

Early years students and children of all ages love to share things that are special to them. If you give them an opportunity to bring something from home, they will jump at the occasion. Perhaps it is the sharing of something that gives a glimpse of who we are, or the chance to talk in front of the class and feel significant among others. Whatever the reason, most people love to talk about themselves and the things in their lives. This lesson will provide students a chance to share something that is meaningful to them and then craft a story around that object. Through this process they will strengthen their speaking and listening skills (story telling), connect with others in our classroom community (building tolerance and acceptance), and practice their writing skills through story writing.

The steps that will be used to accomplish these goals are as follows:

- Students bring something special to them into the classroom; I will encourage them to think hard about the item that they bring – young students will have a tendency to simply bring in their most recent toy. We want them to bring something that provokes emotion, is meaningful and is memorable to them.
- Share item in small groups – we do 4 corner show & tell which has 4 students sitting in the corners of the room. The rest of the class is broken into four groups and they rotate from corner to corner. From this structure, all students get to see the presentations, and the student presenting can feel more comfortable talking to a smaller group. Another benefit is that they will repeat the same speech four times, so that by the last group, they should be experts and predict the type of questions that their audience will ask.
- After 5 days of presentations, all the students will have had an opportunity to share their special thing to the class. The students will then pair together and have one student tell what

they remember about the other's special item. This will test their listening and remembering skills, and also clarify information about the item for the students.

- Once everyone has shared in a small group and in pairs, we will then draw our item in the environment that we think it should be in. Students will be encouraged to give as much detail to their illustration as possible. We will do a gallery walk where students walk around the room and look at other's work. It is not a time for feedback, but rather to share ideas and see if we are on the right track.
- When all the illustrations are done, we will again pair together and tell another student the story that goes with our pictures. This should be fairly simple given the practice we will have already had to this point. The illustration should also help in our story writing process.
- Finally, once we have shared our stories, we will sit down and write what was spoken in pairs. This will be the rough draft of our "special something stories."

Through this process, students will clarify why their object is significant to them and help craft a story around that object. The repetition throughout is intentional for students to internalize their story and become more confident in their storytelling skills. Having an illustration to go along with their object gives the students an extra source of support when telling their story. The process of writing their stories should have become easier with all the verbal practice throughout as well.