

50 WAYS TO USE A LIGHT BOX (with apologies to Paul Simon)

The problem is all inside your head she said to me
The answer is easy if you take it logically
I'd like to help you in your search for functionality
There must be 50 ways to use a light box.

She said it's really not my habit to intrude
Furthermore I hope my meaning won't be lost or misconstrued
But this is vital, so I will risk being rude
There must be 50 ways to use a light box.

Chorus:

Just use it for Art, Bart.
To help someone eat, Pete,
To look at a transparent book, Brooke,
Take the child's lead.
Watch a wind up toy, Roy,
Or a moving ball, Paul,
Whatever he likes, Mike,
Take the child's lead.

Research shows that passive looking will decrease
A child's motivation to activate and reach
So in order to make learned helplessness decrease
You must find 50 ways to use a light box.

It can be tricky with kids who only small movements make
So simple toys that wiggle, or spin, or roll, or shake
Can be used while the light box acts as a tray
So there are countless ways to use a light box.

Transparent toys, and cups, and bottles are made to glow
It makes it easier to see three toys lines in a row
APH even makes transparencies showing plants that grow
There's over 50 ways to use a light box.

Use it as a table, Mabel.
Scatter on cherrios, Rose.
Knock down the blocks, Rox,
Take the child's lead.
Make a slinky shake, Jake.
Trace the letter A, Kay.
Whatever he likes, Mike.
Take the child's lead.

50 WAYS TO USE A LIGHT BOX

For eating, use the light box as a table:

- 1) Juice in a clear cup or bottle will glow and encourage reaching.
- 2) Scatter m&ms on the surface.
- 3) Scatter cheerios on the surface.
- 4) Scatter small or large crackers on the surface.
- 5) "Set a table" by having child match plate, cup and spoon with a transparent outline of these things on the light box.
- 6) Set plate with slice of bread, container of apricot (or other preferred light-colored) jelly on light box, help child shift gaze from jelly jar to bread as he or you takes jelly to spread on bread.
- 7) Jell-O in clear container will glow.
- 8) Help child mix colored soft drink mix into a clear glass of water and watch the color develop.

Art, using light box (covered in clear plastic) as easel or table:

- 9) Finger paint onto parchment paper with foam paint.
- 10) Paint with dark colored pudding.
- 11) Paint with whipped cream on red or blue transparency.
- 12) Use watercolors on parchment paper
- 13) Sprinkle powdered tempera paint on parchment paper; help child spray on water and watch colored spread and swirl.
- 14) Roll clay into strings and lay out in interesting shapes on light box.
- 15) Use Wikki Sticks to make raised line outlines.
- 16) Use "Smelly Markers" on tissue paper.
- 17) Make a necklace using beads and string (including the APH transparent colored beads).

Simple reaching:

- 18) APH "Spinner" motivates reaching to start or stop the spinner.
- 19) Slinky (connected to handle and hanging over lighted surface; wrap other end onto student's wrist to encourage arm movement).
- 20) Stack up blocks so that simple arm or leg movement knocks them down.
- 21) Leave a koosh ball on the light box.
- 22) On a large light box, put a pressure switch attached to a vibrating pillow. Position the child so that slight pressure on the switch makes the pillow vibrate. Help the child shift gaze between the two.

Movement Difficulties:

- 23) Adult helps with any of the activities here when the child signals the adult to continue.
- 24) Student uses adaptive switch to turn on the light box.
- 25) Small infants can be positioned prone on the light box for Tummy Time.
- 26) In supported 90 degree sitting, a small child can crinkle mylar paper under their feet while they rest on a light box.
- 27) Have child eye point to choose 1 of 2 items lined up on light box.

During class:

- 28) Make transparencies of circle/calendar time pictures and show on the light box.
- 29) Make transparent digital photos of classmates and adult, show them using light box, ask child to point to so-and-so.
- 30) Have child construct daily schedule on light box using pictures made into transparencies
- 31) Count manipulatives lined up on light box
- 32) Tracing letters onto light box (Bold marker on light weight paper taped on light box)
- 33) "Sense of Science" overlays can encourage gaze shift, recognition, etc.
- 34) Do sorting activities on the light box (APH makes materials, or functional objects, like forks and spoons, can be used).
- 35) Choose rhythm instruments by the outline they make on the light box.
- 36) Use light box to highlight dark lines that need to be cut for paste and scissors projects.

Daily Living Routines:

- 36) To get dressed, put sock and gym shoe on light box, have child eye point to item needed next.
- 37) Put wash cloth and toothbrush on box, ask child to choose which they want to do first. Can choose with eye pointing, finger pointing, or naming.
- 38) Before going to doctor, store, etc, show child transparent Meyers-Johnson symbols of those activities on light box and see if they can identify the picture.

Make Believe Play:

- 39) Put dress up items on Light box. Have child identify items and choose how they was to dress up (baseball hat vs. construction hat)
- 40) Put play hammer next to play pan, so child can choose to play house or play construction.
- 41) Put a lipstick and perfume bottle near each other to choose between the two.
- 42) Trace outlines of make believe characters/action figures to make pictures of them, and then use the pictures to create a story.
- 43) Tell stories with "pictures" by using real objects on light box to create a "Shadow Puppet" type of performance (for examples, twigs make trees and a "Barbie" type doll becomes Goldilocks).

Other Activities:

- 44) With an adapter, look at a "Discovery Light Book" on the light box.
- 45) Play "Break the Ice" on a large light box.
- 46) Play hands-only "Twister" with a transparent color circle overlay on the big light box.
- 47) Play table-top hockey (Quarter with fingers) on the large light box.
- 48) Make a woven pot holder, putting the look and loops on a dim light box.
- 49) Thumb wrestle with a friend on the light box.
- 50) ASK THE CHILD WHAT THEY WANT TO DO ON THE LIGHT BOX!