

My Own Stories®

On-line Manual



Introduction

Translating Imagination into Stories

Children are natural storytellers. Through their vivid imaginations, they explore new and familiar worlds. Through pictures and stories, they bring their imaginations to others.

The My Own Stories™ software program is a creative tool that transforms children's imaginations into stories. Using My Own Stories is like entering a library rich with books written by great young authors—kids just like yours! Drawing from children's every day world, My Own Stories features over 500 images and over 500 scenery combinations that kids can use in their stories. In addition, 16 colors, 41 sounds, 13 songs, 11 page borders, and 5 type styles bring stories to life. My Own Stories gives kids a perfect way to express their creativity. With My Own Stories, children create their own stories by weaving a tapestry of ideas, words, pictures, sounds, and music into their rich story fabric.

With My Own Stories, children experience the pleasure of writing and illustrating the stories that interest them the most—their own—and the pride of sharing their stories with others.

Encouraging Your Child's Creativity

What can you do to encourage the creativity of your budding young authors? Here are a few ideas.

Talk with your children about their experiences.

Authors write best from their own experiences. As your children participate in a variety of activities, talk with them about their experiences to give them ideas for their writing.

Use books to spark ideas for writing.

Literature provides a model as well as a springboard for children's writing. Visit your local library with your children to select books that explore experiences from their everyday world. These books are sure to spark ideas for writing with My Own Stories.

Help your children publish their own storybooks.

Children feel a great sense of pride in their "published" work. Make book covers using cloth, wallpaper scraps, or construction paper to bind a finished story into a book.

Make your children's stories part of your reading time together.

Plan to read aloud with your children the stories they have written with My Own Stories. Stories can be printed to create storybooks, and you can also share stories on the computer.

Encourage children to share their stories with others.

Have your children send printed storybooks to family and friends. A story from a child is a treasured keepsake. You can even send a disk with your child's story to family and friends for them to read on the computer.

My Own Stories

Most of all, create a special shelf in your home library for the storybooks your child has written. After all, your child is a published author now!

Using My Own Stories

The best way to start learning how to use My Own Stories is just to play around. There's no right way to do things. You can't make a mistake because there are no mistakes to be made. There is no order or sequence to follow. You may begin by writing your story or by creating a picture.

This section explains everything you need to know about My Own Stories. Read it through before beginning, if that's your style. Or simply look things up if you get stuck.

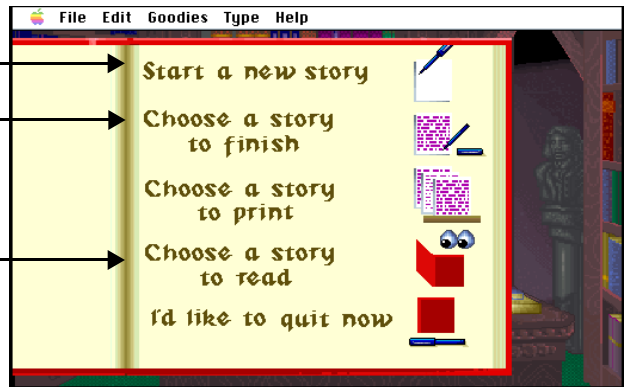
The Main Menu

The Main menu provides five options. Choose an option by clicking on the menu picture or the name. A sample story, "Ballgame," is available to finish, print, or read.

Choose picture-and-text pages or text-only pages.

Work on a story that you already started.

Read a story that you already wrote; no editing allowed!



Is Help Available?

Help is available from the Help menu. Just choose the type of help you need from the list of available topics.

The Title Page

The Title page is the first thing you see when you choose Start a new story from the Main menu.



To enter the Title, Author, or Info: Click the button and then start typing in the text box that appears.

You can change your text at any time. See “The Story Window” for instructions on changing text.

To choose a border: Click the Border button. You’ll see 11 border choices. Click the one you want. The border will appear on the title page. Click OK or choose another border.

