

Activity Boxes

General Information

Boxes -

- are to be used by ALL caregivers
- should contain all materials needed
- must be readily available
- must have instructions and information on the lids
- should be put away when not in use



Examples of Instructions

1. Gather your box and make sure everything is ready... THEN
2. Use a positive approach to engage the person

For people who are interacting with you – (typically Diamonds-Ambers)

- ask for their help or to try
- ask them to do the first step
- show them what to do
- gesture to the objects/task
- work along side them
- encourage talk about old times – remember about... (family, work, hobbies, childhood memories, experiences, background, other times and places and people...)

For people who are looking at your hand or other object (Ambers-Pearls) (- *not* responding to your words)

- call their name again and wait for a response
- offer them an item, if they take it, offer another
- gesture to an object
- touch or tap an object
- show the person what to do, then hand them an object
- offer one object at a time, unless they take over

For people who don't seem to be interested in touching or handling the materials (Rubies & Pearls) -

- do more of the activity next to them or near them – let them watch
- talk about the activity as you do it... OR... if they seem just to want to watch, just do the activity
- offer pieces or parts as you go – NOT forcing them, but offering...
- ask for their input or opinion as you do

3. Give positive feedback - positive regard – thanks – simple praise for efforts & help – sound sincere!



4. If the person *is actively engaged* with the box activity -

AND is interacting with you -

- stay with them and engage them until they are done
- OR excuse yourself and find out if they *need* you there to continue - if so come back

AND is not interacting with you -

- move away from the person and monitor for completion
- check on progress quietly

5. When finished -

- put the box away
- note the session

Letter Code for Functional Abilities: D=diamond E=emerald A=amber R=ruby P=pearl

Positive Physical Approach

- Come from the Front
- Go Slow
- Get to the Side
- Get LOW
- Call out the name
- Offer your hand...
- THEN WAIT...

Examples of Boxes

1. Flower Arranging

Materials -

- artificial flowers cut into single stems (leaves and flowers) - different colors
- plastic glasses or vases
- (optional – add a small drop of different scents to the various flowers)



Possible Activities -

1. sort by color into groups (D-A)
2. make up arrangements (D-A)
3. put arrangements on tables for decorations (D-R)
4. collect flowers and put back into the box (A-R)
5. handle flowers (A-R) – look at them, smell them (R-P)

2. Pipe Construction

Materials -

- Lots of 3/4" or 1" PVC pipe lengths (available at Home Depot or Lowes in 10' lengths - must be cut - can use a hacksaw then sand the ends for smoothness - a high functioning resident may be able to help make this up (D))
- Lots of connectors - 2-way, 3-way, 4-way
- pictures of completed arrangements (for higher level folks)



Possible Activities

1. put pieces together (E-A)
2. put pieces together following a set pattern (D-E)
3. take pieces apart that are already assembled (E-R)
4. use rhythm sticks while singing – or blow into it like a musical instrument (rinse afterward with cleaning solution)
5. sort into different types and sizes (E-A)

3. Sanding Blocks

Materials -

- Several square 2x4" blocks with one side covered with a sheet of sandpaper that is secured with duct tape
- Pieces of wood that can be sanded
- Shapes that can be sanded



Possible Activities

1. sand pieces of wood (D-R)
2. roll sanding paper against one another (A-R)
3. handle the sand paper (A-R)

4. Lotion

Materials - (***) always check for skin allergies prior to doing this activity)

- Different lotions
- Scented lotions
- Unscented lotions



Possible Activities

1. have person apply lotion to self (D-R)
2. apply lotion for the person on arms and hands (A-P)
3. give a 'massage' or 'rub' – with permission – verbal or non-verbal (D-P)

5. Laundry Kit

Materials -

- clothes line
- clothes pins (clip and push on)
- washcloths
- pillow cases
- plastic bottle to put water in - used to wet items so that they need to be hung out
- small laundry basket
- clothespin bag



Possible Activities

1. have someone help you set up clothesline outside (D-E)
2. put clothespins out on the line (E-A)
3. take clothespins off the line (E-A)
4. you wet the items - hang out the wash (D-A)
5. sort clothespins - by color, by type (E-A)
6. take in dry laundry (D-R)
7. fold laundry (E-R)
8. put laundry away in a drawer (E-R)
9. put pillow cases on pillows (D-A)
10. take down clothesline (D-R)
11. hand you the clothespins (A-R)
12. hand you the items to hang up (A-R)
13. take items and put them in a basket as you take them off (A-R)
14. handle the clothes and clothespins (A-P)

