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Please stand by for realtime captions.

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Hello. This is Jake.? Hello. How are you feeling?

Good. You?

Good. I feel good. MA to login?

No matter much better.

I have got the microphone further away from my face so that should help. I have actually been in the meeting -- visually, I was just having trouble with a microphone and then the office is not mine, so anyways, when I first got on, I saw that you are looking for the cues for the polling questions, which I just put in there. Do you have any questions for me before the session starts?

I do not think so. Well, maybe. For any questions that appear in the chat, should I just save those until the end or are you going to explain to people went to ask questions?

I'm going to explain to people went to ask questions at the beginning, and then, once you are done with the presentation, that is when we will -- I will go to the chat -- the questions that have come into the chat throughout the presentation, I will keep track of the chat session and you do not have to worry about that. I will relay the questions to you so you will hear them coming from me so I will say, Jennifer, wanted to know a question. And then I will just give it to you.

Okay. And is that portion recorded as well? Do you stop at that point?

That is recorded as well.

Okay.

[ Pause ]

Please stand by for realtime captions.

I am going to let people in and about one minute or two. So we can get ready.

Please stand by for realtime captions.

All right. I am going to let them in.

Okay.

Please stand by for realtime captions.

I just want to welcome everyone who is joining the meeting. Real Life Learning, the webinar session today. As you sign in, feel free to utilize the chat box and let us know where you are joining us from. And what your job title is. We will begin in about two more minutes. To allow others to join the session. So again, if you will, utilize the chat box and let us know who you are and your job title, where you are joining us from. Thank you.

So, it is 4 PM Eastern time. We will now begin the session. This session is being recorded. Welcome to Perkins e-learning webinar series, today is Wednesday, July 8, 2015. My name is Dave Morris. I welcome to today's presentation. Real Life Learning, making the most out of every day and special activities presented by Beth Kennedy. Perkins Act shows e-learning webinars presented throughout the year on a monthly basis and you can register to attend live at no charge or read -- view the recorded webinars at a time and place that suits your schedule to the webinar series is one of the offerings in our professional development program, which includes publications, newsletters, webcast, online and in-person classes, and self-paced study. You can see the entire listing at her website, and today's presentation by Beth Kennedy will focus on Real Life Learning and strategies that can be used to capture the essence of a activity and expense learning into the future and also include ways to share expenses between a student home and school settings, integral part of building skills and concepts. Before we get started, a couple of things about the technology. One, to keep noise levels in control, we have muted your lines. The question and answer space will be provided on the screen shortly and we encourage you to post your questions as they occur to you during the webinar and we will address them at the end in the Q&A session. Two, we are using this virtual meeting room for audio, make sure that the volume is on and turned up, external speakers or personal headphones will give you the best audio. Three, you do have individual controls for your screen for both audio as well as video. Part of this introduction is to give you time to make adjustments as you need them. Four, audio and video may not be in 6 and wireless connections team -- tend to be sketchy. Five, this event will be recorded, it will be available tomorrow for the on the Perkins website including a PDF version of the slide presentation that you will see. Lastly, thank you for joining us for this event, we appreciate your feedback and your topic suggestions. And now, it is my pleasure to introduce today's speaker, Beth Kennedy was worked in the field of deaf-blindness for 24 years, working in the deaf-blind apartment at Perkins School for the Blind and graduated from Boston College in her teaching training program in deaf-blindness prior to taking the job consulting for the Florida death line project. She is currently the direction of DeafBlind Central, Michigan's training and resource project and teachers American sign language classes at Central Michigan University. While she addresses a variety of topics when consulting, her primary focus is intervention. She has led teams to developing for open hands, open access, OHOA, intervener trainer modules for the National Center on Deaf-Blindness, the NCDB, excuse me -- and has made notable progress in increasing the number of intervenors working in Michigan. Welcome, Beth.

Thank you, Jim. Welcome everyone today. I'm very happy to be here to share a little bit about Real Life Learning and how to capitalize on that and extended learning from a one moment into the future. Students who are deaf-blind and their multiple disabilities benefit best from. So today, my learning objectives -- I am hoping that all of you will have a better understanding of the value of the life learning opportunities, and I think that Real Life Learning is often underestimated, and we get caught up in bells and whistles. When so much can be learned and gain from just our everyday activities.