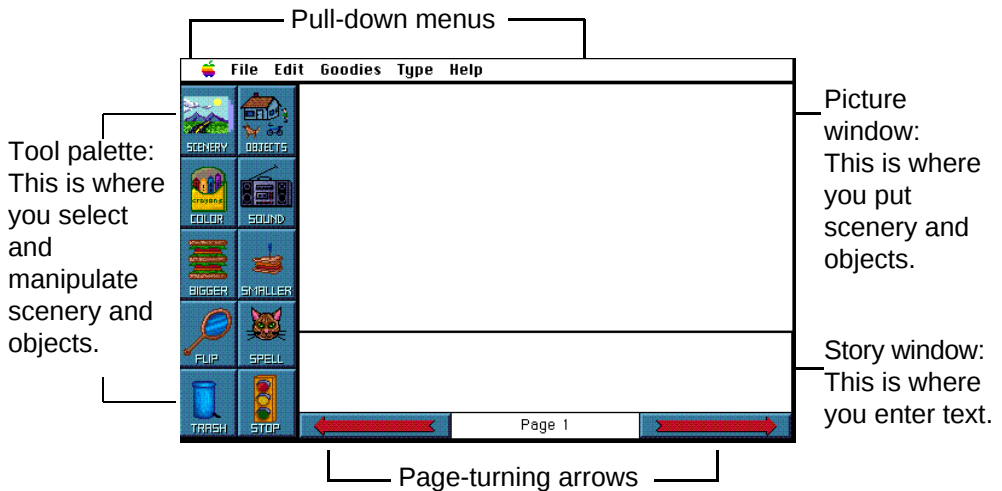
To remove a border, click the solid-colored button.

You can also make your own border using any objects in a picture window. (You get a picture window when you click the page-turning arrow at the bottom of the title page.) In the picture window, click on the object to select it and then choose the Copy or Cut command from the Edit menu. Use the left- page turning arrow to go back to the title page and then choose the Paste command from the Edit menu to create a picture on your title page.

To choose a color: Click the Color button either before or after you start entering text. You'll see 16 color choices; click on the one you want.

The Main Work Screen

When you are done with your title, click the page-turning arrow. You'll see the main work screen.



The Story Window

To enter text: Click in the story window and start typing. If you fill the window, a new page is created for you.

To delete text: Highlight the text that you want to delete. Then press the Delete key, choose the Clear command from the Edit menu, or click the Trash button.

If you want to delete all of the text in the story window, click in the window, choose the Select All command from the Edit menu, and press the Delete key or click the Trash button.

To move text: Select the text by highlighting it and then choose the Cut command from the Edit menu. Next, click where you want the text to go and choose the Paste command from the Edit menu.

To change fonts: Use the Type menu or the Preferences... option on the File menu.

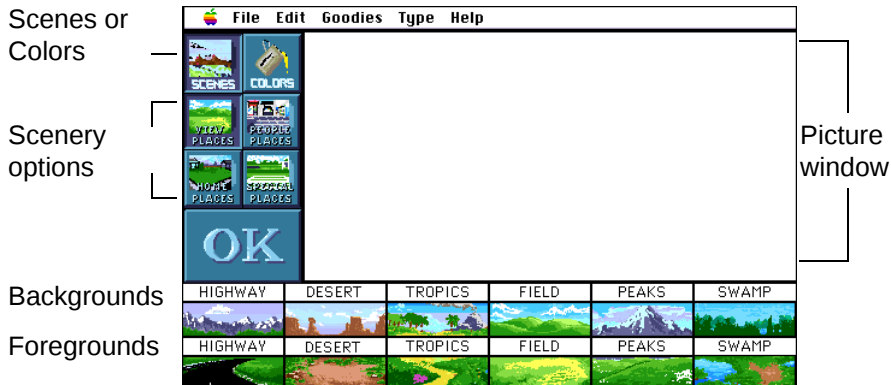
The Tool Palette

The tool palette has ten buttons that allow you to choose and manipulate scenery and objects for your picture window. The buttons found on the tool palette include Scenery, Objects, Color, Sound, Bigger, Smaller, Flip, Spell, Trash, and Stop.

Adding Scenery to Your Picture



When you click the Scenery button, you get a new screen that lets you choose from a variety of scenes and colors.



At first, you see the View Places choices across the bottom of the screen. The top row is for the background of your picture, and the bottom row is for the foreground. Click on the scenes you want. You'll see them in the picture window. Additional scene options are available by clicking on the People Places, Home Places, and Special Places buttons.