6. Office Work (this can be divided into several smaller kits)

Materials

- papers that have fold lines on them (you fold them unfold and stack)
- envelopes
- colored paper - mixed or sorted
- box of paper clips
- stapler with staples
- calculator (hand operated and a electric one, if you can find one)
- pencils
- pencil sharpener
- worksheets
- blunt paper scissors
- tape with dispenser
- small pieces of colored paper, pictures, articles
- file folders
- hanging file holder
- index cards with an index card holder
- rubber bands
- junk mail
- business cards



Possible Activities

1. fold papers (D-E) – if pre-folded – to re-fold (E-A)
2. stuff envelopes (D-A)
3. take papers out of envelopes and open them up (D-E) – two steps (A)
4. sort papers by color (E-A)
5. collate papers (D-E)
6. paper clip papers together (D-E)
7. staple papers together (D-A)
8. file papers into file folders (maybe matching colors, letters, numbers or words) (D-E)
9. put file folders into file folder holder (alphabetically or by words for some) (D-E)
10. use calculator (use sheet of numbers to enter, give simple problems) (D-E)
11. sharpen pencils (D-A)
12. tape pieces of paper or pictures onto page (D-A)

13. cut up paper, cut out pictures, cut out ads (D-A)
14. sort index cards by color (D-A)
15. put index cards into a box - one at a time (E-R)
16. take index cards out of the box (E-A)
17. rubber band index cards (E-A)
18. tape recipes/ads on index cards (D-E)
19. open junk mail (D-A)
20. sort, stack, or file business cards (D-A)

7. Yarn

Materials

- skeins of yarn
- small styrofoam balls to start wrapping yarn around
- knitting already started on large needles
- crocheted work already started - large crochet hook



Possible Activities

1. Wind yarn on ball (E-R)
2. Pull yarn off ball, while you wind it (A-R)
3. Pull yarn off skein while you wind it (D-E)
4. Crochet - single or double (D-E)
5. Pull out crocheted work (D-R)
6. Knit (D-E)
7. Pull out knitted work (D-A)

8. Utensils

Materials

- Sorting tray
- Plastic ware - different colors
- Metal ware
- Drying cloth - dish cloth
- (for some populations) - silverware, silver paste, cleaning rags



Possible Activities

1. put utensils in tray - give sample (E-A)
2. sort utensils by types (knives, forks, spoons) (E-A)
3. sort utensils by color (E-A)
4. place utensils out on tables for meals (E-R)
5. pick up place settings not used and put them away (E-R)
6. wash silverware and dry, then put away (E-A)
7. (for some folks) - polish the silver (D-A)

9. Dusting

Materials

- dust cloth
- lemon spray
- (dusty surfaces are needed for folks with higher skills)
- feather dusters (R at least)



Possible Activities

1. Clear surface to be dusted (D-E)
2. Put spray on rag (D-E)
3. Dust surface (D-A)
4. Wipe surfaces (D-R)
5. Put items back in place (D-E)
6. Dust off surfaces with feather duster (D-A)
7. Run feather duster along walls and blinds (D-E)

10. Nuts and bolts

Materials

- Nuts (vary sizes for some folks)
- Washers (vary sizes for some folks)
- Bolts (vary sizes for some folks)
- Short metal plates with several holes through them
- Pieces of wood with holes drilled through them
- small containers with lids (margarine containers work well)
- crescent wrenches



Possible Activities

1. sort each item by size (D-E)
2. sort by type (washers versus nuts, etc.) (D-A)
3. put together/take apart nuts and bolts (E-A)
4. put together/ take apart nuts, washers, bolts (E-A)
5. put bolts through plates/wood and put on washers and put on nuts (D-A)
6. use wrenches to tighten/loosen bolts and nuts (D-E)

11. Coupon Clipping

Materials

- blunt scissors
- magazines
- food stores flyers
- newspapers
- mailers
- folder
- small boxes
- small accordion file



Possible Activities

1. find coupons (D-E)
2. cut out coupons (D-A)
3. sort coupons (D-E)
4. file coupons (D-E)
5. talk about coupons (D-E)
6. talk about food (D-A)
7. talk about sales (D-E)

12. Folding & Hanging Clothing

Materials

- variety of clothing items (Goodwill) - many of same things
- small laundry basket
- plastic hangers
- 'hanging' rack



Possible Activities

1. fold items - put in basket or drawer (D-A)
2. put items on hangers(D-E)
3. hang items (D-A)
4. button buttons (D-A)

