

One amazing tool for helping students generalize vocabulary: Personal Pages

Supplies:

1. Colored markers
2. 3-hole punched paper
3. 3-ring binder

To get the story started:

1. If the student is verbal, ask what's happening for them that day/week
2. If the student is nonverbal and you know what they love, write about that
3. If the student is nonverbal and you don't know their interests, ask the parent to send in a topic for that week's personal page
4. Ask the student to choose a marker color of his/her choice for you to use when you write the story

To write the story:

1. We're teaching language and grammar, so write a page of text that's grammatically correct; don't take literal dictation from the student.
2. Write in very large, very neat **print** with double-to-triple spacing between words. Make sure your printing is extra clear and easy to read.
3. Leave extra spacing between the lines of your text.
4. Write at the literacy level of the student, using familiar reading vocabulary, both that which is learned and that which is still being mastered; the high interest topic words will be the "new words". This is a good way to both generalize learned vocabulary and add a few new ones.
5. Remember that you're going for repetition, repetition, repetition of vocabulary.

How long should it be?

1 or 2 pages, depending on the student's reading ability.

How often should I create a personal page?

1. Once a week.
2. Make a copy and send it home with the student for parents' homework. Homework: the child reads the page to a family member each day.
3. Collect the student's personal pages in a 3-ring binder; it makes a great vocabulary review tool.

Sample:

(This is a real sample; I handwrote it for the student, but will type it for you here. Notice the spaces between words and the repetition of vocabulary. The font below is Chalkboard, a good one to use if you don't trust your handwriting and you're going to do it on computer. Also note that I did not doubt the truthfulness of the end of her story...It's *her* story, so I told it her way!)

My Tooth

This weekend, food got stuck

in my teeth. It was chicken

that got stuck in my teeth.

And it hurt! It hurt a lot.

So Mama got the dental

floss out, and Daddy helped,

and my brother Bryan and my

dog Ruby helped get it out.