



# It Was a Dark and Stormy Night

*Janet Ahlberg , Allan Ahlberg*

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A small boy who has been kidnapped by brigands, passes a dark and stormy night in their cave weaving for them incredible stories of their own exploits. Through the stories he solves his own problem and manages to escape.

## It Was a Dark and Stormy Night Details

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Author : Janet Ahlberg , Allan Ahlberg

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## From Reader Review It Was a Dark and Stormy Night for online ebook

### RhiannaH says

Ideal hook for a story telling topic; each story beginning by Antonio can be provided and then completed by the children in your class. Additionally, looking at the story as complete, different elements of speech and language can be explored as well as changing moods of the other characters. A fun read to share with any class.

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### Emily Holmes says

A great story with an abundance of teaching opportunities. I have used this on my second school placement in a year 3 class. We used it mainly in our English lessons. The children created a wide variety of writing all based on this boo. The children really engaged in the book too.

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### Andrew Christou says

Summary \*no spoilers\*:

It was a dark and stormy night, the rain came down in torrents, there were brigands on the mountains, and wolves, and the chief of the brigands said to Antonio, "I'm bored – tell us a story".

Antonio, a master storyteller and cheeky so-and-so from Southern Italy has been kidnapped by a bickering band of unbathed brigands. While his parents anxiously search for him around the mountains and valleys, he entertains the hideout with his improvised stories of killer parrots, haunted castles and exciting treasure hunts. Needless to say the bandits get more than a little caught up in the story.

Review \*some spoilers\*:

A really engaging and fun story, packed with humour.

A vivid demonstration of the power of storytelling. Antonio's story within the story leads to a blurring between the brigands and their mise-en-abyme counterparts. The hapless brigands get so involved with Antonio's story that when their characters revolt against the chief in the story, friction begins to develop between the real chief and the real brigands. Eventually they get into a flap and are chased out of the mountainside den by the offended chief, allowing our daring raconteur the opportunity to return home to his family. I do think this book showcases, in a light-hearted and entertaining way, the capacity of a good story to engross its reader/listener. As a result, it should instil in children an appreciation of the art of storytelling or writing, and show them that reading can be very engaging for them.

Reading age: 8-10

Possible use in class (other than for private reading): It may be used to prompt a creative storytelling lesson in which either the whole class or groups of children work together to come up with their own exciting story.

If done in groups, each group would share their rough ideas with the class, feedback would be given, and the groups would then write down their stories. It could be followed up with a drama session in which each group gets to perform their story, with one elected pupil narrating and the rest acting out the story.

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### **Sarina says**

This is my review of 'It Was a Dark and Stormy Night'.

One of my favourite childhood books. the story features an eight year old boy Antonio, who is kidnapped by pirates who demand a story from him. Antonio the eight year old simply begins with "it was a dark and stormy night...". This caption was the platform for a variety of endless adventures that Antonio told them. For children it inspires them to think creatively and 'out of the box', as anything can be made possible through story telling. Antonio embarks on many adventures throughout the story all of which stimulate the readers attention. I particulalry think this book would suit children of all ages; especially lower key stage 1, as it enables them to start thinking creatively and using a variety of adjectives in their writing. Used in the classroom this book could be useful for many activities such as writing adventure pieces using creative vocabulary and enabling the childrens imaginations to grow.

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### **Sue Read says**

As soon as I read the word 'brigands' in the first sentence, I knew I was going to love this book. Who else writes about brigands and uses the phrase 'right-o' and manages to convey so much humour but the wonderful Ahlbergs? I was laughing out loud as I read this. I love its pace, the ridiculous Chief, the clever Antonio, the story Antonio tried to tell, mirroring the real story we find him in...he was kidnapped by the brigands.

The brigands like Antonio's story, but ask for hilarious changes, for example 'no rain' (they'd had enough of the rain) and no bears (they didn't want to fight bears) and they love the rhyming words!

The brilliant Ahlberg illustrations enhance the humour and stories and provide us with so much to look at. This book has to contain the best and the biggest range of punctuation, surely able to help many a teacher out with their SPAG!

It's a great read and I recommend it wholeheartedly.

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### **Siobhan says**

A wonderful read from my childhood, one I'd certainly suggest for other youngsters. Whilst it is not my all-time favourite childhood read I can still recall all the details of this one meaning it certainly left a lasting impression upon my young mind.

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And isn't that what we want with children's books, for them to leave a positive lasting impression?

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### **Jon Saunders says**

A young boy of eight called Antonio is kidnapped by brigands and taken to their secret cave during a fierce storm. The captain of the brigands declares he is bored and demands a story from the young protagonist.

Antonio of course obliges and starts to spin a tale of some brigands trapped in a cave during a dark and stormy night. As his story telling progresses the brigands demand alterations to the tale to fit in with their moods and egos. Antonio uses this to his advantage and manages to tie his captors up in knots and has them turn on each other whilst he makes good his escape.

This is fantastically post-modern book about story telling, full of imagination and vim. The brigands are childish and self involved whilst Antonio is imaginative and cunning. He gains confidence as his story expands and his imagination runs wild. All the time playing to his audiences emotions.

This is a great book to introduce children to the art and power of story telling either read aloud to them or read quietly by them. It is beautifully written and illustrated, a real joy.

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### **Ivor says**

This was a brilliant book. The funniest bit when the captain told the boy to tell a story and he told the story of what was happening right then at that moment, even when the captain blew his nose. And he still continued even when the captain said stop it. I wish I could give it infinity stars. Ivor aged 5 and a half

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### **Angela Randall says**

This is a very cute story. Just read it. :)

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### **Kelly says**

This is my favorite children's book of all time, which is pretty hard to say- but it is just delightful. I have a lot of favorites, but this one is always the one I read on rainy days with a mug of hot chocolate.

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### **Amy says**

This was by no means the first book I ever read but I remember it unequivocally as the first book I ever enjoyed reading.

We were allowed to pick our own book from my primary school's small library on reading week and this was mine.

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Curled up on the beanbag chair I experienced for the first time what it was like swept away with a tale, building a world within your imagination and becoming immersed within it.

Before this reading had merely been a chore, something I did as part of English lessons an activity that on a good day was merely tolerable.

I don't actually remember anything about the story though. I think it made me laugh.

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### **Savannah-Alicia Lloyd says**

Found this book hard to get into at first but eventually found myself smiling as I turned the pages. Antonio is a cheeky main character that brings the story to life with amusement. Illustrations are great and capture what the text says perfectly. I definitely think primary school aged children would enjoy this book!

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### **Amy Aldridge says**

Although difficult to get into an interesting story that could be used in class to encourage children to write their own story like Antonio has done in this book.

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### **Robert Beveridge says**

Janet and Allan Ahlberg, **It Was a Dark and Stormy Night** (Viking, 1993)

Somewhat wordy for a preschool-set book, but an amusing story nonetheless; a kidnapped boy escapes from a band of pirates by telling them a scary story. As the story progresses, the pirates modify it and add to it, thus contributing to their own fates. I'd think this one would probably go over better in a classroom than a home setting, but it's certainly worth checking out and seeing how the kids react. \*\*\*

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### **Duane Miller says**

Wow, postmodernism meets children's lit! How fun, Derrida would be proud.

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