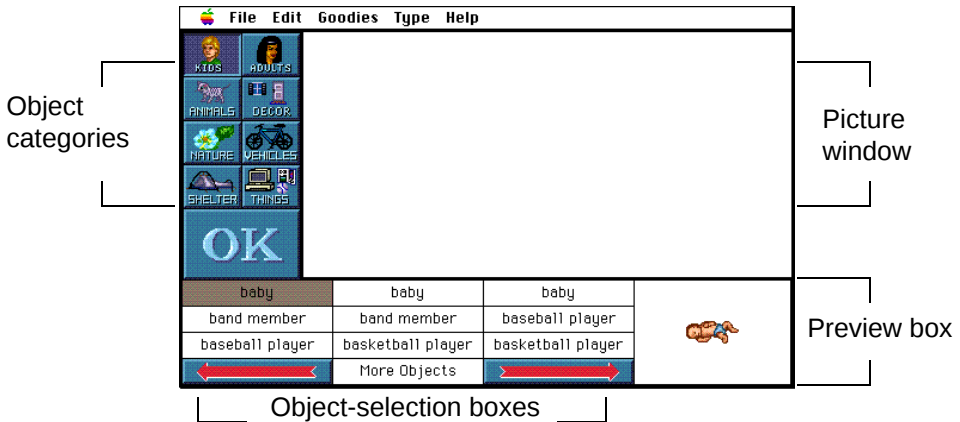
Instead of scenes, you may want to use colors. In that case, click the Colors button. The scene choices will be replaced by color choices. "Pastels" are displayed across the bottom of the screen. You can choose a background from the top row of colors and a foreground from the bottom row of colors. Additional color options are available by clicking on the Hot, Shade, and Cold buttons.

You can also create a picture that uses both a scene and a color. Click OK when you're done. You go back to the main work screen.

Adding Objects to Your Picture



My Own Stories has more than 500 objects that you can add to your pictures. When you click the Objects button, you get a new screen that lets you choose the objects you want.



Objects are arranged into eight categories:



Kids in a variety of activities



Adults in a variety of occupations



Animals, including pets



Nature, such as weather, plants, and other natural objects



Vehicles, for transportation and pleasure



Things, including objects that can be used by people



Shelter, including buildings, homes, and businesses



Decor, including objects to decorate interiors and exteriors

The object-selection boxes contain the names of the objects that are available in each category. The selection boxes display nine objects at a time. More objects are available in each category. You can scroll through the objects by clicking on the right or left arrows beneath the object-selection boxes.

The preview box, located in the lower right corner of the screen, allows you to view an object before placing it in your picture window. You can also practice vocabulary because the object appears when the word is highlighted.

To put an object into your picture window:

1. Click on an object category.
2. Use the arrow keys alongside “More Objects” to scroll through the category; then click on the object label that you want.
3. Drag the object from the preview box to the picture window. Repeat if you want two or more copies of the object.
4. Select as many objects as you want. Up to 50 objects can be placed on a page. Click OK when you’re done.

To move an object within the picture window:

1. Click on the object or group of objects to select. The object gets “handles.”

You can move several objects at once by holding down the Shift key and clicking on the objects you wish to move.

2. Drag the object or group of objects to its new location.

To remove objects from the picture window:

1. Select the object or objects you wish to delete.

You can select all the objects at once by choosing the Select All command from the Edit menu.

2. Click the Trash button on the tool palette, choose Cut or Clear from the Edit menu, or press the Delete key.

If you drag an object into the picture window but don't release the mouse button, you can drag the object back into the preview box to remove it.

The Color Button



The Color button lets you change the color of text or objects.

1. Select the object or text that you want to color.
2. Click the Color button. You see the color-selection screen.
3. Click one of the colors.

Objects from the Kids and Adults categories appear in the preview box with a set clothing color and skin color. You can change those colors by selecting either the Clothing Color or Skin Color options on the Goodies menu and then selecting the color you wish.

To return an object to its original color, select the object and choose the Restore Color option from the Goodies menu.

The Sound Button



The Sound button lets you assign sound effects to objects in the picture window. Forty-one sound effects are available. When you give sound to an object, you hear the sound whenever you select the object.

