

Little Boxes of Memories

Additional Activities

Pre-session suggestions - Explore, think, make and do

1. Introduce and explore the idea of telling multi-sensory stories using objects as stimuli. Gather together a few simple objects that pupils are familiar with that stimulate all the senses. Try to get a range of materials and textures too. Then, work with the pupils to devise a simple action to go with each object and practice these actions regularly. Put all the objects in a box and then it's story time: allow pupils to take it in turns to pull out an object from the box. You can create an improvised story around the objects as they emerge with pupils performing the actions they have learnt for each object and experiencing the multi-sensory nature of each object too. If you do the activity again, it will of course be a different story each time!

2. Introduce the idea of collecting precious objects. Get your pupils to bring in from home interesting objects that are meaningful to them or that they particularly like (but obviously not ones that are valuable or will be missed at home!). The rest of the class can then explore these objects and you could play a guessing game - "Who does it belong to? Why is it important?" You could then make a display of all the objects with a photo of its owner next to each one to reinforce the concept of different objects representing different things to different people.

3. Explore the theme of caring for others. Doris' story is about how we show our feelings for other people. You could develop this idea with your pupils and explore the various ways we show we care for each other. One such way is giving each other gifts and you could work on this with your pupils by recreating the key episode in Doris' story when her fiancé presents her with the hollyhock. Pupils could make their own flowers (which could even be perfumed to give them more of a multi-sensory aspect) and then present them to each other or to loved ones as gifts.

4. Encourage your pupils to become museum curators. Every time that you make a visit somewhere with your class, encourage them to collect mementoes as a record of what they have done and what they have seen. These can then be put into their own boxes (see above). Any significant pieces of work they produce in class can also be included. They can even bring in souvenirs from home collected during family trips. Thus they will each build up a sort of physical diary containing significant multi-sensory objects that celebrate their achievements over a period of time. You can revisit the contents of each box regularly in order to keep the memories of those achievements fresh in the mind.

5. Explore the theme of origins. Darnley's story focuses on his departure from the country of his birth to start a new life in London. You could explore the idea of origins by looking at the place of birth or countries of origin of the pupils in your class. This could be represented by a map of the world, a display of national flags (made by the pupils out of multi-sensory materials), a collection of objects/music/smells representing each country, etc.

Post Session Suggestions

1. Make your own Little Boxes of Memories

Collecting stories: what can these boxes hold?

Entelechy spent a long time collecting older people's stories and sensory memories for the Little Boxes of Memories.

Which stories would your pupils like to be held in their own Little Box of Memories?

- It could hold a pupil's life history, or tell the story of their family or heritage.
- It could be an ongoing project mapping their activities during the school year and providing a mini exhibit to be explored at the end of the year.
- Alternatively, the class could create a box together about one recent, exciting event.

Using the Little Boxes as inspiration, it might be possible to create a whole range of themed multi-sensory boxes for use in class.

Themes could include family, self, friends, travel, home, animals, local community, heritage or citizenship, a particular historical period or a sporting event. A whole unit of work could be devised around making each box.

What kind of boxes or containers could be used to create the pupils' own boxes of memories?

Go to '[Stories & Activities](#)' to see the contents of our two Little Boxes of Memories. Flo's story was contained in a 1950s shopping trolley; Winston's story was in an old suitcase.

Once you have a theme for your boxes, source a wide range of containers for pupils to choose from, so that each box can be as personalised as possible.

Each pupil can select the design of their own box or container (e.g. the shape, colour, material, etc.) Spend time exploring the different qualities of each object – how it opens and closes, its texture, its smell, its shapes and corners. Boxes could be adapted to represent their contents – for example an animal themed box could be covered in fake fur.

Practice taking things in and out of the container together – have fun with hiding unexpected objects in it, then revealing them.

This will become the box of memories into which pupils can start to put significant objects (see below).

What goes into the box? Objects which inspire memory.

