

I've Made Out a Will

(Simon Armitage)

Through reading this poem, the student will be listening and responding to sensory stimuli associated with it. They will use their individual communication systems to communicate whether they want more or to finish, taking some control over their environment and engaging with the supporting adult, who will know how the student communicates.

You will need:

- Hand mirror
- Jelly (any flavour, through preferably set) and/or syrup
- Loaf of bread (still in its wrapper)
- Bowl of small objects (e.g. M&Ms, Smarties, marbles)
- Blueberries (or bilberries)
- Toy stethoscope (optional)
- Metal bric-à-brac (no sharp objects)
- Plastic clock face
- Ribbons, wool and/or laces.
- Ticking clock sound effect (e.g. Switch, YouTube, MP3):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ppH0ZdcumgI>
- A bag to contain all of the above and which the student will explore before the story begins

1. Tell the student(s) that they are going to use:
 - Their ears to listen
 - Their eyes to look
 - Their noses to smell
 - Their hands to feelAdult models pointing to each and supports the student(s) to touch their own.
2. Continue by saying we are going to listen to a poem. Show each student their story bag allowing them to feel and smell saying, "*(Student's name), it's story time.*"
3. Support student(s) to feel, touch and smell the story bag as a cue to the activity.
4. Introduce the poem, telling the student(s) it is about a person who wants to help others after he is gone.
5. Read the poem slowly, allowing time for the student(s) to lead the session by giving them time to explore.

The Poem

*I've made out a will; I'm leaving myself
to the National Health.*

ENCOURAGE THE STUDENT TO LOOK AT THEIR REFLECTION IN A MIRROR; THIS IS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO REINFORCE EXPRESSIONS FOR BASIC EMOTIONS, E.G. HAPPY, SAD, etc.

*I'm sure they can use
the jellies and tubes and syrups and glues,*

EXPLORE THE TASTE, SMELL AND FEEL OF JELLY AND/OR SYRUP.

the web of nerves and veins, the loaf of brains,

ENCOURAGE THE STUDENT TO SQUEEZE A LOAF WITH THEIR HANDS, EXPLORING ITS SPRINGINESS WHEN THEY SQUEEZE IT AND LET GO.

and assortment of fillings and stitches and wounds,

EXPLORE SMALL OBJECTS (e.g. M&MS, SMARTIES, MARBLES) IN A BOWL, SWIRLING THEM AROUND THE BOWL AND LETTING THEM DROP FROM THEIR HAND(S) BACK INTO THE BOWL.

blood - a gallon exactly of bilberry soup -

TASTE AND SMELL BILBERRIES (LIKE SMALL BLUEBERRIES); SQUEEZE THEM TO LET JUICE RUN THROUGH THE STUDENT'S FINGERS.

*the chassis or cage or cathedral of bone;
but not the heart, they can leave that alone.*

IF APPROPRIATE, AND USING HAND-OVER-HAND, ALLOW THE STUDENT TO FEEL THEIR OWN (AND YOUR) HEARTBEAT; USE A TOY STETHOSCOPE (OPTIONAL) TO ALLOW THEM TO LISTEN TO THEIR HEARTBEAT.

*They can have the lot, the whole stock:
the loops and coils and sprockets and springs and rods,*

EXPLORE A RANGE OF METAL BRIC-A-BRAC (WHICH DOES NOT NECESSARILY HAVE TO RESEMBLE THE OBJECTS DESCRIBED IN THESE LINES).

*the twines and cords and strands,
the face, the case, the cogs and the hands,*
PLAY WITH A PLASTIC CLOCK FACE; RIBBONS, WOOL AND/OR LACES.

*but not the pendulum, the ticker;
leave that where it stops or hangs.*

HELPING THE STUDENT (HAND-OVER-HAND), CREATE PENDULAR MOVEMENTS (SWINGING BACK AND FORTH) WITH A ROD-LIKE OBJECT OR A WEIGHTED LENGTH OF STRING; PLAY A TICKING CLOCK SOUND EFFECT USING A SWITCH, YOUTUBE OR MP3.

Tell the student the poem is over; support them to help pack their bag as cue to the end of the session.

I would be grateful for any feedback you would care to provide about this sensory story or others you may have read with your child or young person. In particular, I am interested in comments regarding how well the more *challenging* texts (such as the above, as well as *Much Ado about Nothing* and *Macbeth*) have been adapted into sensory texts. Please email me here: plegowski@ellentinkham.devon.sch.uk or add your comments to Evidence for Learning.