ziptales™
by VANTAGE LEARNING

Librarian User Guide

Login via www.ziptalesusa.com/library

Contents

What Problems Do We Address?

- Low reading skills can be a serious disadvantage to children and can result in low motivation, isolation, poor self-esteem and depression.

- Significant numbers of children experienceing literacy difficulties are likely to have difficulties in coping with the steadily-increasing demands of the curriciulum. [Greg Brooks Emeritus, Professor of Education, University of Sheffield]

- Libraries can often struggle to use online resources to engage sucessfully with their audience.

- There is an ongoing challenge to promote reading for children. We aim to not only allow children to read our stories, but also promote a love of reading so that children have a desire to borrow and read books from the library as well.

Reading For Pleasure

Parents, teachers and librarians know that motivation is the key to children's behavior; put simply, if a child wants to do something, it will happen easily. The attraction of interactive book is clear in the research:

"Narration, animated pictures, sound effects – e-books that incorporate these features have the capacity to increase children's comprehension and enjoyment of storybooks." [Grimshaw & Hume, School Library Journal, 2011]

"Children interact longer with their parents while looking at e-books compared to traditional paper books." [Moody, Justice and Cabell, "Electronic versus traditional storybooks", 2011]

"Reading for pleasure is more important for children's cognitive development than their parents' level of education." [Dr. Sullivan, Institute of Education, 2013]

Ziptales' literacy library offers:

- 500 + interactive leveled stories and curriculum aligned English lessons.

- Voiceovers, animations, videos, follow-up comprehension quizzes, and much more.

- Over 1500 printable worksheets to follow up each story/lesson.

- A fun and safe online learning environment.

- Use in small groups, or individual use, at the library and at home.

- Access online anywhere, from any device, including computer, laptop, and tablets.

- No lock-step progression; instead, Ziptales fosters a love for reading where the children are not afraid of failing or getting low reading scores.

About Ziptales

Learn to Love Reading

Ziptales is an online literacy "library" designed for library, school and home use.
It is based on the latest research about how children develop and sustain a love of reading. The Ziptales "library" was built by trained treachers with the express purpose of making reading a pleasurable and lifelong experience.

The Research

At the core of the Ziptales mission is the recognition that children will do best when they read "for pleasure, to be informed and to perform a task" (Beverly Tyner, The Literacy Jigsaw Puzzle, IRA 2012).
For example, a child who reads a scary story, or a mystery "whodunnit", will instinctively engage with the reading. Reading the story (for pleasure) will raise their skill level without them even being aware of the process.

The Voiceover

Every story has a voiceover - read by a professional actor. This is a great way not only of modeling good reading, but of sustaining interest in the text.
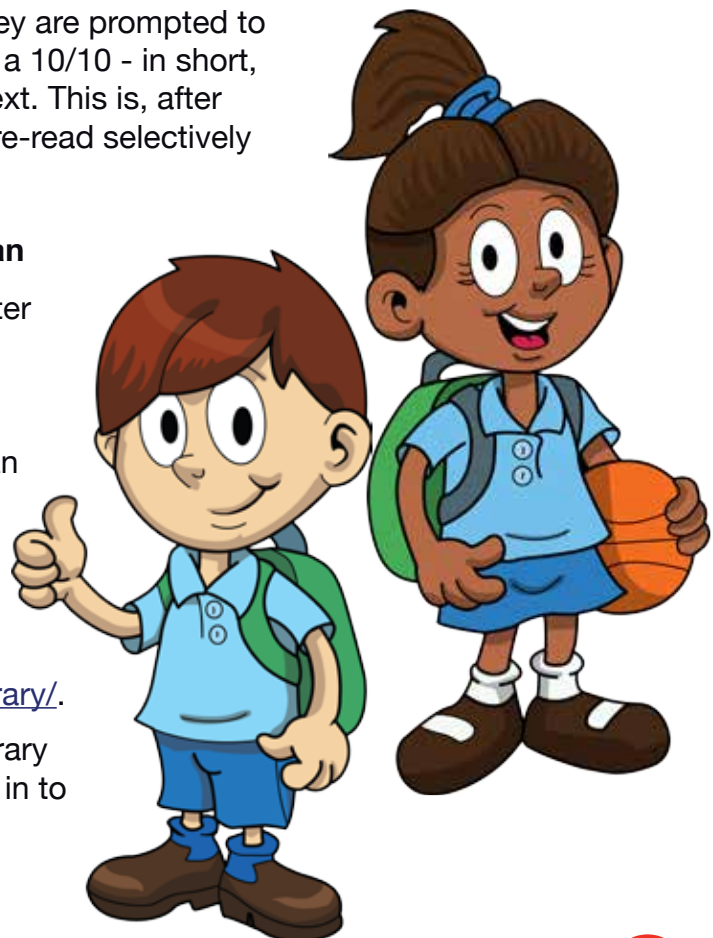
Testing and Feedback

