

Top Tips for making Experience Bags, Boxes or Books

Fill bags or boxes or make a book with articles (on each page) relating to an 'experience' e.g. Going shopping, making a pizza, staying at Nana's house, having a friend for tea.

Teach and review (relive) concepts

After an experience book/bag/box is made you can go back and "relive" what happened. This helps to review the important steps/concepts that are being taught.

Reinforce language experiences

It is always important to tie language to all experiences. If the child learned the name of the apple when you went to the shop and bought apples, there would be multiple times to use the name of the apple, to make Braille/Print/Audio labels to support learning. An experience book page about the trip to the shop to buy apples would be very helpful.

Individualise

Every child has his/her unique needs. An experience book page can be tailor made to fit these needs. For example, if you have a child with good vision, more detail can be made visually. If the child is a tactile learner more textures can be used.

Important Individual Considerations

Use representative materials and actual objects

Use items that were used in the actual experience and represent what the child found interesting about the activity. Save meaningful items that were used in the activity to use in your book/box/bag

Learning proceeds from concrete to abstract

Start simple and use objects that the child will understand. For example, in the apple

example from above, a concrete object would be the apple. Moving to more abstract, would be a picture of an apple, a drawing of the apple, and then the word for apple written in Braille or Large Print.

Make sure the book relates to the CHILD'S experiences

Remember to show the page as the child experienced the activity, not how you did or wanted him/her to.

Add articles to the bag/box/book during the activity or as soon as possible after the activity

It is important to do the page when the activity is fresh on the child's mind. Hopefully, in doing it quickly, the memories will remain and you can go back periodically and relive the experience with the child. If you wait too long you might forget important details that occurred. The book/box/bag will be more meaningful long-term if the child remembers what he/she did.

Use a variety of approaches to produce pages

Be creative and have fun. Use different colours, textures, pictures, etc., to make the experience activity memorable.

Emphasize important details

- These details are what the child found important in the activity
- Use pictures of the child participating in the activity
- Use real (concrete) items. Save "experience items" (mementoes) of activities done in the community, at home, or at school

Include auditory experiences

Try adding features to the objects using the RNIB Audio Labeller

- Record voices that correspond with the activity
- Record sounds that correspond with the book and pictures
- Use objects that make noise, i.e. crinkly paper, if the paper was part of the experience

To enhance the child's understanding of the concept of the experience book, choose the time and topics carefully.

- Pick a time when the child is best able to attend to the activity
- Initially pick topics that are most meaningful to the child. Meaning comes through participation, so initial pages should be routine activities that the child has experienced often

Advantages of Experience Bags/Boxes/Books

- The objects motivate the child to actively participate in reading a story and retelling
- The objects used help aid in comprehension