13. Window Washing

Materials

- spray bottle of water OR water with a small amount of white vinegar
- paper towels
- newspaper
- bag for trash



Possible Activities

1. spray windows (D-A)
2. wipe windows with paper towels (D-R)
3. wipe windows with newspaper (D/R)
4. put used paper in trash bag (E-R)

14. Sweeping Up

Materials

- broom
- dust pan
- vacuum cleaner



Possible Activities

1. sweep floor (D-R)
2. hold dust pan (D-A)
3. run vacuum (D-R)

15. Car Care

Materials

- cleaning rags
- soap
- buckets
- squeegee
- polishing cloths
- wax
- window cleaner
- brushes
- hose
- nozzle
- magazines or catalogs with cars
- calendars with cars on them



Possible Activities

1. wash cars (D-R)
2. supervising washing cars (D-A)
3. wash windows of cars (D-A)
4. talk about cars (D-A)
5. wax cars (D-A)
6. dry cars (D-R)
7. clean wheels (D-A)
8. look at car calendars (D-P)
9. look at care catalogs (D-P)

16. Snack Making

Materials

- butter knife
- pitcher
- cup measure
- stirring spoon
- tray
- napkins
- paper cups
- paper plates
- supplies for preferred drinks and snacks



Possible Activities

1. make drink (D-E)
2. make snack (D-A)
3. serve drink(D-E)
4. serve snack (D-E)
5. clean-up after snack (D-R)
6. deliver snacks (D-R)

17. Stuffed Animals

Materials

- small stuffed animals of various types
- brushes and combs
- ribbons
- collars



Possible Activities

1. holding and petting (A-P)
2. brushing (A-R)
3. stroking(A-P)
4. setting them out (E-R)
5. putting ribbons on them (E-A)
6. putting collars on them (E-A)
7. talking about animals and pets (D-A)
8. sharing them with someone else (D-R)

18. Hot Socks

Materials

- long sports socks
- large bag of uncooked rice
- large bag of dry beans
- large mouth funnel
- plastic measuring cup
- dried herbs (lavender, rosemary, lemon thyme...)
- (use of a microwave)
- basket to carry heated socks



Possible Activities

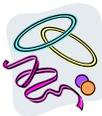
1. Make up socks (D)
2. help pour rice/beans into socks (D-E)
3. hold socks(E-R)
4. hold funnel (A-R)
5. measure rice/beans (D-E)
6. select herbs to use (D-A)
7. crush dried herbs (D-A)
8. put herbs in sock (D-E)
9. tie knot in sock OR tie sock with a ribbon (D-E)
10. help microwave sock - P-R minutes on high (D-E)

11. share socks with others (D-R)
 12. hold onto sock(A-P)
 13. put sock on shoulders, lap, arms, neck (D-P)
 14. get a massage with the sock (D-P)
 15. give you a massage with a sock (D-A)
 16. empty out socks for another day (D-A) ***
- *** of course you can keep them, if you don't want to make them up over and over

19. Button or Ribbon Sort

Materials

- large assortment of buttons or ribbons
- lots of small containers
- small baggies



Possible Activities

1. sort buttons/ribbons into piles or containers (D-A)
2. simplify sorting to match the person's abilities (A)
3. have person put all buttons/ribbons back into one container (E-A)
4. handle and count or move buttons from one container to another (D-E)

20. Coin Sort

Materials

- large number of coins
- coin rolls
- containers
- plastic coin holders (they have preset levels for what goes in a roll)
- 'piggy bank' or other container with slit in the top of it



Possible Activities

1. Sort coins (D-E)
2. Count out coins (D-E)
3. Put coins in rolls (D-A)
4. Handle the money(D-A)
5. Put coins in a piggy bank (E-R)
6. Give you coins to put in the rolls (A-R)

21. Shoe Cleaning

Materials

- Dull/dirty shoes or boots (Goodwill or Thrift Stores are good resources)
- polish
- cleaning rags
- polishing brush



Possible Activities

1. clean shoes (D-A)
2. polish shoes (D-E)
3. brush off shoes (D-A)
4. shine shoes (D-A)
5. pair up shoes (E-A)

22. Music Time

Materials

- CDs from the 20's, 30's, 40's
- Song sheets (mostly for you)
- CD player



Possible Activities

1. singing (D-P)
2. dancing (D-R)
3. talking about memories (D-A)
4. relaxing (D-P)
5. encouraging folks to come to a given location (E-R)
6. encouraging folks to stay in a given location (E-R)

