



## Story Swap Activity Guide: Using objects to create meaning and belonging

This guide shows how simple objects can be used in activities with care home residents that build connections with fellow residents and care workers.

### Group activity

20 minutes sharing, followed by creative response with collage (20-45mins).

Sessions work best at 30-45 minutes in total but could be split into two with a tea and cake break in the middle!

There is no right or wrong way of making creative responses.

### Preparation

- Create the right environment – make sure the television is off if you are in a communal space.
- Collect all the objects and other materials in advance.
- Seat everyone in a circle and go around asking people to introduce themselves (if they don't already know each other).
- Create a relaxed atmosphere by letting people know they can come and go if they need to.

### Steps and things you will need:

- ask residents to select an object which reminds them of something, it could be a memory, a holiday, a favourite place. The object itself might have been given by someone special. For example it could be a handbag, a pair of glasses, a special necklace or watch, or if you have time, perhaps a photograph from residents' rooms or small ornament
- a table or tray to place the objects on.

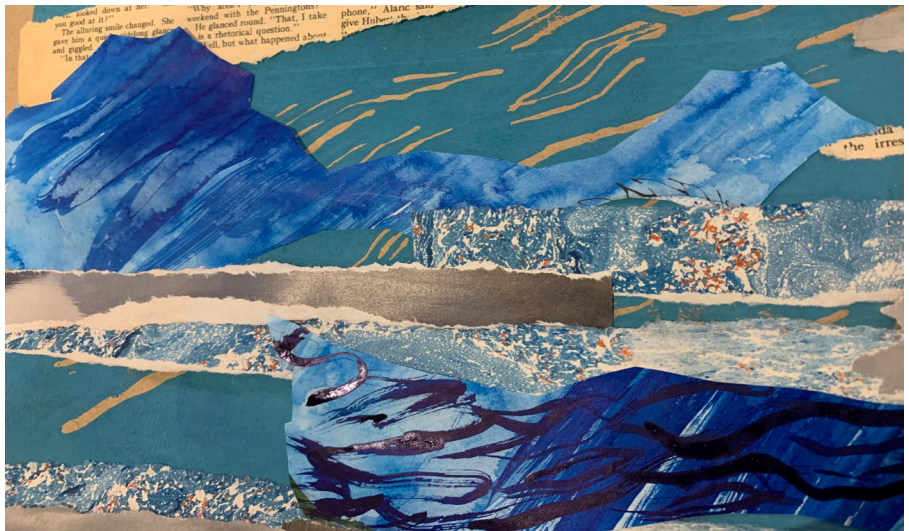
### To get started

- Put the objects on the tray or table.
- Have a conversation around each object. Ask the residents to talk about what it means to them. What response does it bring up for the others in the group? How does it make the residents feel?
- It can help to demonstrate by going first, to give a sense of what you'd like them to share.



## Other creative activities to do with objects:

- add paint, drawing, oil pastels to the list of materials that the residents use to create the work
- some local museums have handling boxes with objects that can stimulate conversations from history
- you could choose to create a story with one of the objects – what journey might the object have been on? Who else might have owned it?



### Follow with collage...

Collage is a piece of art created by sticking together various different materials such as photographs, pieces of paper or fabric onto a backing.

Materials: magazines, coloured paper, newspaper, glue and scissors.

If available, you could take photographs on phones of people's objects and print them to cut out and stick on the collage as part of a story image.

### Next

Using the object as inspiration, cut out text, images, paper etc. to create a collage representing something about that object's story.

Lay out the cut outs first, and rearrange to work out the best layout before gluing.

### Finish...

Show and tell – ask the residents to talk about the work they've created and share if it has changed their perspective on the original object and story they told.

### Adaptability... Ways to adapt for less able residents:

- less able residents can still take part fully, but it might be better to work one to one with them rather than in a group
- to generate a collage, work with a resident by cutting out collage shapes and then composing the image by asking for feedback on where things should go, or placing pre-cut shapes, words and coloured paper in front of the resident so they can make their own collage
- using a digital copy of the object they chose, or a photograph of themselves or family can help to build interest and pride in the work they are creating.

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