The Box with No Instructions

Two children discover what a plain box can become.



A short story for reading aloud

AGES 4-7 • Take your time. Enjoy the sounds.

The Box with No Instructions

A big cardboard box arrived at Mina's house.

Inside was a new lamp. Once Dad had unpacked it, Mina climbed into the empty box.

“What is it?” asked her little brother, Bo.

“I have not decided.”

Bo tapped the side.

Tok-tok-tok.

“A drum?”

Mina tapped back.

Tok-tok-tok.

They drummed until Dad danced through the room carrying the lampshade on his head.

Then Bo turned the box onto its side.

“A cave!”

They crawled inside with two cushions. For a little while, they were extremely quiet bears.

But Mina's feet stuck out of the cave. Bo's bear laugh echoed around the cardboard walls.

The Box with No Instructions

“We need something bigger,” Mina said.

They opened the flaps and spread a blue blanket around the box.

“A boat!” cried Bo.

Mina fetched a wooden spoon for a paddle. Bo brought three toy animals and a sock.

“What is the sock for?”

“The captain.” Bo put it on a teddy bear's head.

Swish-swash! Swish-swash!

They sailed past the sofa island. They rescued a cushion from the sea. They stopped for a snack in a sunny harbour beside the window.

When Dad came back, the boat was empty.

“Where are the sailors?”

Two heads popped up behind the box.

“It is a shop now,” said Mina.

Bo tapped the cardboard counter.

Tok-tok-tok.

“Would you like to buy a lampshade?”

THE END

Original MimoMango story. Story and illustration created with AI assistance. First edition, 2026.