

Story Starters: Brief Plots from Which to Build Short Stories

1. On the way back to camp from his deer stand, Luke finds a fellow hunter lying unconscious in the woods with a serious gunshot wound to the back.
2. With her widowed mother out of work and scheduled to have major surgery the third week in December, 16-year-old LaTasha decides to find a job and try to save Christmas for her mother and three younger siblings.
3. Thanksgiving Day is spoiled for the Hurston family when Captain Hurston's unit has to continue its deployment in Iraq for an extra six months.
4. Deeply involved in a multiplayer online game set in the Middle Ages, Kevin grows more and more distant from his family until his dad arranges a surprising intervention.
5. Marie has trouble understanding why the pastor of their country church asked her younger brother, who's only 14, to bring a devotional before the congregation on Sunday night when anyone can see that she's more devout and a better speaker.
6. As Valentine's Day approaches, Charlie asks his older brother for advice on how to attract the attention of the girl of his dreams, a sophomore at Jefferson High School who hardly knows he's alive.
7. When someone breaks into the school office and steals the Beta Club's money that they were planning to use for the state convention in Hot Springs, amateur sleuths Sherry and Dillon decide to solve the case and recover the money.
8. When Seth gets a chance to go on a two-week African safari with his dad and step-mother, his mom refuses to even talk about it, but Seth won't give up without a fight.
9. Toni, a new girl in school, tries to fit in but becomes the target of some bullies who make her life miserable until the school counselor enlists the aid of the most popular girl in the ninth grade.
10. Three days into a Caribbean cruise that the Kennedy and Russell families are enjoying, Jimmy, the fifteen-year-old son of Rex and Janice Russell, disappears.
11. Sarah takes a part-time job at the local hospital and gradually overcomes her shyness as she interacts with the hospital staff and the patients they treat.
12. Fifteen-year-old Jared has a hard time learning responsibility until his dad negotiates a contract with him and offers him a new car if he can keep the conditions of the contract for a whole year.
13. When a Hollywood casting director comes to town, three best friends decide to audition for bit parts in a slasher movie.
14. When her mother dies of cancer, Hannah goes to live with a wealthy aunt in Miami.