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Creating & Using Remnant Books for Self-Selected Writing

(Compiled by Hanser, 2004)

What & Why?

Remnant books are a visual/tactual way of helping students record important events in their lives. Remnant books can easily be created using inexpensive “brag books” or mini photo albums. Students can pick a familiar remnant to set a topic for face-to-face communication (Beukelman & Mirenda, 2005). Remnant books are also an excellent way for students to select a topic for writing (Musselwhite & Hanser, 2003).

How?

Adding Things to the Remnant Book

Each time the student participates in some type of event, get an object, symbol or picture from that event. The student should be involved in deciding what goes in the remnant book. The events don't have to be the student's favorite; they can also be things the student does not like.

Examples of remnants: Movie ticket stubs, pieces of napkins or containers from fast food restaurants, pictures from parties or holidays, pamphlet or business card from doctor's office visit...

Place the remnants in the brag book. With a post it note, briefly write the date and the key details of the event in first person language (“I got my haircut...”). If possible, it's important to include multiple details as this will provide more context for the unfamiliar communication partner. This will help them talk about the remnant and the event with the student, and ask more appropriate open-ended questions.

Tips: Keep extra blank post it notes in the back of the book for adding things on the fly!

Using the Remnant Book

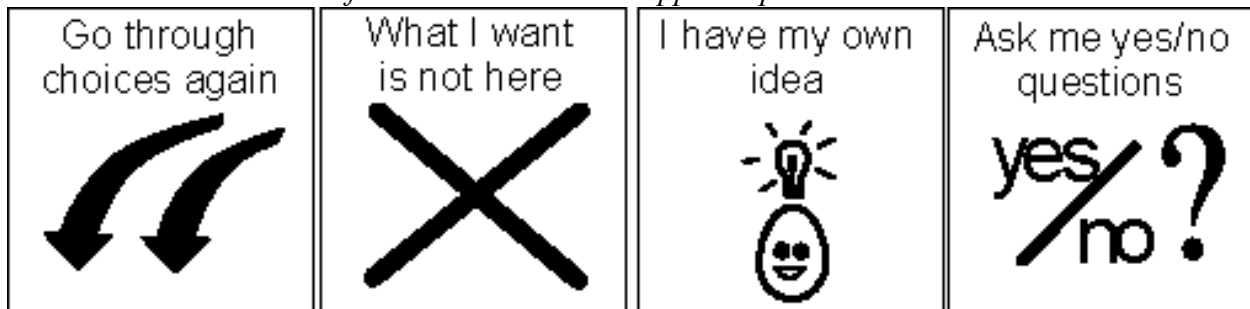
When the student chooses to write, they can use the remnant book to select a topic. Students should use whatever access method is easiest to do this (i.e. manually turning the pages, eye gaze and/or partner assisted scanning).

When an item is chosen, a copy of it can be made and placed on the writing. Consider leaving the remnants in the book, as the student may want to return to this topic and write about it again.

What Happens If the Student Doesn't Choose Anything?

When this occurs, it is important to include a way for the student to communicate this. To support this, symbols should be included on the back page to help the student indicate: “Go through my choices again, What I want is not here,” “I have my own idea,” or “Ask me yes/no questions.”

Paste these into the back of the remnant book to support topic selection:



Beukelman, D. R. & Mirenda, P. (2005). *Augmentative & Alternative Communication: Supporting Children & Adults with Complex Communication Needs*, 3rd edition. Paul H. Brookes: Baltimore, MD.

Musselwhite, C. & Hanser, G. (2003). *Write to Talk-Talk to Write!: Supporting Language & Literacy for AAC Users*, 2nd edition. Special Communications: Phoenix, AZ.