You will be familiar with strategies to help build on the educational value of those everyday activities. And special activities as well. Finally, you will learn ways to capitalize on Real Life Learning activities across home and school environments. And my consultation, when school team, I am very adamant that families be included and that we work together, hand in hand, and collaborate to you the best of our abilities to remove the needs -- to meet the needs of students who are deaf-blind about is great homeschool communication and sharing techniques and strategies between environment.

What -- without further ado, I'm going to start off by saying, what is Real Life Learning? I want us all to be on the same page. I mean that learning that happens in the moment, doing actual activities, they are not contrived seatwork types of activities. They are functional, they are real-life. And I do not just mean schedules and things that happen at school but activities of daily living that are integral to home life. Moments of having fun, just about anything that occurs in our everyday life.

Doctor Barbara McLetchie who was my grad school advisor and teacher at Perkins -- at Boston College and continues to be a mentor and friend today -- she says, to live, to love, to work, and to play. That is how she summarizes Real Life Learning, and I think that that is almost a predicate definition of what we're talking about.

-- A poetic definition of what we're talking about.

So why would we use Real Life Learning? We know for many years of implementation of practice that children who are deaf-blind are more motivated to communicate and learn in naturally occurring situations. When we try to contrived lessons, it is very difficult to keep students engaged and motivated a learning. So using what is happening, day to day, can really get students more involved.

It can help them as in the second bullet, to generalize their knowledge and skills beyond the classroom setting. Then, contrived lessons are difficult to make meaningful and engaging for the population of students who are deaf-blind and students with multiple disabilities.

So before we get to -- too much further along, we need to talk about -- what exactly do we mean by meaningful? I like to think in terms of these three questions. Will the skills and activity benefit this learner into the future? It is never too early to start thinking about the future when we are talking about kids who are deaf-blind, because learning sometimes takes a lot longer and sometimes years, and we need to look at what is going to be necessary for success down the road, and start building those important skills now.

Then, will the learner and joy him or herself because of this activity? Remember what Barbara McLetchie says. To live, to love, and we all are more motivated to do things that we are having fun doing, that we enjoy doing, so we need to make sure that we make the most of those moments.

No matter how trivial they might seem, they can be built upon. And then, if the learner does not acquire the skill, will someone else have to do it? Are you going to be building upon their ability to be independent to require less and less support by focusing on this?

All right. Now, we know what Real Life Learning is and how we are defining a meaningful. So how do we make the most of it? Any time that we have an activity, we want to build vocabulary and skills. There is no better way to practice those then in Real Life Learning. IEP goals and objectives can be met by just doing your everyday activities. A lot of times, when I go into a school to consult, I will say, you know, let's about -- when a student arrives at school, and they have to take off their coat and put their bag and things into the locker, how many IEP goals and objectives can just be mad right there in terms of fine motor, gross motor skills, communication development? Let's build on that. Then we can move on from there.

Of course, using schedules, experience boxes, experience books, recipes, journaling, those will help you to capitalize on these real-life, everyday activities. I am going to spend some time talking about each of those things.

All right. So schedules. Very important for a lot of reasons. Schedules will give a clear beginning, middle, and end to each activity. So the day will not be full of gray areas and kind of bland altogether. Each activity and will be defined, which is critical. We are going to start out looking at an object schedule. It is what the name implies. It is the use of objects to let someone know the activities that will be occurring in their day. On this site, I have a photograph that includes four white boxes that are about the size of shoeboxes. Within each of those, there is a whole actual objects, including a water bottle, a washcloth, some nail polish, and a winter scarf.

These objects would represent activities such as, maybe, a workout or gym class, going for a walk, that kind of thing. Some sort of exercise. When you exercise, you need to wash up, so that is the washcloth. That was tough at work so it is important to have some fine and maybe you will do some primping and have a man occur -- manicure or pedicure after you are dead. That is the nail polish and that is the -- if this is something that is happening at school, then we are going to have to go home and as J said in my introduction, I am from Michigan, so that often involves a winter scarf for us.