1. Select the object that you want to have sound.

2. Click the Sound button. You see the sound-selection screen. You can see more sound effects by clicking on the small arrow at the bottom of the selection boxes.
3. Click on the sound you want.

To remove sound from an object, choose the “None” button.

The Bigger, Smaller, and Flip Buttons



The Bigger and Smaller buttons allow you to change the size of objects. Just select the object and click the button.



You can return an object to its original size by using the Ideal Size command on the Goodies menu.



The Flip button allows you to change the horizontal direction of objects. Just select the object and click the button.



Bigger/Smaller



Flip

The Spell Button



The Spell button allows you to place the word of a selected object in your story text. You can spell objects that you have put in your picture window.

1. Click where you want the word to appear in the story window.
2. Select the object you want to include in your story text.
3. Click on the Spell button.



The Trash Button



The Trash button allows you to delete objects or text. Just select what you want to get rid of and then click the button.

The Stop Button



The Stop button allows you to close your current story. My Own Stories will ask if you want to save your story before you close.

The Page-Turning Arrows

You can move from one page to another by clicking on the page-turning arrows that appear at the bottom of every page.

The current page number appears between the arrows. My Own Stories has a page limit of 50 pages per story.

On the Menus

The Apple Menu

About My Own Stories

Provides general information about ***My Own Stories***.

The File Menu

New

Lets you start a new story. The new story will have the specifications set in the Preferences... option, described on page 18.

Open...

Lets you open a previously saved story.

Close

Lets you close your story.

Save

Lets you save your story. If you have not saved it yet, you will be asked to enter a name.

Save As...

Lets you save a story under a different name. Any previously saved version of the story is also preserved.

My Own Stories has an option to save a story as a “Read-Only” file to play back at a later time. This unique feature allows you to save your story onto a floppy disk along with My Own Stories Reader and send it to a friend to read. The story can then be read by anyone who has the required hardware. No additional program is necessary.

To save a story as a “Read-Only” story:

1. Insert a blank disk and initialize it.
2. Create your story and select either Save B&W Read Only or Save Color Read Only from the File menu.
3. Select the destination drive and type a name.
4. Click the “Save” button.

To read a story as a “Read-Only” story:

1. Insert the story disk.
2. Select My Own Stories Reader by double-clicking on the icon and open the story to read.

When reading “Read-Only” stories, you can turn to the “Next Page,” “Previous Page” or “Quit” by selecting Quit from the File menu. No editing is available in this mode.

**Save B&W
Read-Only**

Lets you save a black-and-white version of your story in Read-Only format. Read-Only format allows you to read a story from disk using My Own Stories Reader.

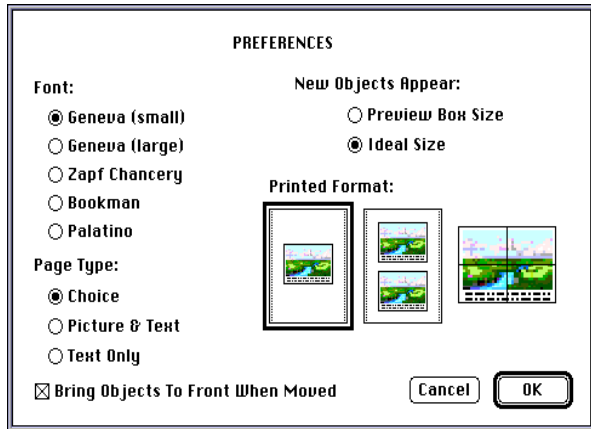
**Save Color
Read-Only**

Lets you save a color version of your story in Read-Only format. Read-Only format allows you to read a story from disk using My Own Stories Reader.

Revert to Saved Replaces the document on the screen with the most recently saved version. This command makes it easy for you to undo all of the changes that you have made to a story.

Preferences...

Allows you to specify the preferences for each new document.



Font lets you specify the story window font.

The **Page Type** default is set to “Choice,” allowing you to select your new page type each time you start a new story page.

As you add objects to your story, they are stacked in the order in which you added them. **Bring Objects to Front When Moved** causes objects to rise to the top if you move them.

