

Object Box Inquiry

Before the session, prepare the beginnings of the 'special objects resource box' by collecting a variety of objects to bring into class that represent the sort of things people generally value. For example:

- Photographs
- Jewelry
- Ornaments
- Religious items
- Clothing
- Wedding memento

You will also need a box (a shoebox works well) to keep the items in.

As an interesting discussion point, include some everyday, household objects in the box. Discuss with the learners why these objects might have been included in the box. Are they special too? Can learners think of any everyday items of their own which they consider special?

You could also talk to your local museum about borrowing objects with particularly hidden or interesting stories from their collection to discuss and include in this activity.

These items can form the starting point for a variety of activities around objects, their properties and their meanings. For example:

- Creative activities discussing the objects and what they might mean to different people. For example, the group could be asked to make a list of as many reasons as possible why a certain object would be special enough to be included in the box, or begin to imagine who could own these objects
- Examining the properties of the objects included in the box. How could you sort them according to color, material, shape, size? What do the objects have in common, and what is different about them?
- Are any these objects similar to things you have at home, or things you value? Choose a favorite object and draw it, or write a short story or poem about the object and what it means to you.

Begin to discuss with the group what is missing from the box, or what they might add themselves. As a class, have each person contribute one small item to the box. This box then becomes the basis for a shoebox exchange.