23. Socks Sort

Materials

- lots of socks of the same type
- lots of socks of different colors or types
- small basket



Possible Activities

1. sort socks by color (D-A)
2. sort socks by type (D)
3. pair up socks (D-A)
4. fold/roll pairs (D-A)
5. put socks in a drawer (D-R)
6. put paired socks in the basket (E-R)

24. Pillow Stuffing

Materials

- small sewn pillows with one end open
- small sewn pillows – one end open with gathering cord at that end
- long tube socks
- bags of polyester stuffing material
- safety pins, diaper pins or clothespins
- pieces of ribbon or cord



Possible Activities

1. stuff pillows (D-A)
2. safety pin pillows shut (D-E)
3. draw cord and tie it to close pillow end (D-E)
4. stuff socks (D-A)
5. tie socks shut at various points along the length making a 'caterpillar' type creature (D-E)

25. Nail Care Kits

Materials

- Washcloths (some for wet and some for dry)
- basin to put warm wet washcloths in
- bag for used washcloths
- polish
- polish remover
- cotton balls and pads
- orange sticks
- emery boards
- nail clippers
- soaking dishes
- water pitcher
- lotion
- sealable bags to put used polish remover pads in (smell)



Possible Activities

1. do hand warm soaks with warm wet washcloth wraps (D-P)
2. dry hands (D-P)
3. clean around and under nails(D-P)
4. apply lotion to nail areas and hands (D-P)
5. remove old polish from nails (D-P)
6. help with nail care, or have nail care done (D-P)
7. select preferred color (D-A)
8. help apply polish or have it applied (D-P)
9. admire one another's nails(D-R)
10. have the person do your nails (D-E)
11. paint toe nails (unless medical condition prohibits it) (D-R)

26. **Foot Care Kits** (**make sure there are not conditions prohibiting foot care)

Materials

- basin
- towels
- baby oil
- lotion
- washcloths
- foot massage machine (available at drug stores and 'Walmart'- type stores) – must be cleaned between people and uses



Possible Activities

1. soak feet (might put some oil in the water) (D-R)
2. rub feet (D-P)
3. dry feet (D-P)
4. put lotion on feet (D-P)
5. do a foot massage (D-P)

27. **Newspaper Box**

Materials

1. newspapers
2. ad inserts
3. paper bags (folded)



Possible Activities

1. read the paper (D-E)
2. look at pictures (D-A)
3. open out the paper
4. tear paper into long strips (top to bottom) – for paper mache projects) (D-R)
5. crumple paper into balls (D-R)
6. throw newspaper balls into a basket or a paper bag (D-A)
7. have a 'snowball fight' (D-A)
8. clean up after the game or 'snow ball' activity (D-R)
9. stuff pillow cases or 'scarecrow' with wadded paper (D-R)

28. Egg Hunt

Materials

- plastic buckets with handles
- plastic eggs
- plastic grass
- treats for the eggs (make sure all participants can eat what is in the eggs)
- empty egg cartons



Possible Activities

1. put items in eggs and close them up (D-E)
2. hide eggs (D-E)
3. hunt eggs(D-A)
4. pick up eggs and put in basket (E-R)
5. open eggs(D-A)
6. eat treats (D-R)
7. carry baskets (D-R)
8. fill egg cartons with plastic eggs – sorted by color (D & E), in general (A & R)

29. Market Basket – Clean up

Materials

- basket with handles
- stuff to collect and pick up



Possible Activities

1. carry basket (E-R)
2. collect items (E-A)
3. put things in basket (E-R)
4. put things away (E-A)

30. Grocery Put-Away

Materials

- small cans of vegetables and fruit
- boxes of food - rice, macaroni and cheeses....
- grocery bags
- (area with shelves)



Possible activities

1. carry grocery bags of food (D-R)
2. put groceries up on shelves or on low shelves (D-R)
3. sort cans and boxes by type(D-E)
4. put items away in locations to match (D-E)

31. Paper Airplanes

Materials

- recycled office paper
- marked paper with simple fold patterns
- markers – water based
- paints – water based
- brushes
- sponges
- paper plates or plastic plates for paint
- newspaper for table top covering during painting/coloring



Possible Activities

1. Make simple paper airplanes out of used/recycled paper (E-D)
2. Fold airplanes that have been pre-folded (A-D)
3. Fly airplanes (R-D)
4. Fly planes at targets (E-D)
5. Paint airplanes with brushes or sponge print (A-D)
6. Color airplanes with markers (A-D)