

## Life Stories

*From "Montessori-Based Activities for Persons with Dementia, Volume 2"*

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Purpose: Promote conversation and communication skills; Promote reading; Promote socialization

### MATERIALS

- Paper
- Pen
- Access to computer & printer



### SETUP

None required. However, ask permission to collect a participant's life stories from the person responsible for the participant before doing this activity.

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Tell the participant that you would like to collect some stories about their life.
2. Ask the participant to tell you a story about something amusing that happened to them as a child.
3. Write down the story and ask if you could type it out and print it.
4. Print out the story using large (40-48 pt), bold type and a sans serif font such as Arial or Helvetica.
5. Ask the participant to read the story aloud to you.



*ATTENTION: Obtain prior permission for sharing stories from the person responsible for the participant's care. Do not share stories with others if the individual may be made to feel anxious, embarrassed, or uncomfortable in any way.*

## **EXTENSIONS**

- Ask the participant to tell you another story about their life that they would like to share.

## **HORIZONTAL PROGRAMMING**

- Ask the participant to read large print stories aloud to individuals with vision impairments.

## **VERTICAL PROGRAMMING - DOWNWARD EXTENSION**

- If a participant cannot read, follow steps 1-4 above. Then, let them participate in a **GROUP ACTIVITY** in which they can listen to and discuss the stories as they are read by others.

## **VERTICAL PROGRAMMING - UPWARD EXTENSION**

- Have participants read stories about their childhood to children as an intergenerational activity.
- Have participants tell stories about when their children or grandchildren were growing up. Have them read those family stories aloud to their grandchildren or great grandchildren.
- Have participants compose and print out for themselves a collection of life stories and/or family stories that can be given as a gift to their children or grandchildren.

## **PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS**

P: A participant cannot read.

S: See if these participants can orally present stories (you may have to prompt to help them remember key story elements).

S: Have them participate by listening and commenting as stories are read by you or other participants.

P: A participant does not want to relate their stories.

S: Have them read and/or listen to life stories written by you or other participants.

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