHARACTERS 6/6

A dinosaur in fluffy slippers

One slipper squeaks and the other hums. Where are they tiptoeing?

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Where does it happen?

Choose one place. Imagine a sound, a smell, or a small detail you could find there.

PLACES 1/6

The kitchen inside a cloud

There are moon-shaped spoons and a window full of sky. What is cooking?

PLACES 2/6

A library under a lily pad

The books stay dry in tiny bubbles. Which book is waiting on the desk?

PLACES 3/6

The moon’s mitten shop

Some mittens have room for five fingers, and some have room for eight. Who shops here?

PLACES 4/6

A garden of singing pebbles

Every pebble knows one note. What happens when someone hums along?

PLACES 5/6

A station for sleepy trains

The benches are cushions and the clock yawns. Where is the next train going?

PLACES 6/6

A blanket fort by the sea

The doorway has a curtain of ribbons. What can you see from inside?

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What small thing needs doing?

Choose one little problem. Find a kind or funny solution, then give everyone a place to rest.

PROBLEMS 1/6

The moon has lost its hat

It remembers leaving it somewhere cozy. Where would you look first?

PROBLEMS 2/6

One friend has no seat

The picnic is ready, but the blanket is full. How could everyone make room?

PROBLEMS 3/6

A song is missing its last note

The singer keeps stopping in the same place. Who could help finish the tune?

PROBLEMS 4/6

A tiny parcel needs delivering

It says “For someone who needs a smile.” How will you choose where it goes?

PROBLEMS 5/6

The welcome sign is upside down

Visitors think it says something very silly. How could you help them feel at home?

PROBLEMS 6/6

A new game needs a name

Everyone has a different idea. How could you choose a name together?

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