

Instead Of Workbooks

Classroom Activities For Universal Design

The following is a list of activities, which do not require the use of workbooks. These activities can be adapted to work with themes for language arts, socials or science at various grade levels. These learning activities can be adapted for all learners (e.g., low incidence, high incidence, gifted), as they are open ended and do not rely on workbooks, seat work or direct instruction. The emphasis for students with severe multiple disabilities, is placed on providing opportunities for students to develop communication skills using either voice output or choice making, hand skills, cause and effect using switches, etc. Select and adapt the ideas, which appear to work for your subject areas.

- Listen to a classmate read a story. The student uses the voice output device to indicate: "Turn the page now, please".
- Listen to a story at a listening centre. The student could run the tape recorder with a switch and the AbleNet Powerlink.
- Work with classmates to put on a play. The student uses the voice output device to produce a sound effect or make a statement.

• **Interviews: The student (in the picture) is using his voice output device to ask questions prepared with a classmate. Various classmates are being interviewed.**



- Story Theatre: The classmates take a story and read it to their audience while acting out their respective parts as well. The student can participate with parts or sound effects recorded on the voice output device.
- Present a report for school on the student's voice output device.
- **Tell a joke on the voice output device.**
- Read a short poem to the class, which is recorded on the student's voice output.

- The student "reads" to a buddy by using a switch to activate a tape recorded story when visiting a younger class, the library, or having a turn in the "Author's Chair".

- Record a few different endings to a short story on the voice output device. The student selects different endings and classmates have to act out the story and improvise when the new ending is given. Endings can be silly, dramatic, scary, sad, etc.



- Classmates could write a pattern book with the student. The repetitious portion can be recorded on the student's voice output device and choices made about which one to read.

- The student could keep a diary. Classmates ask questions using pictures or objects to obtain information and record the student's choices.

- The teacher makes up questions for classmates on a topic and pre-recorded on the voice output device and given by the student to peers at a centre, as a research assignment.

- With assistance, the student could make choices in writing a letter to a friend or relative.



- Record a brief description of a story on the voice output device without revealing the title or the characters' names. Classmates try to guess the title of the story.

- Each step of an experiment is recorded on a section of the voice output device. Classmates prompt the student for the next step.

- The student and classmates nominate someone for an award. This can be recorded on the voice output device.

- Classmates could make up riddles based on a story the class is reading, which are recorded on a voice output device. Classmates try to guess the riddles given by the student.



- Classmates construct self-profiles. Questions are posted on the voice output device to interview family. Pictures/objects could be sent in, which have special meaning for the student.

- Make up a spelling crossword puzzle &

record questions (#2 down) on the voice output device. Classmates listen to the clues and fill in the crossword together.

- Create clues for a Treasure Hunt and post on the voice output device to reinforce listening.
- Peers create a story map. Photocopy pictures of the main events in the story. The student could make choices of what comes next.



• Make a mobile related to a classroom, with related pictures or objects. The student sorts which items relate to the theme.

• Make a storyboard with the story is recorded on the voice output. Classmates make figures and move them as the story is told on the voice output device.

• The student uses sponges daubed with paint with stencils made from plastic overhead sheets. Choices can be made about colours. Borders can be made for class bulletin boards.

• Make a T.V. commercial and record the student's speaking part with the help of a classmate on the voice output device

• Use the AbleNet All-Turn-It Spinner or make your own spinner with a fan for the student to use a switch to select numbers for any level of math game for the entire class.

• Make a collage about a theme or topic the class is studying. (e.g., anything to do with fish: fish and chips, frozen fish, aquarium, water scenes, etc.) The student could help rip out pictures from magazines and paste with a glue stick with hand over hand assistance. A switch can also be used with electric scissors operated by a peer.





- Write a song & substitute characters and/or activities with those relating to the theme. (e.g., "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" rewritten with words and phrases about Jupiter).

- **Make a poster to advertise a book the class is studying or for a school event. The student could make choices around the colours, textures and characters used.**

- Use a recipe, which relates to a story or theme, posted on the voice output device. (e.g., for Gingerbread Boys for story; salmon pâté on crackers for Haida Indians) The student uses a switch and Powerlink to operate a mix master.

For more modified classroom ideas refer to "**Let The Switch Do The Talking ...**" for both elementary and secondary levels, as well as "Ideas for Appliances" and "**Switch Accessibility**" ideas for elementary and secondary levels in the program planning section of this website.

With a little flexibility and creativity, all learners can benefit from open-ended learning activities at all grade levels.