I noticed that someone is from Bermuda so maybe not so much for you guys. An important aspect of this particular schedule -- you might not see it otherwise, so I'm going to use the green arrow to pointed out. Down in the bottom right-hand corner there is a match back, so when you are using object schedule, there is a water bottle. We would take it to gym class, you would take it to whatever exercise you are doing. When that is finished, you would come back to your schedule, put the water bottle in this finished a bag and then feel that that first box is empty. Talk about that. That is finished. Then, see what is next. Try to build in all kinds of concepts and vocabulary when discussing the schedule, and always refer back to even the empty boxes. When we talk about empty and finished. And then, see what is next.

These will get a little bit more complex. Here we have a schedule that is now portable. It is in a three ring binder. The pages are laminated to make them more durable. You will see that it is a multimodal, so we now have partial objects. We have pictures. And we have words. Printed words. And this particular schedule, the lunch page -- this is the first picture on the left to -- it is a picture and it has food on a plate and a drink the above it, the printed word lunch appears, and below it, a piece of a plastic spoon is Velcro due to the page so a student who is moving from objects to higher level communication pictures and possibly printed word would be able to pull off the object, manipulate it, sometimes be able to feel it or even put it in their mouths to get the information, and then it can be placed back on the page. When the student progresses away from the need for objects, those objects can simply be removed from the page without re-creating the schedule book. So Velcro is really important factor.

The picture on the right is of a bathroom. We all have our biological needs, so it is important to include things like bathroom. This would be for a student who is toilet trained and uses a toilet. So we have a photograph of what is probably a school toilet. It is more industrial. And a piece of a toilet paper on Velcro below is. So that is important because with this student, they would actually interact with that paper whereas someone who was needing to wear a diaper might not interact with toilet paper when they use the bathroom. So it is important in the schedule to incorporate objects and pictures that will be meaningful to the student, not just to staff or family.

All right. So moving up to a little bit even more complex schedule. This is a basic picture schedule, and there are three photographs that show different aspects of the schedule. It is, again, the bathroom. This particular student no longer needs objects. They are just using pictures, but we have them labeled with words so that there can be some incidental learning and purposeful instruction about moving from pictures to printed words. It may be that they can also be labeled with braille.

In this way, you will see one picture at a time against the icon background and that is important. We do not want visual distractions. We do not want visual noise if you will. So again, we are using Velcro. You can see in the second picture, the picture exchange communication system system are just Velcro it onto the front so when the bathroom is finished, you open the book and insight, on the third photograph, you can see that there is a manila envelope and you can put what is finished in the envelope. Then, inside, on the inside cover, there are actual other pictures of what is going to happen next. Unfortunately, you cannot see those in the photograph, but then you pull the next activity out and stick that photograph or picture right on the cover there.

You can see only one photograph any time. That is really critical for some students, depending on their level of vision and their ability to attend. I think that this is the last schedule picture and then we are going to move on to other strategies. I wanted to show you something that is a lot more complex than the previous examples. In this photograph, you can actually see that it is a three ring binder and there are multiple days represented. So you have your whole week within this book, and when you open up the book, you might even see more than one day at a time. Here you see Wednesday and Thursday. On each day, we have multiple -- multiple activities. There are actual -- actually six per day which is typical with some school schedules.

This is, again, using the picture exchange communication pictures. You will notice to the left, there is -- I will use the green arrow here again -- you will see that there is a red X over the picture for pull. That is something -- for the pool -- that is something that I tell people to use to represent something that is canceled because the red X mimics the fine for canceled which is using your index finger to make an X on the opposite palm and I have had students who are easily able to understand that the X means canceled because we're also talking about it and signing about it at the same time.

In this schedule, one other thing that you may notice is that we have pictures, but we also have some words. So this shows a progression from using picture symbols to just using words. Students will often learn what is the most meaningful and motivating and sometimes that is home, sometimes on the right you can see that there is music class, and I even included the word for just math class which is -- yeah. There are students who would be most motivated by -- motivated by math. So I did not want to shortchange the math teachers.