Each story ends with a (relatively easy) fill-in-the-gaps cloze quiz, and a (more challenging) multiple choice quiz.

If the child does not score more than 5/10, they are prompted to "try again". They can re-read the text and get a 10/10 - in short, they can find their own way to "master" the text. This is, after all, how reading normally works: even adults re-read selectively to extract the most out of the experience.

The Role of the Librarian / Parent / Guardian

Ziptales puts the parent / guardian at the center of all decision-making about the individual child's needs. Only they really know which stories, poems, or lessons are appropriate for their child. No automated reading program can possibly know this.

Log In

- In your internet browser, go to ziptalesusa.com/library/.
- Choose your library from the list and enter your library card barcode. You should be automatically logged in to Ziptales useing your library's card number.

If you have any trouble logging in, please email support@ziptales.com.

Ziptales Reading Levels

Ziptales offers its own reading scheme - shown below - which references Lexiles and Flesch.

The 10-Stage scheme starts at the very simplest "entry" level for young children, whose reading amounts to little more than recognition of simple words and sentences - Zip Stage 1 - through to children who are capable of totally "independent" reading of sophisticated texts - Zip Stage 10.

The whole range of reading in an elementary school is included, from Kindergarten / Foundation / Reception, through to Grade 6 and above.
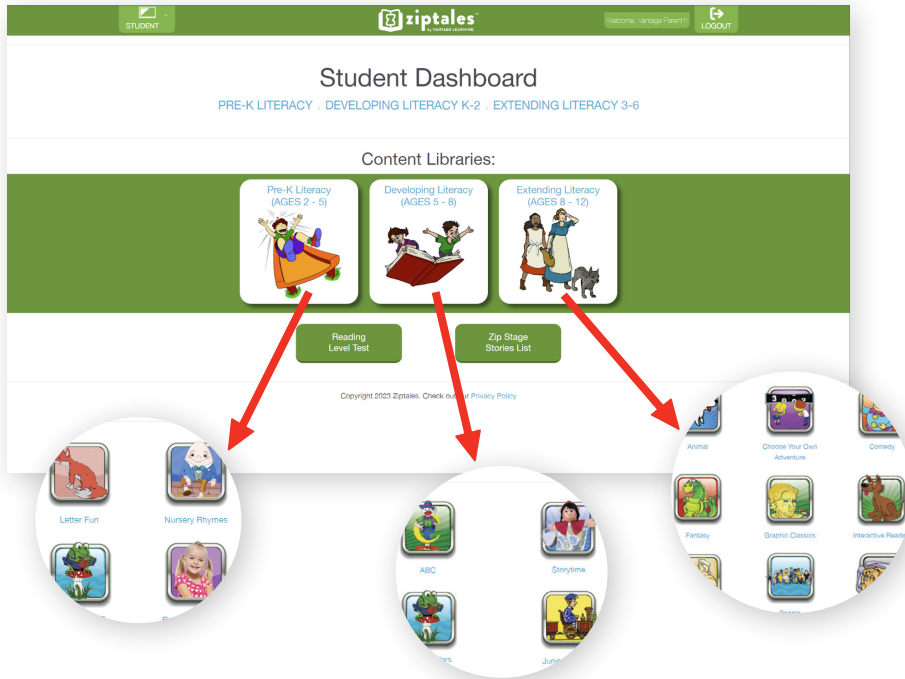
	Lexile levels	Flesch levels
Zip Stage 1		Kindergarten
Zip Stage 2		Kindergarten
Zip Stage 3		0.1 - 2.5
Zip Stage 4	100 - 200	2.0 - 3.5
Zip Stage 5	200 - 400	2.5 - 4.0
Zip Stage 6	400 - 500	3.5 - 4.5
Zip Stage 7	500 - 700	4.0 - 5.5
Zip Stage 8	700 - 950	5.0 - 6.5
Zip Stage 9	950 - 1100	6.0 - 7.0
Zip Stage 10	1100+	7+

