**Application Title:** Silly Stories

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**Description: “**Silly Stories” is an educational application developed for children in grades K-2 to inspire early interest in reading.

**Motivation:** Every night, a battle ensues in my home. My 6-year-old daughter, Skye, is required by her first grade teacher to read for 10-20 minutes each night. Skye enjoys reading only when she is actually interested in a book, and the grim reality is that she finds the majority of books written at the first grade level to be excruciatingly boring. There are tears and fits thrown and attempted bribes and threats of early bedtime in the midst of the struggle to get the assigned reading completed.

I have developed a solution to this problem: “Silly Stories” is an application that allows Skye to participate in creating the before she reads it. Skye chooses characters, silly adjectives, objects, and actions before she knows what the story is about. She is then curious enough about the story to voluntarily read it.

It is vital that young children practice reading often to gain familiarity with “sight” words they encounter regularly and become efficient readers. I intentionally kept the design of “Silly Stories” simple and clean to achieve the goal of real, continuous reading. The application is very user friendly and requires no typing.

**Behavior:** “Silly Stories” is an application developed for an Android tablet. The user first selects characters from a group of images. The next screens require several of the objects, actions, and adjectives to be selected for the story. The backbone of each story is hard-coded into the application with appropriate blanks for the user's selections. After all selections are made, the story is generated and rendered on the screen, and the user reads the (hopefully) hilariously absurd results. The result is a story that takes a first-grader 5-10 minutes to read.

**Tools:** I developed the application in Java using the Android Studio development environment (http://developer.android.com/tools/studio/index.html). I used GIMP (https://www.gimp.org/downloads/) for image editing. I wrote all of the story templates myself based on bedtime stories we have created regularly each night as a family.

**Notes:** The character images shown in the application are not my own, and are included for demonstrational purposes only.

Some features have not yet been implemented. The home screen of the application includes a “Customize” button. In version 2.0, this will start an activity which allows the user to upload images and add words to be used as selectable items for the stories.

Only the first story, “Ride to the Airport” is fully written. The next story, “Lunchtime” is partially implemented to demonstrate the functionality of choosing a new story. The remaining “New Story” options are shown as placeholders for the stories yet to be implemented.

**Credits:**

**Character Images:**

http://www.cartoonnetwork.com/shows/teen-titans-go/characters/index.html

http://splatoonwiki.org/wiki/Splatoon/Gallery

http://zeldawiki.org/Gallery:Link

http://zeldawiki.org/Gallery:Zelda

**Image for icon:**

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Smiley_green_alien.svg>

(public domain)

**Code for reading text file:**

<http://stackoverflow.com/questions/326390/how-to-create-a-java-string-from-the-contents-of-a-file>

Special thanks to Skye Martinez and Jana Hartman for testing and suggestions; and to Dr. David Ackley and the students in his Spring 2016 CS591 class for their feedback and suggestions.

Thanks also to my faculty mentor, Dr. Patrick Kelley.