All right. We are going to quickly ask you guys, about the students that you work with or your child who lives with you does -- does your child or student have a schedule? Is it consistently use across environments? I will pause in just a second here, but I want to emphasize that the pictures were the schedules that I showed our typical school schedules, but when you have a student who is accustomed to having a schedule at school, it is really important to have some sort of schedule system for use at home. Even if it is not every single activity, is a major things can be represented for nighttime, weekends, indications, then, that can help things run more smoothly because schedules help with the transition between activities. So I will pause here for you to respond.

[ Pause ]

All right. This is phenomenal. The answers coming in so far. They are indicating that people do use schedules. It looks like we have a variety of ability levels. For students and children represented here. That is also very nice.

[ Pause ]

All right. Thank you. Now, we're going to talk a little bit about experience boxes. Before I show you an example of one, I just want to say that, to me, this is like collecting momentous. You know? If you reflect back on when you were a child and you went somewhere like the beach or someplace special, for a family vacation, maybe you collected shells or you took a little sand home where you found a rock that was really cool and that is what I think of it when I think of experience boxes. They are mementos. Things that make the trip meaningful and special. It brings back special memories.

So this photograph is an experience box about going to the beach. It is summertime. A lot of people are taking vacations or going to the beach. In Michigan, for us, that means it going to a freshwater lake, whether that be a tiny one or a huge one like Lake Michigan, but our experience box might look a little bit different than an experience box of someone going to the beach in the Caribbean or someone going to the beach that involves one of our oceans, Atlantic or Pacific.

So it is important that whatever goes inside of the experience box is something that is meaningful to the child or student. So, during the activity, you are watching them. You are observing them. What stands out? What is their focus on? It might be a shell. It might be a rock. A piece of seaweed or something like that. How do you capture that and get that into the experience box?

Here we have a -- it is just an ordinary shoebox. It is covered in wrapping paper that is reversed. So it just looks plain white. We have a photograph of the beach on the end of it. So when you put it on the shelf, you can see that photograph and we know which box to grab, because, in my mind, you could have a shelf in your classroom or in your child's bedroom that has a bunch of experience boxes on it, just like we would warehouse photo albums or something of that nature.

So you can go and grab it at any time. While you are at the beach, you may be where a son had, you have a pink son had in here. If you are anything like me, you are going to have to wear sunscreen, so that is an integral part of going to the beach for me. I have got a little tube here and in this experience box, it is great because you can take that out and smell it. You can put it on. You can have a multi sensory activity, when you are talking about the beach. Before you go or even in the winter, talking about what we did over the summer, anything like that. We have a little bathing suit. It is a tiny little blue girls bathing suit. This was an example made for a little girl, but your box we obviously have things associated with a person who will be using the box. If you are using it for a whole classroom, you might even have a mix of girls and voice things in here. So we have some sunglasses and we have a bag of rocks because like I said, Michigan -- our experience is like and that often means -- our experience is lakes and that means that you often have to walk on rocks to get to sand and water so that is an important part of a Michigan beach trip.

We have a bag of sand. So that you can touch it, feel it, and talk about it, and you can even make -- warm it up so that it feels the same as it did on that hot summer day that you were at the beach. In the back, there, you will see that there is a little beach ball. And it is a manager, it is one of those things that you get -- it is a freebie thing that someone gives you when you go to a conference or a bank having some sort of open house type of thing.

I am not big on miniatures because when you are born can generally blind or you have multiple disabilities, and a lot of times miniatures are not an adequate representation of actual activity because they do not feel the same -- a match my car does not feel the same as an actual card. -- So we need to be careful about what kinds of objects go in the boxes, but in this case it is a miniature. It is made of beach ball material. It has a nozzle like a beach ball. It can be blown up and squished the air out, deflated. You know? It has all of the same attributes of a beach ball so I thought that this was okay but do take care to only put things that will be readily understood by your student or child into an experience box.

All right. So I am not going to spend a ton of time on boxes. It is an easy concept to for people to pick up. It is momentum -- it is momentous that you collect in the box and now we are going to move towards experience books which are very similar except that I think that they are an important way to build on literacy skills so they are still autobiographical, about an experience that the student or child is having but now they are arranged in a book so you can do it -- build on all kinds of pre-literacy and literacy skills in this way.