No one readability scheme is perfect, and this scheme should be treated as a suggestion only. Librarians are the ones best placed to determine what texts a child will be able to read. Ziptales gives teachers total control over what stories and lessons a child accesses.

The "library" allows open access for all children, under the personal guidance of their librarian.

Student Dashboard

It's safe and easy to navigate and browse through our stories.
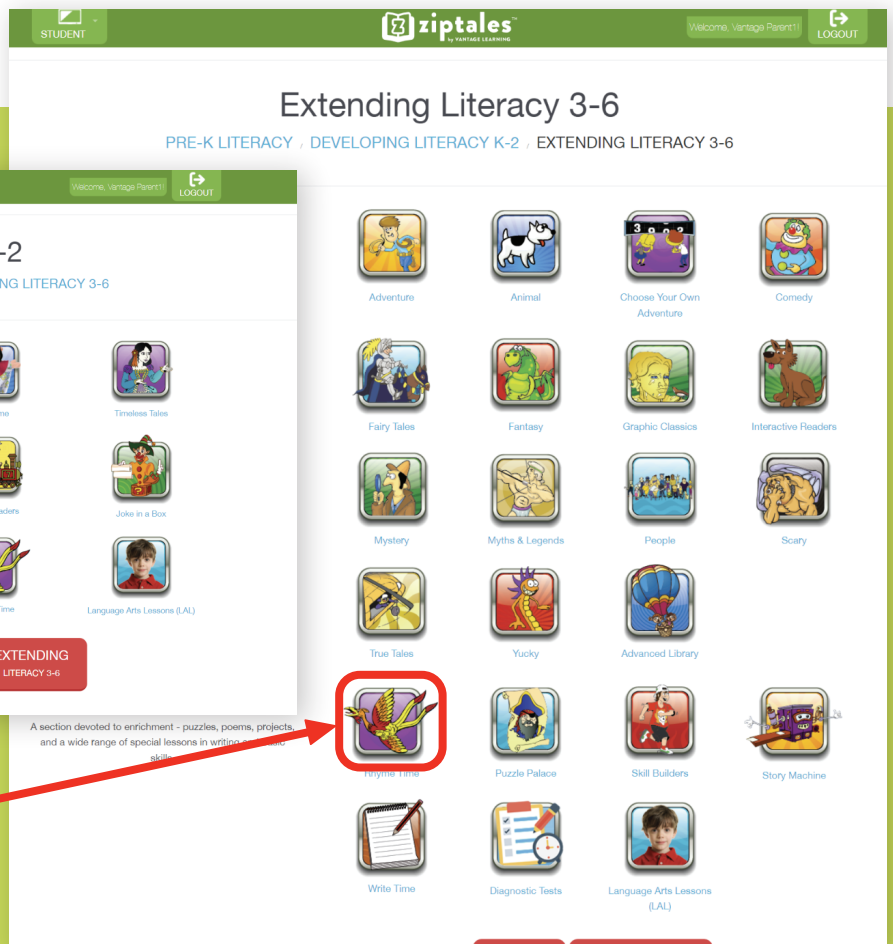
Students can go straight to the stories.

All stories have professional voiceovers.

Stories have interactive comprehension quizzes.

Change your account type EASILY by using the TOP-LEFT user type menu dropdown.

Students simply click on the icon to go to the stories.

Parent Dashboard

Parents can access their own portal, including specific information and worksheets for parents.

Our Modules

EASY READERS
PRE-K & DEVELOPING LITERACY
Ages 8 and Under

Easy Readers takes up where "Learn the ABCs" leaves off and takes children through a series of short texts teaching phonics to beginning readers — one syllable short vowel and long vowel words, simple blends and the requisite sight words. Each story teaches them to read a particular phonic family (e.g. short vowel "A"), to reinforce their understanding. Worksheets and interactives are provided for classroom follow up.