New Objects Appear in either Preview Box Size or Ideal Size. Ideal Size means that *some* objects will spring to their larger, originally drawn size when placed in the picture window.

Printed Format lets you choose how to print a story. You can print one story page on each printer page or two story pages on each printer page, or you can use the big-book format, which provides a 2 x 2 printout of each story page. Stories printed in the big-book format require some assembly.

Program Sound	Allows you to turn the program sound on or off.
Page Setup...	Lets you select settings for your document, including paper size, vertical sizing, and any printer effects.
Print ...	Lets you print all or a portion of your story. Printed formats are set in the Preferences... command. The title page is page number 0.
Quit	Lets you leave <i>My Own Stories</i> . You will be asked if you want to save changes to your document.

The Edit Menu

Undo	Undoes your <i>most recent</i> action. This includes Cut, Copy, Paste, and Select All commands, changes to text, and coloring, deleting, and moving objects. Undo is dimmed when unavailable.
Cut	Removes the selected object or text from your story. Objects or text that have been cut may be pasted.
Copy	Duplicates the selected object or text. The original objects or text remain in place. Objects or text that have been copied may be pasted.

Paste	Places any previously cut or copied objects or text into your story. Text is added at the insertion point. Objects appear at the same location as the original cut or copied object. Multiple copies of objects or text can be pasted.
Clear	Deletes the selected object or text.
Select All	Selects all the text in the story window or all the objects in the picture window.

The Goodies Menu

Bring to Front	Brings selected objects in front of other objects. In effect, this reshuffles the object order and places the selected object at the top of the pile.
Send to Back	Sends selected objects to the back of your picture window behind other objects.
Restore Color	Allows you to return text or objects to their original color. The original text color is black.
Ideal Size	Returns an object to its originally drawn size.
Clothing Color	Allows you to change a clothing region for the objects in the Kids and Adults categories.
Skin Color	Allows you to change the skin region for the objects in the Kids and Adults categories.

Delete Page	Allows you to remove the current page. A deleted page cannot be retrieved. The other pages are automatically renumbered. The title page cannot be deleted.
Insert Page	Allows you to add a blank page before your current page. Existing pages are renumbered. You cannot insert a page before the title page.
Copy Page	Allows you to duplicate a previously created story page to your current page. The story page, including scenery, objects, and text, is copied. This replaces your current page and cannot be undone. You cannot copy the title page.
Swap Pages	Allows you to change the order of your story pages. You cannot swap the title page.
Go To Page ...	Allows you to move to any page in your story. To go to the title page, type 0 (zero).

Add Music...

Allows you to choose the type of music to be played at the beginning and ending of your story. When you select “Choose a story to read,” your selected music is played as your title page and last story page are displayed. To listen to or to select music, click on the button or the word describing the music. To return to your story, click “OK.”

ADD MUSIC

Select the type of music to play at the beginning and end of your story.

Opening:		Closing:	
☒ None	☐ Minuet	☒ None	☐ Minuet
☐ Spooky	☐ Saturday	☐ Spooky	☐ Saturday
☐ Sad	☐ Suspense	☐ Sad	☐ Suspense
☐ Happy	☐ Playtime	☐ Happy	☐ Playtime
☐ Boogie	☐ Silly	☐ Boogie	☐ Silly
☐ Ballpark	☐ Carousel	☐ Ballpark	☐ Carousel
☐ Farm	☐ Traveling	☐ Farm	☐ Traveling

The Type Menu

Provides font choices for the text on your title page and story window.

Font styles, such as plain, bold, and italic, are available for some fonts.

You can select fonts from the Type menu or in Preferences... from the File menu.



The Help Menu

Provides a list of topics that you can select to get on-screen information. Highlight the topic desired and click Help.

Previous and Next allow you to scroll through the Help topics available.

Credits

My Own Stories is brought to you by:

Manley & Associates, Inc.: Jean Bergesen, Kurt Cagle, Rebecca Coffman, David Hasle, Carol Manley, , Ivan Manley, K. Camille Nims, Lloyd Ollmann, Jr., and Robert Ridihalgh.

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MECC Technical Support

If you have any questions about My Own Stories, please call us at 612 / 569-1678.