

VOICES OF EXPERIENCE

Practical Ideas to
Wrap Up the Year

Grades 4-8

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Introduction

Who is this series for?

Voices of Experience is a series of six books – three for grades K-3, three for grades 4-8. Each book is full of practical ideas designed for new teachers, teachers new to a grade level, and teachers who want new ideas to reenergize their practice.

What's in the books?

We have compiled our best ideas and organized them into two sets of three books:

- Book 1: for the start of the year when teachers are just getting to know their students
- Book 2: for during the year when teachers need to get themselves and their students “fired up”
- Book 3: for the end of the year when teachers need to wrap things up

Each book is organized into four sections around the acronym ROAR.

R = ideas for building relationships

O = ideas for classroom organization

A = ideas for classroom assessment that support student learning

R = ideas that are reliable and ready to use tomorrow

“Create a new model of teacher-teacher support so that every teacher knows every other teacher’s best ideas.”

— Eric Jensen,
Brain-Based Learning

For each idea we provide a brief discussion and easy-to-follow steps. Many also include student examples and unique adaptations. In addition, we have included current information about the brain and how students learn.

We have also included a variety of ways to use this series of books to support professional development activities in different settings; for example, educators' book clubs; team and department meetings and staff meetings; in-service and pre-service workshops; and seminars with student teachers (see appendix A).

Final Note:

The single, most important message we want to leave you with is to listen to your own voice and the voices of your students. Adapt our ideas to fit for you, your students, and your school community.

Remember When: keeping souvenirs of special events and times

“Thinking and talking about experiences not only helps make sense of the past but also changes the likelihood of subsequent remembering.”

— Daniel Schacter,
The Seven Sins of Memory

DISCUSSION

Stop and celebrate the milestone of nearing the end of the school year. We give our students time to talk about highlights of their year and to collect or make souvenirs as reminders of the special events and the time they spent together.

STEPS

1. Talk with students about souvenirs and why people keep them. We say, “Have you ever kept a souvenir from a ball game, a special event, or a place you’ve travelled to? Tell us what you kept and why you kept it. I’m going to ask you to think about some things we did this year and then I will ask you to find or make souvenirs to keep as reminders.”
2. Work together as a class to make a list of the things students remember most about the year (see figure 1).

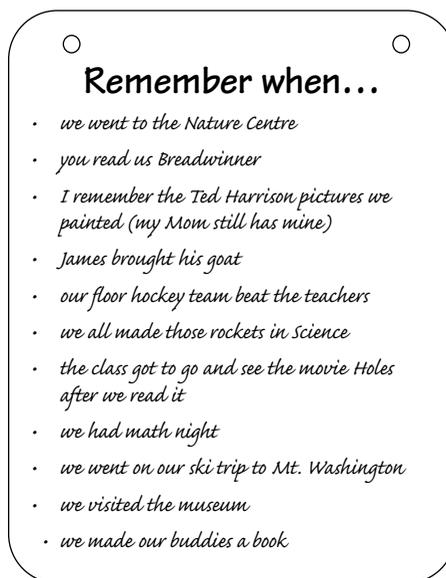


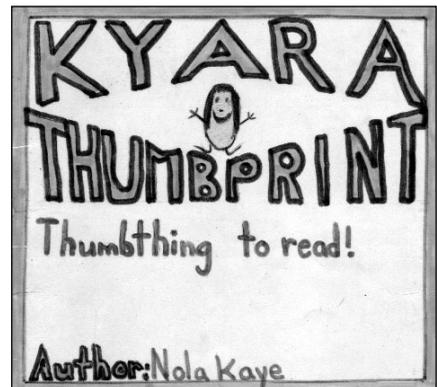
Figure 1. A list of events or times to remember

3. Discuss with students possible souvenirs they could find or make to fit with the specific times and events they wish to remember. Have them make a list of their ideas on chart paper (see figure 2).
4. Have students select 5-7 events or times they want to remember and a souvenir to represent each one.
5. Have students write a brief comment about what they want to remember most about each event by completing the phrase, “Remember when...” (see figure 3).
6. Decide on a container for the souvenirs and “remember when” comments such as a box, a bag, or a booklet. Our students make a booklet and leave the last page for autographs from their peers.
7. Set aside class time for students to select events, find or make souvenirs, and write their “remember when...” reflections.
8. Give students time to reminisce and share their “Remember when...” with classmates. We save the sharing time for the last couple of days of school and our students sign each other’s booklets.

Remember When...	Souvenirs
1. Nature centre	my poster I made
2. ski trip	ski pass
3. buddies book cover	photocopy of
4. museum trip	I've got the brochure
5. floor hockey game of Mr. Robinson in lost	I'll draw a picture goal when they
6. paintings (Ted Harrison)	my painting
7. gymnastic routine doing the handspring	a picture of me

Black line master on p. 54

Figure 2. One student’s list of “remember when . . .” and her souvenirs



<p>Remember when...</p> <p><u>we made books for our little buddies and</u> <u>Kyara loved hers</u></p>
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Figure 3. Student comments about what they want to remember

Remember When...	Souvenirs
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

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Figure 2. (page 5)