Modules (continued)
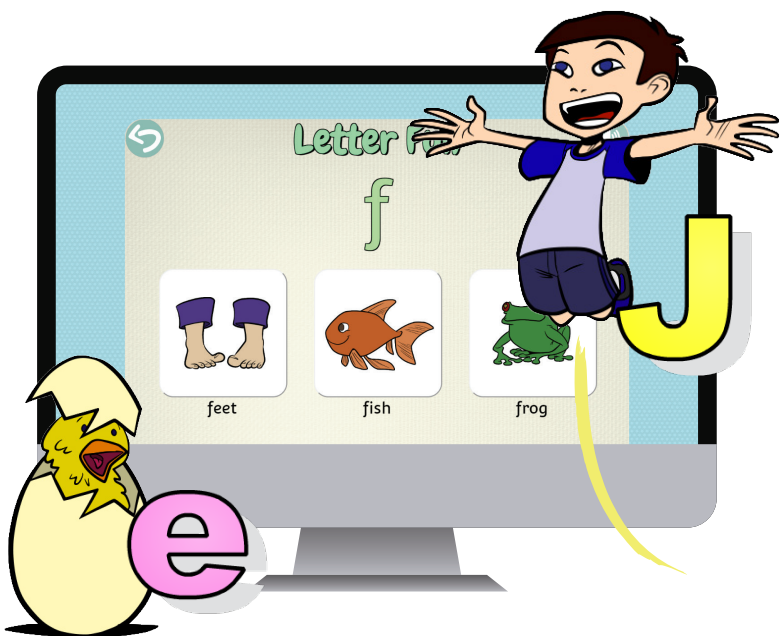
LETTER FUN
PRE-K LITERACY

A simple introduction to the alphabet.

The name of the letter (e.g. "F") and its sound are given, with a common word (e.g. "Fish") sounded out. The pictures are animated.

MY FIRST WORDS
PRE-K LITERACY

A range of popular word categories are presented: pets, fruit, shapes, transport, the zoo, nature, clothes and instruments.

Children choose a category, such as "Pets" and click on an example (e.g. "Dog"). The word is said aloud and there is a simple animation.

NURSERY RHYMES
PRE-K LITERACY

Some of the best loved rhymes, set to music, with amusing animations and the full text on-screen.

LEARN THE ABCS
PRE-K & DEVELOPING LITERACY
Ages 8 and Under

The lessons in this section teach the the alphabet. Children are taught to recognize the letter (as an initial sound), to write or draw the letter, and to be able to see the letter inside another word. Worksheets are provided.

STORYTIME
DEVELOPING LITERACY Ages 5-8

Eight high interest animated stories for Year 1: The Three Little Pigs, The Billy Goats Gruff, Little Red Riding Hood, Goldilocks and the Three Bears – plus four cartoons starring Wendy: Wendy and the Fairy, Wendy and the Dragon, Wendy and the Pirate and Wendy and the Genie. All with worksheets.

PUPPET PLAYS
DEVELOPING LITERACY Ages 5-8

All the joy of live children's theatre, with beautiful rod puppets. As well as the three stories (The Octopus, The Sea Monster and The Pirates' Treasure), there is a "Behind the Scenes" special feature, a video on how to use soft toys to make stories, a puppet making workshop and a documentary on The History of Puppets.

TIMELESS TALES
DEVELOPING LITERACY Ages 5-8

Four all time favorite stories for younger children, presented as graphic novels: Peter Pan, Pinocchio, Snow White, and Sleeping Beauty. Children can enjoy these wonderful old tales, brought to life in charming, Disney-style art. Worksheets are provided for follow up.

JOKE IN A BOX

PRE-K & DEVELOPING LITERACY
Ages 8 and Under

A Jack in a Box offers endless jokes and limericks. This resource offers "micro-reading" events disguised as pure entertainment. To enjoy this, children must be able (a.) to read and (b.) to think — so it's good for them as well as being lots of fun.

STORY MACHINE

DEVELOPING LITERACY Ages 5-8

Children can choose a story 'scaffold' by selecting (a.) characters, (b.) a setting, and (c.) a plot. They then go away and write the story they have chosen.

