How to Delay Your Bedtime

A poem in four voices

© 1996 by Bruce Lansky. Adapted from the poem "How to Delay Your Bedtime" from My Dog Ate My Homework, published by Meadowbrook Press. This classroom theater play version of “How to Delay Your Bedtime” is © 1999 by Meadowbrook Press.

Narrator:
How to Delay Your Bedtime
Refuse to turn off the TV.
Say:

Child:
All my friends watch this show.

Narrator:
Shout:

Child:
No Fair!

Narrator:
when you’re told to go to bed.
Then ask:

Child:
Why can’t I stay up till ten like all my friends?

Narrator:
When Dad says:

Dad:
If all your friends
jumped off the Brooklyn Bridge
would you jump, too?

Narrator:
Sneer:

Child:
Yes!

Narrator:
Whine:

**Child:**
I’m too tired to walk upstairs to bed.

**Narrator:**
Make Dad carry you up the stairs.

**Narrator:**
Pout:

**Child:**
I’m too tired to brush my teeth.

**Narrator:**
Wait till Dad squeezes the toothpaste onto your brush and starts brushing your teeth for you.
Then groan:

**Child:**
Ouch, you’re hurting me.

**Narrator:**
When Mom comes in to say good night and asks you to pick up your clothes,
yawn:

**Child:**
I’m too tired to pick up my clothes.

**Narrator:**
Watch while your Mom picks them up for you.
Beg:

**Child:**
I need a bedtime story.

**Narrator:**
When Mom finishes the story, ask:

**Child:**
And then what happened?
Narrator:
Tell her:

Child:
That story got me excited.
Now I need a backrub to make me sleepy

Narrator:
When Mom starts rubbing, give directions:

Child:
Rub a little higher.
No, a little to the left.
No, more to the middle.

Narrator:
When Mom stops rubbing,
grumble:

Child:
I was just starting to feel sleepy -
don’t stop now.

Narrator:
When Mom says:

Mom:
For the last time, good night!