

Bedtime stories about grandparents.

3 stories to read aloud at bedtime, each with its own picture and a calm, sleepy ending. Written for ages 3 to 8.



Zoe's First Sleepover

about 3 min

The Story Quilt

about 10 min

Sharing the Moon with Nonno

about 3 min

Reading times assume a slow bedtime pace of about 110 words a minute. Every story is also free to read online at pimlo.app/bedtime-stories/grandparents.



Zoe's First Sleepover

Tonight was Zoe's first sleepover at Granny and Pop's house. She had packed her own bag: pajamas, toothbrush, two books and Bun, her rabbit. She was excited. But when it started to get dark, she felt a little bit wobbly too.

Pop made cheese on toast for supper and cut it into triangles, just how she liked it. Then Granny ran a bath with so many bubbles that Zoe made herself a bubble beard. Pop said she looked exactly like him, and she laughed.

The spare room had a big bed with a flowery quilt and a lamp shaped like an owl. It was nice, but it wasn't her room. Zoe held Bun tight. "At home," she said quietly, "Mom sings me a song."

Granny sat on the bed. "Is it this one?" she asked, and she began to sing, softly, the very same song: the one about the little boat rocking on the sea. Zoe's eyes went wide. "How do you know it?" she whispered. "I sang it to your mom," said Granny, "when she was your size."

Granny sang it all the way through, twice. Pop stood in the doorway and hummed along, a little bit out of tune. Zoe snuggled down with Bun under the flowery quilt. It wasn't her room, but it was her song. And she fell asleep before the little boat reached the shore.

The end. Goodnight.



The Story Quilt

Every summer, Kai stayed with his grandma for a week, in her small yellow house by the river. On the bed in the spare room there was a patchwork quilt, made of dozens of squares of different fabrics, all stitched together. Kai had slept under it every summer for as long as he could remember. But he had never really looked at it.

One rainy evening, when it was too wet to go down to the river, Kai lay on the bed and traced the squares with his finger. There was a blue square with white stars. A green one with tiny tractors. A shiny cream one. A red one with a hole in it, carefully mended. "Grandma," he called, "why are all the squares different?" Grandma came in, wiping her hands on her apron, and sat on the edge of the bed. "Because every square," she said, "has a story."

She put her finger on the shiny cream square. "This one," she said, "is from my wedding dress. Your grandpa and I got married on a windy day by the sea, and my veil blew right off and landed on a sheep. Everyone laughed so much, even the sheep." Kai laughed too. He touched the cream square. It was smooth and cool, like the inside of a shell.

"And this one?" He pointed to the blue square with white stars. "That was your mom's pajamas," said Grandma. "She wore them every night until her feet stuck out of the bottom. She used to say the stars helped her sleep. When she grew out

of them, I couldn't throw them away. So I cut out the best piece and saved it."

Kai found the green square with the tractors. "Your Uncle Ray's shirt," said Grandma. "He wanted to be a farmer. Now he's a dentist, but he still loves tractors." Next to it was a soft gray square. "That's from your grandpa's favorite cardigan. He wore it every winter, and he always had peppermints in the pocket." Kai pressed his nose to the gray square. He thought, maybe, it still smelled faintly of peppermint.

There was a square made from a tea towel from a holiday in the mountains, with a little goat printed on it. A square from the curtains of Grandma's first house, yellow with orange flowers. A square of rough brown fabric from a sack that once held potatoes, which Grandma said was there to remind her that not everything has to be fancy to be good. And there was the red square with the hole.

Near the middle there was a square of red and green tartan, a little faded. "That's from the picnic blanket we took to the beach every summer," said Grandma, "when your mom was small. That's the beach where she learned to swim. She was so proud that she wouldn't get out of the water, even when her lips turned blue and her fingers went wrinkly like raisins. In the end, Grandpa had to carry her out wrapped up in that very blanket." Kai laughed. He couldn't imagine his mom being small, with wrinkly fingers, refusing to get out of the sea.

"What happened to the red one?" asked Kai. Grandma smiled. "That was my favorite scarf. One day, a goat ate a hole right through it, while I was still wearing it." Kai gasped. "The goat from the tea towel?" "The very same goat," said Grandma. "I mended the hole, and I put it in the quilt anyway. Mended things have the best stories."

Kai looked at the quilt properly now, all the squares together. It wasn't just a blanket. It was a map of his family: Grandma's wedding and his mom's childhood and his uncle's tractors and his grandpa's peppermints, all stitched side by side. Then he noticed something in the corner. One square was newer than the others, white with little orange foxes on it. He knew that fabric.

"That's my baby blanket!" he said. "From the photo, when I was tiny!" Grandma nodded. "Your mom sent it to me when you outgrew it," she said. "I stitched it in last spring. You're part of the quilt now too." Kai traced the little foxes with his finger. There he was, in the corner, next to his mom's stars and his grandpa's cardigan.

"Will there be more squares?" he asked. "There's always room for more," said Grandma. "Maybe one day you'll give me a piece of something that matters to you, and I'll stitch it in, and you can tell the story." Kai thought about it. He thought about his favorite T-shirt, the one with the rocket on it, which was getting very small. Maybe that one, one day.

Grandma went to her sewing basket and came back with a spare scrap of fabric, a needle with a big eye and a length of red thread. "Would you like to try a stitch?" she asked. She showed Kai how to push the needle in from underneath, and pull it through, and push it back down again a little farther along. His first stitch was wobbly. His second was a bit better. By the fifth, he had made a short, slightly crooked red line across the scrap. "There," said Grandma. "Every quilt starts with one stitch. That's how I started this one, a long time ago." Kai put the scrap under his pillow to keep.

Outside, the rain was easing to a soft patter on the roof, and the river was rushing quietly in the dark. Grandma pulled the quilt up around Kai's shoulders and tucked it in. Kai lay very still, warm under all those stories: the wedding and the windy sea, the star pajamas, the tractor shirt and the peppermint cardigan, the goat and the mended scarf, and his own little foxes in the corner. "Goodnight, Grandma," he said. "Goodnight, my love," said Grandma, switching off the lamp. And Kai fell asleep under his family's quilt, dreaming of goats and stars and a veil blowing out across the sea.

The end. Goodnight.



Sharing the Moon with Nonno

Noah's grandfather, Nonno, lived very far away, in a different country, across a whole sea. Noah could only visit him in the summer. But every evening, just before bed, they had a video call.

Tonight, Nonno's face appeared on the screen. He had a big gray mustache and a twinkle in his eye. "Buonasera, Noah!" he said. "Is your moon out tonight?" Noah went to the window and pulled back the curtain. There it was, round and silver over the rooftops.

Noah held the tablet up to the window. "Look, Nonno! It's full!" Nonno laughed and turned his own screen around. And there, over the hills and an old stone wall, was the moon. The very same moon. "It's my moon too," said Nonno.

"How can it be the same moon, if you're so far away?" asked Noah. "There's only one moon," said Nonno. "Everybody shares it. When you look at it tonight, I'm looking at it too. That way, we're never really far apart."

They looked at the moon together, Noah from his window and Nonno from his, for a long, quiet moment. Then Nonno said, "Buonanotte, Noah. Sleep well." Noah climbed into bed and left the curtain open a little, so he could see the moon. Far away, Nonno was looking at it too. And with the moon watching over both of them, Noah fell asleep.

The end. Goodnight.