I think of this as kind of a scrap looking -- a scrapbooking -- with the 3-D scrapbooking. So we can make experience books about everyday activities like taking a bath. We can make them about special outings like going to the beach.

This one happens to be about taking a bath and it is for a probably someone who falls in the birth until 3 or 2 age range. So on the cover of the experience but, we have a partial object, it is a rubber ducky. It also has the printed word for bath and it also has the real word -- you might not be able to see than that photograph but there is some braille label tape that has the word for bath braille out and so the next photograph there is the inside of the book and you can see some of the pages better than others.

They all involve partial objects. I do not recommend starting with partial objects. Students learn best when you start with a whole object, and then slowly whittle them down to smaller and smaller pieces. That is usually -- in an ideal situation, the student or child would actually help you make those cuts and reduce the size. So that they can follow and understand what is happened.

We have a piece of the towel, a piece of a diaper, there is a baby brush in here. All kinds of aspects of taking a bath. The pages are laminated. So you can talk about the bath before you go and take one, and you can even talk about it in the bathtub because everything is pretty water say. Then, you can talk about it afterwards and any time, talk about your bath and I know a lot of kids who are deaf-blind who absolutely love the water so talking about swimming and talking about that time are highly motivating.

All right. So we actually have been talking about fundings, baths, and vacations and trips to the beach, but now we have to talk about something that is much more serious, maybe a little uncomfortable and that is changing your pad. This is of course for a female student, a young adult, a teenage child. When you have someone who is deaf-blind or who has multiple disabilities, this is going to be a challenging time to explain and to talk about in a meaningful way.

For a young woman, it can be a scary time. When a peer he does a period first starts and not being able to adequately express that are talk about that with someone can be quite scary. So these photographs are actually of a book that I made for a family who was struggling with this very same topic. There is a picture -- there is an actual cutout of the pad box on the cover. That was the families chosen product, which was important.

Inside, I have used Velcro again, so that the book is interactive. On this first page, you can remove the backing of the pad and you can feel that it gets sticky. On the third photograph, the pad is Velcro to the page and then the panties have some Velcro in them as well so that you can take the pad off of the page of the book and practice putting the pad in the panty and then there is a page that just has the pad already inside the panty. Then, there is a page that has the pad wrapped in toilet tissue.

So this allows parents, staff members, to talk about the menstrual process with a young lady and it brings the process out of the bathroom, which can be very helpful, because, with the need for privacy and it just offering respect to young ladies, and things like that, being able to talk about it outside of the bathroom can be very helpful.

So experienced boxes can be very fun and they can also be very important and other ways to talk about important routines. All right. We are going to just ask you another question. We would like you to share one Real Life Learning opportunity that you can capture using either experience box or a book.

[ Pause ]

Getting some great responses, taking a bath. As we saw -- trips to do museum and the zoo. That is a good point. Brushing your teeth. Very important. Great. Workbooks. Books about different work tasks, about going to work. Lunch, school. I love birthdays. At that is a great idea to have an experience a book about a birthday party that is a good one for school and for Humbert it might look very different in the two environments. -- And it might look very different in the two environments. A trip to the park. These are great ideas. These are wonderful. And I like how they are -- traveling out of the country. That would be great. That is important -- especially when you have to go through customs and do things that might be very different than the trip that you to to grandma's house that might have been in the same country but still on a airplane is a really important, Doctor's office visits. A hospital stay would be another very important book to explain some confusing and possibly scary aspects. Thank you, guys. These are all wonderful ideas.

All right. So moving away from the experience box and book, we will talk about recipes. I called him recipes, no matter what, but they are just kind of to do list. If you are -- recipes are associated with food but you can also use these four things like arts and crafts, or any type of multistep activity. A job, someone had suggested experience box or book about a job site. You could use these types of quote unquote recipes for that kind of thing as well.

This first one is about food and it is about making putting. So we have all of the objects that we would need to do that job, and we also have some pictures that are picture exchange symbols again. They are one picture at a time. On index cards. They are all connected by a single metal ring. So you can easily flip through the recipe, but you only see one picture at a time. It is very important, again, for some students. Then, you might be able to move to something more complex.