JUNIOR READERS

DEVELOPING LITERACY Ages 5-8

Engaging stories for children in the early primary years who can decode more complex texts. Our Junior Readers are ideal for children able to independently read at an emerging level.

MAKE & DO

DEVELOPING LITERACY Ages 5-8

Here are 18 "DIY" projects, in three levels of difficulty. Children can make a paper doll or finger puppets (at the simplest level), learn magic and how to draw cartoons, or do origami at the most challenging level. All projects come with a list of "ingredients", photos, diagrams, text, an an explanatory voice-over.

PUZZLE PALACE
DEVELOPING & EXTENDED LITERACY Ages 5-12

Twenty-four original interactive puzzles, ideal for thinking. There are: Word Play (spell a word by dragging and dropping letters); Word Search (click and choose letters to find words); Drag and Drop (assemble a picture by putting together the pieces); Tell a Story (sequence a story from jumbled pictures and text); How Good is your Memory? (reconstruct the scene from memory); Amazing Quest Games; and Whodunnit (select the culprit from the suspects and their testimony).

RHYME TIME
DEVELOPING & EXTENDED LITERACY Ages 5-12

These are twelve famous poems – ranging from Edward Lear's limericks to The Owl and the Pussycat, Jabberwocky and all the way up to challenging works like The Lady of Shalott. Worksheets and teaching notes are provided.

SPECIALIZED ENGLISH LESSONS
DEVELOPING & EXTENDED LITERACY Ages 5-12

These are explicit lessons embracing the key concepts in the curriculum syllabus. There are lessons in Writing, Reading and Oral Language. All elementary grades are covered in 150 mini lessons specially mapped to the curriculum.

ADVENTURE
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

Here, children can find high-octane narratives of the sort that they love — pirates, treasure, ancient tombs, jungles and dinosaurs. Three stories star an intrepid adventurer called 'Lucky Luke', who dares go where no one should go. Safe but adrenaline-charged tales. Twelve leveled stories, with comprehension quizzes.

ANIMALS
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

Cute tales about dogs and frogs, mice and kittens — problem pets, abandoned puppies, a crazy zoo, faithful furry friends and animal fables. Twelve leveled stories, with comprehension quizzes.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

You decide the outcomes of these stories. In the unit *Choices*, there are 25 scenarios based on morals and the decisions we make. In *Pirate Island*, the reader must avoid danger and find treasure. *The Black Knight's Castle* centers around rescuing a princess from the titular castle. *The Castle of Screams* is a scary story about a spooky place filled with monsters and frights. Lastly, *Great Moments in History* is a time travel story wherein the reader visits historic locations such as the Titanic, Gallipoli, Pompeii, the Hindenberg, among others — real history with a thrilling twist.

COMEDY
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

All children love a laugh, from broad slapstick to subtler character humor. These stories showcase comic staples like classroom embarrassment, annoying pets and would-be superheroes. Twelve leveled stories with comprehension quizzes.

FAIRY TALES
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

These are traditional tales — some famous (*Cinderella*, *The Frog Prince*), others practically unknown. All demonstrate the pleasures of fantasy, magic, and morality — heroes, villains, monsters, wishes, enchantment, and happy endings. As well as classic European stories, we showcase Middle Eastern and Asian gems. Twelve leveled stories with comprehension quizzes.

FANTASY
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

Enchanting tales of magic and make-believe, exploring archetypal classics like wishes, knights and princesses, spells, dragons, wizards, and aliens. Twelve leveled stories with comprehension quizzes.

MYSTERY
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

Intriguing child-friendly "whodunnits" to make children think and problem-solve, featuring the celebrated narrative elements of exposition, clues, suspects, and deduction from facts. Twelve leveled stories with comprehension quizzes.

MYTHS & LEGENDS
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

An important part of our cultural heritage comes from myths. In this genre, we meet the classic heroes, the monsters, the dragons, the mermaids and the magic. These are epic tales of quest, tests of goodness, magical help and virtue rewarded. Twelve leveled stories, with comprehension quizzes.

PEOPLE STORIES
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

These stories explore the rich world of relationships and values — difficult siblings, schoolyard bullies, problem parents, guilty secrets and friendship. Twelve leveled stories, with comprehension quizzes.

