

## Creating Multilingual Story Sacks

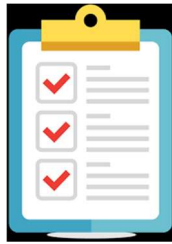


Commercially available storysack

*By using and creating dual language (home language and L2) texts, children can develop literacy skills in both their home language and the language of instruction. These 'plurilingual' approaches increase children's language awareness, so using many languages can be a positive learning experience for all (Catibusic-Finnegan, Bronagh, 2017)*

*Recognizing children's home languages is an important aspect of intercultural education . Educators should encourage migrant parents to maintain their home languages and enable families to support their children's vocabulary development through meaningful conversations, story-telling, reading, and play. Children's linguistic and cultural identities should be affirmed by creating inclusive environments, where words in all languages become foundations for learning. (Catibusic-Finnegan, Bronagh, 2017)*

Creating storysacks with parents and children in your classroom is an excellent way to encourage parental involvement, develop the home learning environment and promote literacy. It is an inclusive activity that can be done with all parents. It is especially useful for supporting the home language of children who are acquiring the instructional language. Families can choose culturally recognisable and familiar materials to add to their storysack.



## Plan

1. Make a list of outcomes you hope to achieve by doing this activity.
2. Organise parents to take part in activity- decide on whether this will be a school based or home-based activity.
3. Book choice- decide on whether to use one book for the whole class or let children/parents choose the book (can be multilingual, home language or instructional language). You can always do both. E.g. have a school-based activity where all parents use the same book as a demonstration and then children can choose their own books to use at home.
4. Source a selection of materials that can be added to story sacks, these can be purchased, collected from home or found online.
5. Have examples of story-sacks available for parents and children to look at.

6. Make a list of categories of items that can be included in the story sack- e.g. props (cars, toys, figures, etc, empty cereal boxes etc. tea sets), activities or games which could link with the story (homemade snakes and ladders game), factual books that link to the story (e.g. Where does water come from? Frogs, baking cakes). Remember, most things can be made and added to story sack, there is no need for families to buy additional items).
7. Create a simple set of directions for parents/children, if you have parents/staff who can translate into different languages, you can have dual/multilingual instructions. Include images of each step (this will also help parents with literacy issues and language barriers.)
8. Model the use of the story sack- If you decide to have a school-based activity, this can be done during circle time, you can build this modelling into your activity plan. If you choose to do a home-based activity, you could create a video of a teacher using the story sack or take a series of photographs of the teacher to create a visual aid.
9. Plan your evaluation/ review- how do I know the activity was successful/enjoyable/supported parents/have I fulfilled the desired outcomes/what have the children learned.



Do

10. Once you have planned your activity, put it into practice (school based or home based)



Example of home-made storysack



## Review

11. Use your planned evaluation process to review the desired outcomes.



## Reference

Catibusic-Finnegan, Bronagh (2017): Supporting multilingual children's literacy development. MLM-  
make literacy meaningful: <http://euliteracy.eu/supporting-language-acquisition-multilingual-environments/>

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