So we have line drawings, sometimes that will be just fine for students. In fact, sometimes students and kids can help to make the recipes and draw the pictures, which is even better. This talks about making a salad, and we can cut up the tomato, and you will notice on the cards are that the keywords are underlined so cut tomato, and the word cut is underlined and then we put the tomato from the cutting board into the bowl and again, the keywords put and in the are underlined to emphasize what has happened.

All right. This, again, is about food, but this is making a pizza and you can see that there are multiple steps on each page, five steps on each of the two pages. We have a more like a full sentence and more complex pictures. They are hand-drawn again, which works for some students, not others. You can use photographs here. You can get all kinds of things off of the Internet and you do not even have to draw or have a special program. You can do all kinds of searches on Google images and find amazing things, line drawings, photographs of all kinds of things that you can make a recipe or a task list from.

What is even better, if you involve the student in taking photographs, along the way, as an activity actually happens. In this case, we are making a pizza. If this is too much for a student as they first move from one picture or one phrase at a time to multiple steps on a page, you can use some sort of paper to block the extra information and move it down the page as a place saver, if you will.

So this is a more complex recipe. It is for a student who has developed some independence and is at a higher level. All right. So all of my examples again were food, but a recipe does not have to be about food. You can, like I said, take advantage of anything that is a multiple step event. Worker, brushing teeth, that kind of thing. And it builds independence, like we talked about the beginning of the PowerPoint.

Now, we are going to do a little talking about journals. This is something that I actually took advantage of Google images and I did some searches and I found some cute -- Q drawings of different emotions. So this is a journal about emotions but I think that that is very important. If you know the work of Doctor Jan VanDyke, he is very big on acknowledging emotions for students who even have multiple disabilities and who are at lower language levels about acknowledging a moat -- emotion at using music and things to key into the emotions to build on learning.

This will be more about a student who is able to do some drawing on their own and so this picture has a little line drawing of a person who -- the eyes are wide and the mouth is open in and oh shape and the hair is standing on end so I think that this is scared or shocked and so if you had an experience, maybe to stay with error experience boxes of books, you would go to the beach and maybe you got in the water and your Michigan right now, that water is called.

Maybe your face would look like that when you first went to the water. Being able to talk about the emotion associated with an activity is so important. It builds all kinds of concepts. It makes more connections on a social level. It is just kind of what people do. Right? When you really get down to it. So having an emotion

Or building emotional conversation into activities it just kind of quote unquote normalizes the conversation with your students or children.

Okay. So I have shown you some things and there are, again, all pictures of samples that I take when I do consultations at schools are with families to show people what I am talking about. Sometimes I hear people like, well, Beth, that is great. That is great, but I do not have time to make stuff like that. I am busy. My schedule is jampacked.

I am going to break those I cannot do it down a little bit. Collecting the materials is something that should happen with the learner to his deaf-blind. With that child or with that student. Because you need to know what they are interested in, where their focus lies, not where your focus lies. So if they go to the beach and the coolest thing there is CB, then it is important to have a Ziploc baggie maybe with a little bit of moisture in it so that you can maintain a little bit of seaweed from that trip.

I personally do not care for seaweed, so that would not be something that I would want as a memento but we really do have to look at where the learner's interest lies. I would have to shake off that seaweed phobia there and embrace the seaweed. That, so you're not doing anything extra, right? You are just working with your student, having fun with your child, and keeping a little momentum as you go.

-- Momento as you go.

Then you need to put in a box or a book. That takes time. That can be an activity in and of itself, and you can build all kinds of learning into it. So the child, the learner is helping you make the box. They are helping you cover it with plain paper, and they are helping put things in it, and you are talking and chatting about the activity as you go and building all kinds of vocabulary practice into it.

Then, if you are making a book, they are helping, maybe, cut the objects down or glue it to the page or tape into the page, whatever way you want to affix it. I am big on Velcro because all of my examples have tons of Velcro on it because that allows you to take the things off and interact with them. All right. More breaking down the barriers of I cannot do it. You allowed the development of the materials to be an activity. So if you are at school, you do the activity, and that is in your planning book, and the next thing is, we are just going to sit around the table and we are going to make these materials.

