

Sensory Stories

Sensory stimulation is vital for everyone's physical and mental well being.

Sensory stories partner concise text with rich sensory experience to convey a narrative

Sensory stories have been used with individuals with profound and multiple learning disabilities, dementia, autism and sensory processing difficulties,. They have been used with babies and children in the early years, and with adults in their later years, they have been used in schools, care settings, heritage settings and homes, by specialist practitioners and by absolute beginners. They truly are for everyone.



Simple sensory resources are easy to find.

Guides

Guides like this one, on a range of topics, are available to download for free from www.TheSensoryProjects.co.uk follow links to the Sensory Story page and scroll to the bottom for the guides.

The Sensory Projects run on the principle that with the right knowledge and a little creativity inexpensive items can become effective tools for sensory inclusion.

Through the work of all the Projects founder **Joanna Grace** is seeking to contribute to a future where people are understood in spite of their differences.

To learn more about the projects, and to access free resources and information about bespoke sensory training visit

www.TheSensoryProjects.co.uk

Joanna's books: **Sensory Stories for Children and Teens** and **Sensory-being for Sensory Beings** are available on amazon, with more titles due for publication in 2018.



The Sensory Projects

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Why share sensory experience through a story?



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Why share sensory experience through a story?

Why share a sensory experience through a story?

You will know how wonderful sensory experiences are and how important sensory engagement is for everyone, but why might you want to deliver sensory experiences through the medium of a story?

Stories are a part of being human, they are something we all share in, no matter our age, ability, race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual preference, we all share and create our own, stories every day.

Sharing stories in a sensory way enables people who access communication through their senses to be a part of sharing in stories, a part of responding to stories and a part of creating their own stories.

You might be thinking that stories are fundamentally based in words and therefore inaccessible to individuals who do not use words, but happily this is not the case. The essence of a story is not words, it is sequence: beginning, middle and end. Indeed many of our most important experiences in life are things we find difficult to put into words. What better description for experience than experience itself?

A sensory story is not a substitute for a word based story, it is a story in and of itself. Sensory stories are accessible to all.

Natural structure

A story provides a natural structure to sensory experience, enabling both the experiencer and the facilitator to better engage with the experiences. Structuring sensory experiences can make them more predictable, taking the anxiety out of the situation and supporting memory and understanding. These things hold particular benefits for individuals with autism, dementia and learning disabilities. When our brain is ready for an experience we all get more out of that experience.



The magic of the story telling space

The story telling space: the space we occupy when we share a story with someone else, holds almost magical properties. Within the story telling space we are braver, we are bolder, we are better able to cope with things we find difficult. These things make stories the perfect place to face our fears, learn new and challenging things and have a go at experiencing something for the first time.

Within the story telling space we feel more connected to those who share the space with us. Which is a great reason to choose a story that will have a broad appeal. Sharing the story telling space with others helps to foster social connections and build community.

Through stories we get:

Pleasure! Stories are fun, we all share them, we all enjoy them.

A chance to develop our moral compass. Some stories teach right from wrong, but through all stories we get the chance to reflect on what we would, or would not have done in any given situation.

To learn. Stories can teach us skills and life lessons.

To create change. Change comes about through telling stories about how we would like things to be.

To understand our world. The stories we tell reflect the world we live in and help us to understand it.

To feel a part of a community or group. Groups share in collections of stories, for example members of a particular faith, culture or community will share in a bank of common stories.

To form bonds and friendships with others. Sharing stories helps us to connect with others. We can form friendships through a shared enjoyment of particular stories.

To discover our own identities. Our identities are formed through the stories we have heard about ourselves, the stories we tell about ourselves and the stories we make up about who we want to become.

By sharing stories in a sensory way you can enable someone who experiences meaning through sensory experience to access all of these things too and be included a long side people who share meaning with words.