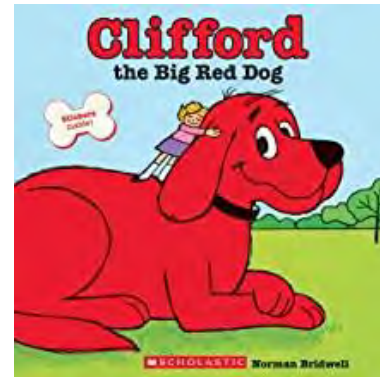# Clifford The Big Red Dog

A Parent's Guide to Using an Experience Box

Experience boxes provide a way for children with limited formal communication skills to share in the experience of literacy while developing vocabulary and concepts. Using real objects or object symbols, children with limited communication skills can explore, match, and share these objects as they refer to the story with others. Experience boxes can be used with children of all ages and abilities.

Recommended Lesson Plan

- Allow your child to first explore the items in the box, let them become familiar with the shapes and textures of the items. Familiarity is important for learning.
- Select Clifford the Big Red Dog on www.dbcentral.org – Or choose to read the enclosed book with your child on your own.
- Utilize objects in the experience box to have a conversation about the pictures and the words in the book. Allow your child to handle the object, play with it, learn and come to understand the shapes and textures of the objects. If available, provide a real life example of the item. For example, pull out a pair of shoes or if you have a dog in the home, use those to compare sizes and colors; see if you can explore your personal vehicle in some way with your child.
- As you watch the "Story Time Video", or read the book together, pull objects from the experience box as they are presented in the story. Allow your child to try to find objects that match the pictures and identify objects by practicing vocabulary. Mutually explore the object, if possible, talk, have a conversation about the objects and the story. Remember that touching the object together is a simple conversation. Hold Clifford and the smaller dogs and allow them to "bark" loudly and softly. Put the giant Clifford dog in his dog house and now compare the size when you put Emily Elizabeth's small dog in the dog house. Talk about how big Clifford really is! Velcro the giant shoe to Clifford's mouth like he is tearing it from the storybook. Play with the characters of the story to reenact the story.
- Conversation starters
  - Did you like the story?
  - What did you like about the story?
  - What is your favorite object?
  - Did the objects help you understand the story better?
- After the video is finished, continue to talk and interact with the objects. Communicate with your child about the objects throughout your day.
  - For example, Would you ever want a red dog? Would you ever want a giant dog like Clifford? What do you prefer, small or big dogs? Did you see the giant shoe? Is your shoe bigger or smaller?

NOTE: The objects in these particular boxes are all SYMBOLS for real items. If you can collect and provide the real and actual item (for example provide a real shoe or if you have access to a dog) the concept will be more understood and broadened to the greater environment.

A Parent's Guide to Accessing Story Time Videos and Vocabulary

- Log on to www.dbcentral.org
- On the right side, click on the "Story Time" tab
- Scroll down until you find the book that you have borrowed.
- Click on the video thumbnail to access the story in ASL and spoken English or practice the vocabulary using the tools provided under "Vocabulary Development."

A Note on the ASL Vocabulary Video

The vocabulary is presented by a native signer in a pure form of American Sign Language (ASL). Sometimes, two or more signs are required to capture the concept behind the English word. If you need clarification on any of the signs, please contact DB Central for assistance at dbcen@cmich.edu.

DB Central Can Help

Project staff are able to schedule a virtual meeting to help brainstorm how to use the experience box with your child and/or to teach them new vocabulary and concepts. Signs can be learned using vision and/or touch.

When You Are Finished with this Experience Box

Please collect all of the listed items (see back of plastic lid or tag on the bag) and place them back into the provided container. Contact DB Central at dbcen@cmich.edu for mail pickup at your front door.