



## **The mission of the Marvin's Story Time Show**

The mission is that the inclusive literacy model, Marvin's Story Time Show reaches more children and re-positions access to story time for children with complex learning needs and their families.

So many parents and educators have said to me that this model needs to reach all children around the world to be GLOBAL and MAINSTREAM.

There is a huge unmet need and many, many children around the world for whom the typical story book is not accessible, impacting on their important participation in family story time. They want to be included. Marvin's Story Time Show offers the bridge. Through this model, literacy is brought to life beyond the typical story book – with success! Inclusion of children with complex needs becomes the starting point for Storytime rather than always being the final add on or afterthought.

Teresa, mom of a child who watches the show describes this eloquently in her Story Time Show Wish.

### **Mom Teresa's Story Time Show Wish**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tpozGhw0E6c>

## **The inclusive literacy model – Marvin's Story Time Show**

The model is designed to incorporate teaching and learning strategies and accessible opportunities to participate in an online story time by the whole family or class, inclusively.

The core literacy skills threaded through the model are:

- Fine Motor
- Auditory and Language
- Tactile Discrimination
- Concept Development (all skills come from this point this is the jumbo plane in the sky)
- Visual Skills (Hierarchy: Visual Awareness, Visual Attention, Fixation, Tracking, Scanning, Visual Discrimination of objects and Images, Identification of print, number, shape – not all children reach this point.)
- Book and Story (this may not necessarily have to be in the shape of a typical book for every child)

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In my courses for professionals I refer to these core literacy skills as Red Arrow Planes that fly with the child through their lives. The planes will never leave the child but the package of skills the child requires to access literacy will develop and change.

Marvin's Story Time Show uses high contrast glittery characters presented against an uncluttered black background to maximise access, develop visual attention, engagement and increase connections. Each show follows the same structure incorporating specific elements to maximise the opportunity to increase the literacy skills: a huge welcome, rainbow wheel spins, time spent saying 'Hi' to each child by name, a chat/wave to Marvin, a story told with high energy using glittery homemade characters and finally a craft made live on the show linked to the story.

I write the adventures about a boy called Marvin and during the show I tell the story using glittery characters made by my husband and I. Songs for each adventure and songs to welcome, say goodbye and a song sung for the parents bring a special quality to this home spun show. All the songs and music are composed by our son Tom, not a professional musician but a beautiful talent within our family.

The show is purposefully home spun. I am neither actor or singer, nor is it a rehearsed theatre performance. If it were to change significantly, it may no longer be as effective.

The model works in several ways:

- Engages, increases vocalisation, concentration, participation and as a result increases the child's literacy access skills because access has been enabled to story time which includes them.
- Its empowered parents and given them confidence to know the starting point for story time for their child
- The whole family feel included in Story Time
- Children that you wouldn't think would watch for one minute watch the whole hour and cry when it's over and watch it again!
- Children who don't lift their head because it's too hard, lift their head and watch the whole hour. Here is Jade, her family are overjoyed!
- <https://www.dropbox.com/s/2m2sf3mln3hia36/Jade%20watching%201.35m.mp4?dl=0>
- And a second video of Jade taken two years later, she is still watching the show and loves it. When she won't engage in anything else, she will engage in this show  
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/nl88giba43t3ohk/Jade%20Video.mp4?dl=0>
- Children who usually sleep all day will wake up for this show and watch the whole hour.

- Parents love to see their children who face so many barriers having the best joy and FUN that this simple show brings. They want to have fun story time at home just like everyone else.
- **I have attached some photographs including the outcomes from some of the children watching the show.**

### **Kara, mom of Cayden shares the outcomes for Cayden in her Story Time Show Wish**

<https://youtu.be/SHQZhCnQHv8>

So many of the parents have said to me that this show has been life changing for their child. They want to see this show on the world stage, they want all children with complex needs around the world to access this show. They absolutely see this show as the starting point for inclusion so that all children can participate equally in story time that works for them.

### **Julia shares the life changing impact the show is having for her daughter Jade Mom, Julia's Story Time Show Wish**

[https://youtu.be/JL\\_l8gwPchQ](https://youtu.be/JL_l8gwPchQ)

### **Developing the model**

I originally developed the model during COVID as a means of using my skills positively. I built the concept and went live on Facebook at 4pm three times per week for a total of four months. Families from all over the world joined this joyful hour and I created the magic! The parents would message me before saying 'we can't wait Gwyn, you are bringing joy to us everyday!'

I received videos and photos from the families watching and I then realised that the show was doing something that was strengthening literacy outcomes for children.

Since then, I have collaborated with 27 Deafblind Projects across the United States to develop the model. I have presented the show to hundreds of children and their families with success. Although I have worked with the Deafblind Projects across all these States the show works inclusively for both neurotypical children and children with a range of additional needs. It would work anywhere in the world because it brings joy, fun and happiness first and foremost.

Mom, Katrina shares how the show ignites the light for parents and care givers to see the joy that happens when you go the extra mile.

### **Mom, Katrina's Story Time Show Wish**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4qXJz9suXw>

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Laura Hughes is the director of a highly regarded charity that supports families of children with vision impairment in the Southwest.

### **Laura, director of Moorvision's Story Time Wish**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-0vXtOsQ8A>

This is a clip of the one hour show (there is purposefully no music played behind my voice on the live show – I add Tom's song music here purely for the clip)

<https://vimeo.com/808015103>

I also would like to share a letter from a leading Consultant Paediatric Ophthalmologist Professor Rachel Pilling who is a huge supporter of the show and other programmes I have developed.

"Dear Gwyn

Can I commend you on the superb impact which the Story Time Shows are having on our children.

I have been reflecting on why this is the case – what is it about the shows which is reaching out to children with complex needs, when other similar online resources don't seem to capture their attention?

And what of those children who we so often say 'need less not more'...what qualities does the show possess which enables a positive experience

1. Black background, obviously
2. A structure they anticipate – like The Night Garden – children know what to expect, and when to expect the unexpected....
3. Repetition of each element so the child grasps what it being said/done/conveyed
4. A single voice, no background jingles, harmonies, accompaniment
5. The 'zoom in and out' of Gwyn (or Marvin, or Fabby) – movement in ONE plane, no moving parts on the faces
6. The roller-coaster-ghost-train anticipation of excitement, something which is both safe and exhilarating at once
7. Enough novelty to hold interest, but enough familiar faces to feel comforting
8. And if there's a bit they don't enjoy, it'll be over soon, returning to a bit of the show they know and find reassuring.

The parents must LOVE the shout outs- their kids are often pitied, you raise them up!  
[End of letter]

It's brought the greatest joy, love and happiness beyond measure and is so deeply loved by the families. Most of all children who face so many challenges can have the best fun ever! This show is about making children with complex/special needs the

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starting point for story rather than continue to always be the add on and final  
afterthought.

Gwyneth (Gwyn) McCormack

Director - Positive Eye Ltd

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