These could be real objects – or representations of them; for example drawings, crafted objects like a pompom, or printed digital images made in class, a favourite word, a smell (soap, dried food), photos, mementoes collected on a day out.

Most objects can be explored safely with careful one to one supervision. Do a careful risk assessment on each object (some objects might be too small, sharp or otherwise risky for the pupils) but do not be afraid to include some fragile or temporary objects – many exciting sensory objects can be replaced such as real herbs or flowers, ice, scrunched up paper.

When including real objects consider their tactile and sensory qualities. What does it feel / smell/ look like?

Is there a way of including opposing sensory experiences - light and dark, soft and hard, hot and cold, water and air?

Do some objects inspire more response or movement than others?

There are many different ways to bring a Little Box to life – torches can shine onto different surfaces, a small speaker attached to an ipod can make a suitcase sing and vibrate!

Sharing the Stories

Take time to reveal each object from the box with reverence or surprise.

Give each object the value, time and space to be explored properly; as a whole group and one to one.

- How does the object feel / sound / look / smell?
- What does it mean / represent?
- Can it be transformed through movement?
- Can it be used as a musical instrument?

Vary the energy and pace.

Introduce sensory contrasts.

Repeat words, phrases and sounds. Whisper and sing.

2. Map Making

Winston liked to talk about bus routes. If you go on trips with your class, you could make a large map of London and stick photos of the pupils on the map showing where they have visited along with the route they took to get there.

What is the journey to school like? Make or draw a giant road map on the floor with 3D objects on it and physically 'journey' along it, introducing noises and sensory experiences on the way.

Find sensory materials to move over, such as bubble wrap, whether on foot or in a wheelchair. Some interesting designs can be made using two layers of paper with some blobs of paint and textured materials sandwiched in between. Carefully walk or wheel over the top layer of paper – peel it back and see what the result is!

3. Create your own weather

An important aspect of Winston's story is the contrast between the hot Caribbean sun and the freezing London snow. You could have fun creating as many different types of weather as you can in your classroom.

Pupils could consider how to create weather effects (hot, cold, snow, wind, rain, fog, sun etc.) using objects in the classroom (e.g. a fan, a lamp, confetti, coloured sensory cloths, etc.).

You could also investigate with the pupils how people dress, how people behave and what people do for fun in different weather.

4. Explore Wildlife

Flo loved flowers and drew a lot of them in her notebooks; real and imaginary. She enjoyed seeing little bits of nature in the city.

Being mindful of any allergies, bring fresh flowers into the classroom. If possible natural ones from your own garden or growing food plants such as lettuce, nasturtium and herbs - and examine them together. Pass around the leaves and flowers. Explore the textures, scents and colours.

Encourage the children to run their wheelchairs over bunches of fresh mint or rose petals – can you smell the perfume in the room?

Use the flowers as inspiration for painting or crafting.

Flo told us that once her boyfriend picked some hollyhock flowers from a garden and gave them to her... and an earwig fell out!

Make flowers with mini beasts on them!

Pupils can make their own flowers with earwigs caterpillars etc,

Make mini beasts from pipecleaners, wool and pompoms and attach to flowers with thread elastic, fishing rod style so that children can enjoy the sensation of them bouncing around.

Make your own flowers or use ready made fake flowers.

Creepy crawlies – do you like them or hate them?

Sing songs about spiders, bugs, caterpillars, worms.

5. Create a 1950s cinema in your classroom.

Re-create Flo's trip to the pictures in Brixton by turning your classroom into a 1950s cinema.

Turn the lights off and darken the classroom as much as possible. Use torches to show everyone to their places.

Take / tear up tickets (raffle tickets are fine). Take time to enjoy ripping the paper, the sound and the feeling of it. Throw the torn paper into the air like confetti.

If safe for your students, pour popcorn into cardboard cartons. Shake the cartons and listen to the sound. Explore it with hands, investigate the texture and smell.

Think about the film you could show – perhaps you have already made a film with the students in it?

To add to the authenticity, there are also many apps currently available which can give your photos or video that grainy black and white 1950's film look.