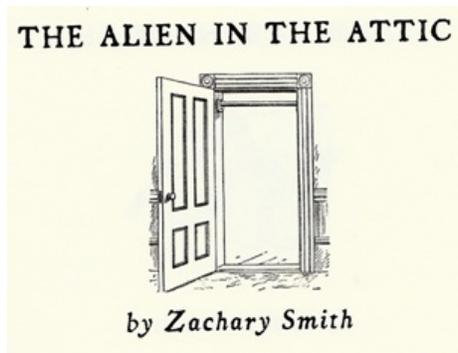


Don't Stay Up So Late: The Coolest Book of Bedtime Stories You Will Ever Own

by TOM B.

Reading at bedtime is a big deal in our house. My wife and I alternate putting our daughter down each night and our nightly rituals always involve reading before she goes to bed. Sometimes she reads to us. Most nights, we'll either read her two or three picture books or a few chapters from longer kid-friendly novels. (We're reading a lot of J.K. Rowling and Rick Riordan lately.) The bedtime story ritual is very, very important to our family, That said, even though we have literally read HUNDREDS of night-time books to our daughter over the years, I'm confident in saying that the **hands-down coolest bedtime book** we've ever bought for her is [Don't Stay Up So Late: A Treasury of Bedtime Stories Written for Children by Children](#), an AMAZING collection of stories, published by [826 Michigan](#), that was entirely authored by elementary school students.

Are you not convinced that a grade school kid could write an engaging bedtime story? Here's the first story in the anthology, written by a first-grader:



When I woke up I heard a *rat-a-tat-tat*. I went straight down the hallway and turned right and opened the attic door. I saw a green alien. The alien had eight eyes and four arms. He could make things in one minute. I grabbed him. He punched me in the nose. I called the army but the army didn't believe me. I put him in the basement. He ran up the stairs and I picked him up, put him back, and put a gate up. I gave him some food. I wanted to keep him. I wanted to keep him forever.

The End. That's the whole story. Admit it – that story was ten times more engaging, heartfelt, and

AWESOME than 95% of the movie tie-in, Disney, or kidlit spin-off picture books that your kid begs you to buy at Target. It's direct and honest and [Don't Stay Up So Late](#) is FILLED with stories just like that – stories with titles like “Supersnake,” “A Cow and a Mouse at Dance Class,” “The Super Dog That Helps People,” “The Mermaid Disappeared?”, “Dr. Jell-o’s Jell-o Plan,” and “Tiny’s Tale,” to name a few.

The bedtime stories in [Don't Stay Up So Late](#) are overflowing with exuberant, imaginative storytelling leaps, the kinds of ingenious flights of fantasy that always seem to crop up when a kid sets his mind to tell you a story. As a parent, I found the stories in the collection to be immediately endearing and couldn't help feeling both proud for the kids and grateful to 826 Michigan for attempting to catch such lightning in a bottle.

As I mentioned, [Don't Stay Up So Late](#) was published by [826 Michigan](#), a remarkable non-profit tutoring lab and writing center for students between the ages of six and eighteen. There are eight 826 centers across America – I've had the chance to visit the centers in [Ann Arbor](#) and [Brooklyn](#) – and I have to say that [826 National](#) is one of the most inspiring grassroots educational charities I've ever encountered. They're wholly focused on mentoring young kids, and they organize safe places for growing kids to get help on their homework and learn to express themselves via creative writing. (Each center also has a fantastically cool themed-store serving as the public face of their tutoring centers. The Ann Arbor store is a [robot supply store](#); the Brooklyn shop sells [supplies for superheroes](#).)



One of my favorite things about the [826 organization](#) is that they not only mentor and support kids, but they also drive kids to **MAKE THINGS**. 826 works with publishers to get collections of their students' writings PUBLISHED, which is astoundingly cool. They work with the kids to express themselves creatively through writing and then help turn them into published authors. That's just one of the coolest things I've ever heard. 826 has published many student collections over the years. [Don't Stay Up So Late](#) is just the first one I've encountered and it won't be the last.

As if the project itself wasn't inspiring enough, [826 Michigan](#) went even further by making [Don't Stay Up So Late](#) one of the most physically GORGEOUS kids' books I've ever purchased. [826 Michigan](#) and their partner Blotch Books went all out for [Don't Stay Up So Late](#) – the design is impeccable, the cloth hardcover feels classic and refined, Ian Huebert's cover and interstitial illustrations are remarkable – heck, even the PAPER STOCK of [Don't Stay Up So Late](#) impresses the hell out of me. This is just a beautiful, beautiful book, filled with words dripping with creativity, and it only costs fifteen bucks. And that money goes to support a charity that helps turn kids into authors. This may be the most no-brainer purchase in the history of our entire home library.

And, in case you were wondering, **my daughter LOVES reading this book**. She's fascinated to read stories written by her peers and she appreciates their silly, economic humor in a way that I never can. She sees herself in these stories, which makes them all the more appealing. If that wasn't enough, the sheer fact that we own such a magnificent collection of bedtime stories written by kids her age makes my daughter want to write HER OWN STORIES. She doesn't want to be left out of the

fun.

So, if you want to delight and inspire your kids, if you want to bring a perfect gift book to a baby shower that no one else will bring, if you want to support a fantastic charity, or if you just want to read some really, really lovely bedtime stories, you can't do better than [Don't Stay Up So Late](#).

You can order [Don't Stay Up So Late: A Treasury of Bedtime Stories Written for Children by Children](#) directly from 826 Michigan [HERE](#). If you want to know more about [826 National](#) and their mission, visit their official homepage [HERE](#).