SCARY
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

Most children love a safe "thrill". These stories feature ghosts, monsters, spiders, spooky settings, weird haunted house challenges and at least one spine chilling urban legend. Twelve leveled stories, with comprehension quizzes.

TRUE TALES
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

Dramatized accounts of real life stories — Houdini, the Titanic, Tutankhamen, Blackbeard, the Mary Celeste, a girl who falls onto the railway tracks as a train comes in, the real Robinson Crusoe, and more. Twelve leveled stories, with comprehension quizzes.

YUCKY
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

For the more reluctant readers — or those who consider reading not "cool." There are stories about disgusting eating, spiders, spew and strange smells. Funny and exciting. Twelve leveled stories, with comprehension quizzes.

GRAPHIC CLASSICS
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

These stories represent all the beauty of graphic novels. The *Happy Prince*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Aladdin* and *King Arthur* are retold as digital comic books. As well there are background documentaries on comics, myths and fairytales.

INTERACTIVE READERS
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

These eight stories are for Learning Support, ESL and Special Needs. There is for each a pre-reading exercise (drag and drop), the reading of the story (with highlighted text, sentence and word function) and four game-like post-reading exercises (match the picture, fill the gaps, and crossword). Ideal for older children experiencing difficulties.

ADVANCED LIBRARY
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

A suite of 40 texts for older children whose reading is of a high standard. The stories are all longer (2000-3000+ words) with sophisticated vocabulary and concepts. Genres included: Adventure, Comedy, Family and Friends, Fantasy and Sci Fi, Horror, Mystery, People and Values, True Tales, Argument, Biography, Expository, Information.

WRITE TIME
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

Teaching writing is often a real challenge. In Write Time we offer eight digital documentaries on "How to write": stories, poetry, arguments, information, instructions, recounts and essays. The lessons are animated, with a voice over. Scripts and worksheets are provided for parents / librarians.

SKILL BUILDERS
EXTENDING LITERACY Ages 8-12

These lessons align to the national curriculum. The 46 digital lessons cover Grammar (nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, preposi-tions and sentences), Punctuation (full stops, commas, capital letters, quotation marks and apostrophes), Comprehension (facts, narratives, argument and visual literacy) and 30 lessons covering all aspects of Spelling. There are worksheets for all lessons.

FAQs

Where was Ziptales developed, and by whom?

Ziptales began in 2003 in Australia and was founded by two former educators, Richard and Valarie McRoberts. Richard has been a writer, editor, and publisher working at all levels of primary and secondary publishing. He has a

Masters in Education and has specialized in literature and reading. Valerie was a teacher, editor, and

publisher. She has an Honors degree in Literature, as well as a Masters in Education,

specializing in "gifted" education.

In 2020, Vantage Learning in the USA acquired Ziptales and has been proudly overseeing its continued success and enrichment ever since. To this day, Vantage Learning partners with the McRoberts and their publishing company, Word Studio, to continue to develop meaningful content for Ziptales.

Are children allowed to use Ziptales at school?

The library license limits use to just within libraries and at home. Schools wishing to use Ziptales are able to purchase their own school license directly from us, allowing their pupils to use Ziptales in their classes, along with unlocking the teacher area of Ziptales.

Is new material added to the website?

Every year, Ziptales adds new content as part of our pact with users to continually "refresh" the site.

Does Ziptales allow you to "track" what the child is reading?

Ziptales is focused on the pleasure of the child's reading experience, and sees "assessment" as secondary. There is no automatic "tracking" of children's scores. We ask users to use one of the two tracking devices (see "Staffroom -> How to -> Student Tracking") to record what their children have read and what scores obtained.

What technical requirements does Ziptales have?

Ziptales will work on any type of computer, both PC and Mac, as well as any device like iPad or Android Tablet. All you need to do is go to ziptalesusa.com in your local browser — we recommend using Google Chrome as it's the fastest and free.

Does it work on an iPad?

Yes! All stories are now available to view on tablets such as the iPad. To view them, just go to ziptalesusa.com on your iPad using Safari.

NEED MORE HELP?

Email support@ziptales.com with any questions or issues! A member of our team will be happy to help, anytime!

WELCOME TO ZIPTALES!