# Bringing Learning to Life by Hannah Rose and Christian Green [Video Transcript]

Bringing learning to life using resources in early years settings and schools.

Resources can be used to plan and deliver really exciting and enriching learning experiences for children.

With resources and artefacts, you can add variety to a lesson, stimulate and engage learners, provide concrete experiences, help to foster deeper understanding, and make learning fun and engaging.

## Variety:

Children are really interested in all sorts of different things and the key I think for students, is to remember that children need lots of concrete experiences.

So the more variety that students can take in for the children, the better really.

The important thing to say with this is to think in terms of comparing with a meal. If I said to you, as a student, for the next three years, you are going to have beans on toast every evening, it might get tedious, whereas if you’ve got lots of spices and different types of food, it’s going to make life a little bit more interesting.

The same thing goes for teaching. The range of resources that you’ve got there is the essence for producing a really rich and varied lesson or experience.

## Relevance:

Obviously, relevance is the key. The artefact or the resource or the book needs to be relevant not only to obviously the curriculum area or the stimulus for learning, but also to the age and stage of children as well.

It’s important to think about the age group of the children. Particularly if you are picking something like a story book or a giant book or a poem book, how they might access it.

So what reading level are they on. What are you trying to hit with perhaps your literacy work; can they access the punctuations or the rhymes or the adjectives.

It’s also nice to think about what the children have done previous to when you teach them, to their prior learning.

## Engaging:

Instead of having to stand up and talk to them for lengths on end, you can just show them.

You can even just open it up with Okay I’ve got this resource, what do you think we are going to be doing? What do you think we are going to be learning? And why do you think I brought it in? That helps me with my introduction, helps me with the start of my lesson, gets them focussed and they are engaged from the minute you say go.

## Stimulus:

Students use them in a variety of ways.

They use them to introduce topics to create that really exciting stimulus to engage children, to ignite curiosity.

This is one of my favourite objects. And to start with, when students or children look at it they may think “what on earth is it?” and three questions:

Firstly, what can I see?

Secondly, what does it tell me?

Thirdly, what do I want to find out?

## Active learning:

It brings learning to life so children are actually interacting with things. We have talked about the characteristics of effective learning in early years, and we have talked about active learning and helping children to think critically and creatively and also for them to explore and play.

## Deeper understanding:

I feel it gets the children more interactive for their learning. They engage to further depths. They are able to use resources such as, here I’ve got a pirate’s hat. We recently did some writing about a pirate ship, they are on a pirate ship and what could they do, what would they use, what would they have. Having artefacts like these that I’ve got from the school experience library, enable the children to put on their hat, put on the different clothing and items, and I saw great benefits in their writing from this.

## Empathy:

Again, the cloak here, I’ve got a Viking cloak and we’ve got other things you can find in the library that you can use to get the children to wear to get some sense of what it was like to be a warrior.

## Social awareness:

We’ve also got some story baskets where children can make up their own stories as well.

This is a lovely one - where there are a collection of people and the beauty of this is that they are culturally diverse as well and of course in modern Britain where we are living in a society where there are lots of different cultures, we want to introduce the children this in a natural organic way.

## Multisensory:

So, this resource and you can probably only see parts of it. This is called a sensory parachute and it folds out into a big circle.

Now it’s sensory because it has got lots of different textures, colours, and there are things you can shake to make it make different noises. It feels different and it looks different and this is a sort of thing you might use in an early year setting for physical development or indeed in a special setting where the children enjoy the shape and the feel and the different colours.

The treasure baskets are for, in particular, for people that are working with babies and the youngest children.

So for example in this treasure basket, we’ve got wooden spoons, we’ve got beautiful, smooth, wooden artefacts, things that children can put in their mouths, they can hold, they can roll, and experience in lots of different ways.

## Language development:

We have story sacks and we also have letter sound bags, which is really, really good for the children. Especially if you got children with special educational need or maybe children that English is an Additional Language and can’t communicate their need or understand the stories.

So, by having visual aids there for them, it really, really helps them, prompt them and kind of go along with the story alongside their peers, so they don’t feel like they are on their own.

## Cross-curricular:

I’ve looked to get resources I can use in multiple lessons.

So, for instance with the outfit such as the hat once again, they’ve used it in drama, they’ve used it in role play, it’s also been used for art, they’ve been drawing each other in the costume.

We’ve talk about children learning holistically in early years. So, we want children not to compartmentalise learning, but to be able to link all the learning; so we would be encouraging them to take in things that children can learn and develop across the different areas of learning.

## Reading for pleasure:

I really like this resource because I love reading stories to the children and a lot of my previous work experience I liked to try and incorporate books and stories into each subject.

And we have lots of puppets and a fantastic collection of high quality children’s fiction which is particularly useful and our students borrow these and they take them into schools to share their love of reading. But also, to promote the importance and value of reading for pleasure.

Visit the school experience collection at the University of Northampton Library to explore the diverse range of resources on offer, as well as using the items that you might have at home, in the settings of school where you are based, local public libraries, or indeed being creative and making your own resources with the help of the children.