

Sensory Stories

Sensory stimulation is vital for everyone.

Sensory stories convey narrative through experience & through words.

Sensory stories are for anyone, of any age, and any ability.

Sensory stories have been used with individuals with profound and multiple learning disabilities, dementia, autism and sensory processing difficulties, they've been used with babies and children in the early years, and with adults in their later years, they've 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 related topics, are available to download for free from :

<http://jo.element42.org/sensory-stories>

The Sensory Project

The Sensory Project believes that with a little know how and creativity inexpensive sensory resources can become effective tools for including everyone.

Sensory Stories from The Sensory Project

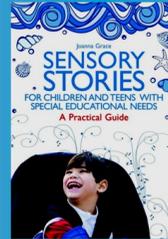
are available to buy from

<http://jo.element42.org/sensory-stories>

Stories come with advice on how to resource them, and extra ideas and information to support further engagement . A basic guide to sharing sensory stories is available to download for free.

Sensory Stories for Children and Teens

is available on Amazon (and in all good bookshops).



Sensory Project Training

The Sensory Project can create a bespoke training package for your setting. You can also access training from the Sensory Project at a variety of events nationwide, for details please see <http://jo.element42.org/training>

Connect with The Sensory Project

<http://jo.element42.org>

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How do I share a sensory story?



Joanna Grace

Tips for sharing sensory stories effectively

Be prepared

A sensory story will be resourced with a number of sensory stimuli. Lay these out somewhere where you will be able to reach them easily as you tell the story. Position the story card somewhere where you will be able to read it whilst delivering the stimuli. Check everything is ready to be used.



Be consistent

This is especially important when sharing a story with individuals with profound and multiple learning disabilities.

Try to stick to the words of the story and deliver the stimuli in the same way each time.

Words:

Some story experiencers may find it hard to concentrate on the experiences if they are simultaneously being chatted too.

Experience:

Think about how you will facilitate the experiences, e.g. Is a touch experience going to be against the story experiencer's hand or face? Is a sound stimulus going to be played once or multiple times?

Be observant

Be alert to responses to the story, these may change subtly over time. Keeping a note of responses is a good way of tracking them. Many people find filming sensory story sharing sessions to be illuminating. When you are able to wholly focus on observing you learn about yourself and about the person with whom you are sharing the story.

Examples of things you may notice:

- Flinching
- Changing facial expressions
- Changes in the body: small movements, muscles tensing or relaxing, movements increasing or decreasing.
- Vocalisations

For more information about what you might see when sharing a sensory story download the guide: [What to look for when sharing a sensory story.](#)

Noting down responses as they occur will support you in noticing change over the long term. This will help you to:

- Recognise when someone is anticipating what happens next in a story.
- Notice if a particular stimuli is being adjusted to.
- Identify sensory preferences, which can then be used to inform the personalization of care for your story experiencer.

Know the person you are sharing the story with.

Understanding the sensory preferences and abilities of the person with whom you are sharing a sensory story will enable you to pitch the story in the best way for your story experiencer.

Tell it again!

This is especially important when sharing a story with Individuals with profound and multiple learning disabilities.

Sensory stimulation is important in its own right, so even if you just tell a sensory story once you are doing a worthwhile thing.

By repeating sensory stories you can promote: cognitive development; anticipation; understanding, communication; the expression of preferences and so much more. To learn more about using sensory stories to support development, communication, understanding and mental well being come on a Sensory Project Training Day, or have a bespoke day created for your setting. See reverse for details.

Do not be scared of repetition. Sensory stories should be a pleasurable experience for tellers and experiencers alike. Enjoy sharing them again and again.