If it is something that you are doing at home as a parent, maybe grandma and your child's uncle are helping and you are sitting around the kitchen table and all of you are making this beautiful book together. It is kind of like a scrapbook, but it is so important for learning. Then, you keep what you created. So yes. It is a little investment of time. It is a little investment of materials, but if you create it in a way that is going to last, like using laminated paper and that kind of thing, you can build on it and use it over and time again and again.

So that summer trip to the beach next summer, hopefully you will still have it. And you can use it again and again. All right. So now, I have broken down your I cannot do it barriers and we are going to talk about how you can use these materials over and over. Well, as human beings, we like to share our experiences. If you think about how you interact with your coworkers and your family, when I come into work on Monday, everyone is asking, hey, how was your weekend? What did you do?

When I come back from a vacation, I am just dying to tell my friends how it went. So when we do these things, create these boxes and books with our learners, then we enable them, that same kind of basic human right to share experiences with other people.

Then, if we send it these boxes and books, use that home into school, that allows your child to do what all the other kids are doing, which is talk about their weekend and talk about their vacation with their classmates and the staff who work with them. And vice versa, something happens at school and the boxes and the books get sent home, and then the child all this setting can share this wealth of information about the activities that they have at school and whether it is a special field trip or just brushing your teeth like you do every single day after lunch, you are still going home and being able to share with mother, father, or your caretaker what happened at school.

That is special. Even for mundane tasks. I want to caution people that this is not the same as a communication book. You might say, well, you know what -- at my school, we have these worksheets that we fill out so parents know exactly what happens during the course of the school day. In fact, we even plan of the information that will be shared with the parent. So that is all taken care of. That is important. What I am talking about does not replace that. That is critical, especially for students who may have some medical needs. It is important to share information between home and school.

What I am talking about is the actual child can take out that book and sit down on the couch and page through the book with mom and talk about, in their own way, in their own modality, what happened at school, with my, and what a gift that is if you as a teacher can give that gift to a parent, to be able to sit down with their child who has multiple disabilities and chat about what happened at their school day, that is profound. Because that might be something that they are able to do with their other children that they cannot do -- they feel they cannot do with that particular child.

That also makes it worth the time that you spent making the material. It is important for home to send it to school for the same reason. That sharing of the wealth of things that happen at home, that can be built upon during lessons at school, it is so critical.

All right. We are going to ask you another question. We would like to know, what strategies are you currently using to communicate between home and school?

[ Pause ]

Okay. So I am seeing a lot of people are using technology. With emails and texting, sometimes they are texting even the students -- even the students are jumping in and texting and sending messages. Or weekly reports. Right. Email. This is good this is that. And what I am talking about -- really supplement -- this is good. And what I talk about really supplement that. If you have a student that has multiple disabilities, then you enable them to talk to their parents on a different level than they might be able to otherwise.

One thing I did not mention is that now that you bring up technology, there are all kinds of things that you can do on iPads and iPhones and that kind of thing. To take pictures and there are apps, one is called. Tello you can easily import apps and sound and make a picture story or even short little video clips in there and I think it cost $10 or $20, but what you can do in creating experienced -- experience stores and you can create social stories to practice important skills is really invaluable so it is worth the little bit of money.

All right. Thank you for those responses. All right. So now, all of this work that you have done, whether it be on an iPad or by collecting materials and momentous, it enables the person to share -- who is deaf-blind to share their stories with others, which, as I said, is something that we do without even thinking. You know? We go on -- we go out to the store and something happens and what do we do? We come home and we want to share about it. When you have communication barriers, that is difficult to do unless someone provides the appropriate support and when you and power a student to share Internet -- and autobiographical way of what has happened to them, it is powerful.

Sharing stories about experience is a way of bonding. We know that kids who are deaf-blind and have multiple disabilities making friends and maintaining relationships can be a real challenge. So when you provide them with these materials and other people show an interest, you are helping them socially to make connections and maintain friendships. What is really cool is that a lot of times friends can even jump in on this whole idea of building materials, whether it is a box, a book, or through an app or other -- technology. Either kids in the classroom or in the school would probably be all over helping to make these things and then you are even further developing friendships there.

