

More Fun Books for SHARED Reading

By: Patsy Pierce, Ph. D



One of our earlier tip sheets ("Making Squishy Books" by Patsy Pierce) on fun books for shared reading, Dr. Pierce talked about how important shared reading is as a technique that emphasizes conversation between a child and the reader about different aspects of a story. (See that project tip sheet titled for more details on the rationale for and strategies to facilitate shared reading. You can find it on the project website: <http://www.unr.edu/educ/ndsip/>)

In the original tip sheet, Dr. Pierce made the point that interesting books may also facilitate longer engagement and enhanced participation during shared reading with children with disabilities. Through her work with children with significant disabilities, it was discovered that children were more likely to interact with books and participate during shared reading if the books were made out of materials that reflected the children's sensory interests. Text was to the books related to the children, their friends, and their family interests.

In the original article Dr. Pierce provided directions to make and ideas for various types of "squishy books" and wallpaper or fabric sample books. This new tip sheet provides additional descriptions and photos of how to make more fun books that Dr. Pierce and her colleagues have found children with significant disabilities to enjoy and explore during shared reading.

Shopping and Gift Bag Books



Find attractive gift bags (or save them when you receive a gift!), especially ones that relate to a child's interest and/or a theme that is being explored and developed as part of a curriculum. Cut the bags in half, leaving one side intact for the "spine" of the

book. You may also cut the bag totally apart, and re-assemble with binding tape or fasteners of any kind. Attached 8-10 blank pages in the "gift-bag" book. Have more able-bodied children write, scribble and draw stories. If they chose they may also illustrate their own stories and/or ones that are dictated to and written by adults. Blank pages could be laminated and children could use erasable markers to create stories and then erase them if the wish to create a different page. All children seem to be more engaged with stories about themselves and familiar events. The gift bag covers add and build upon interests. Large brown paper grocery bags may also be cut apart and reassembled with pages made of box fronts. Readers and children could share these "shopping books"



books, talking about what they are buying to put in their shopping bags including talk about the actual words and letters seen on the logos and labels.

Sun Visor Books

Sun screens or visors that are placed in car windows can be enticing books

for children who respond well to reflective backgrounds. These visors are also able to stand alone and can be placed in front of a child in prone or side-lying position. Simply cut a sun visor into thirds, from side to side. One sun visor usually makes three books. Glue text and pictures onto each fold of the visor, in sequential order to tell a story. Text and pictures may be from a published book, or adults and children may wish to make their own text and pictures to glue onto the sun visor.



Object Holder Books



Some children are more likely to be engaged with a book when objects are available for them to manipulate. Objects should be related to the story so that readers could respond to the child's manipulation of an object as a question or comment. Old and no longer used large dictionaries and other

types of reference books can be used as storage books or "book safes" by cutting out the middle of a large number of the pages to form a well. Remaining pages can have story pictures and text glued onto them. Books made of plastic pencil holders can also be filled with objects representing a published story, or objects from a child's experiences, (e.g., a nature walk) to help a child and reader to share a story. Also pictured is a book made from a brown lunch bag, an inexpensive plastic placemat, and the front and back of a box of animal crackers. These items are used to add texture, interest, and allow beginners to explore books without worry of destroying expensive materials.



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