Sharing emotions increases the power of the story and intensifies the bonding. That is just human nature. All right. I have lost my mouse here. There we go. We are using real-life activities to help motivate learners. Who are deaf-blind. As I mentioned in the beginning, that is what is really important because that is how they are going to learn fast and how they are going to pick up the skills most readily. But then, taking the time to create the schedules, experience books, experience boxes, recipes and journals, will broaden the opportunities for bonding and building communication and language skills. So every little step along the way as a learning opportunity, not extra work, every little thing, can help you achieve your IEP goals and objectives. It is not an extra in addition to what you have to do.

All right. And then, in closing, before we get to the Q&A, I just want to say, do not rush through activities. Whether it is tying shoes or hanging up your code in your locker or going to bed at night or picking out your clothes -- your clothing in the morning, use every opportunity to build language and communication and concepts. Make the most of everything. Then, in closing, I opened with a quote from my friend Doctor McLetchie and I will close with a quote from Doctor Jan VanDyke who I respect very much and consider a friend. Make the most. Make sure -- make the most of everything, he says. He talks about moments of joy. Make sure to have fun along the way. All right. Thank you very much. I appreciate your time, and I look forward to answering your questions.

Okay. Great. Thank you so much, Beth took folks, this is day again from Perkins e-learning and we are now ready to begin the Q&A portion of the webinar. If you have not done so already, feel free to post your questions in the Q&A box, and we will go ahead and ask Beth a few of the questions that have come in. Beth, just quickly, you had mentioned the name of an app used earlier and I'm not sure that the captioning got it correctly. Can you share the name of that app again for the captioning?

It is Pictello I believe and I think it is available on iPhones and android's as well. I know a lot of people around Michigan have started using it and they have told me that it is quite user-friendly.

Awesome. Great. Thank you so much. Speaking of Michigan, Laura K who grew up four blocks from Lake Michigan has asked a question and her question was, with the experience boxes that you described earlier, with of those, are you trying to capitalize on experiences that the student has already had? Or that they will have in the future?

[ Pause ]

I think that there -- they are best used when experienced -- when expense is something that they have already done because you are collecting the mementos and the objects and taking pictures and recording little clips while you are doing it. So it is very autobiographical. It is about things that happen about your memories, and being able to share those with other people. It is important to prepare students for something that will happen, so I do not want to take away from that. When you have a student who uses a schedule, it is important to build in the activities and, when you have something new that is going to happen, you really have to try to capture that and explain that in a meaningful way. So that is a challenge, and you know, it should be very individualized to your child or your students. But once you have that activity, you can capture great things, to use to talk about it into the future. That is a great question.

That was a great question. We have another one from Edwin G and Beth, I believe that you touched upon this in your site, the site title was great but I do not have the time. The question was, how do you suggest that we incorporate experience books into a student schedule? I think that you have in that side discussion had talked about making it a planned activity and directly involving the student. Is there anything else that you would like to add to the incorporation of experience books into a student schedule and how to go about doing that?

Well, I think it is probably the actual instruction and activity has to be very individualized, so it is very difficult for me to speak to anyone students. Especially to someone that I have not met. But what I would recommend is that, you know, the activity in and of itself is scheduled and is completed and then, the next thing in the schedule or something that you do the next day, shortly after the activity is completed -- you would then spend some time making the box or making the book and just enabling the student to participate in that to the best of their ability.

If they have more limited motor movements, it might just be helping to put things inside the box. They might be picking colors. That kind of thing. So just involve your student as much as possible. Other students will be able to sit down and, you know, power through kind of a scrapbooking activity, and putting together a book. So it is very individualized.

Okay. Thank you. Looking at the Q&A post right now, does not look like we have any additional questions. So having said that, I would like to thank you, Beth, and thank you all for joining the webinar today and Beth, obviously for sharing your knowledge on this important topic. We certainly appreciate it. Again, thank you to all of the participants for joining us today. We hope that you found this webinar to be informative and we certainly hope to have you with us again on future webinars. Again, this is J Morris from Perkins e-learning and with that, I will just remind everybody that the recording of this webinar as well as the PowerPoint presentation will be made available tomorrow on Perkins e-learning.org. So thank you all for joining us and Beth, again, thank you very much and have a great day.

[ Event Concluded ]