

HOW TO MAKE AN *ABOUT ME BOX*

Have you ever been frustrated because you wanted to say something, tell a friend about your recent vacation, describe your new job, or share how you felt about a new song? You might know what you want to say, but somehow you just couldn't seem to capture it all in words. This activity will help!

Someone once said that a picture is worth a thousand words. That's what an *About Me Box* will help you do, as you find images, objects, music, and other items to tell people about yourself.

This activity is also about sharing information with others in a way they can understand. In other words, it's a lesson in accessibility.

Being able to translate big ideas into something that's simple and easy to understand is an important leadership skill! Successful Leaders empower others, and that begins with helping them know what's going on.

Remember, this is about YOU. That means there's really no "wrong answer"!

The steps we've listed below for making your *Box* are designed to be easy and fun, but remember, this is about YOU! That means you can pick and choose which questions you want to answer, and answer different answers, too. It also means that your answers will automatically be right! Hey, it's your life, who are we to judge?!

We're here to help! Have fun and let us know if you have any questions.



STEP 1: ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOURSELF

We've listed some questions people ask when meeting someone new in the space below. As you think about your answers, imagine how you'd communicate with someone who speaks a different language, someone who doesn't read, or someone who's blind.

Instead of writing or talking about things, you'd have to find other ways to express yourself, such as using pictures or objects. Depending on your audience, you might also want to use different sounds, scents, and textures.

If you're not a big reader, using different objects instead of the written word can also be helpful.

With that in mind, think about how you'd answer the following questions and what you can put in your Box to represent what you want to share.

1) Where do you call "home"?

Do you live in an apartment, house, or something else? Where is it?

2) How do you spend your time?

Do you have a job? Go to school? Volunteer?

3) Who is in your circle of friends?

Who do you hang out with because you want to, not just because you live or work together?

4) What is one thing that you're really good at?

We all have different skills and our own unique gifts to share with others. What's one of yours?

5) Name one thing you'd like to learn?

No one is an expert at everything. What is one thing you don't know now that you'd like to learn? This can be a new skill, hobby, or information about a topic you don't know much about.

6) Share something you've done that makes you feel PROUD.

Give yourself a great big pat on the back and let others know why you. Did you graduate from high school, college or somewhere else? Are you married? Do you have a job? Do you volunteer your time? Share something you do that will inspire others!

7) What else would you like to share about yourself?

Remember, the name of this exercise is About Me for a reason! What kind of things do you want others to know about who you are and how you live your life?



STEP 2: CHOOSE AND DECORATE YOUR CONTAINER

We call this an *About Me Box*, but you can pick whatever type of container you want. Be creative! Avoid anything breakable. Try to find something that's easy to carry around and represents part of who you are and what you enjoy.

Your container should help you answer some of the questions in step 1. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- If you have a green thumb and like to garden or grow things, use a plant pot or watering can
- If you work at Kentucky Fried Chicken, use one of their buckets (Hint: use a CLEAN one =)
- If you like sports, use a duffle bag
- If you enjoy going on picnics, why not put your stuff in a wicker basket?!

If you don't know what type of container to use, rest assured, there's no wrong answer! Some people have also used a plain cardboard box that they decorated with stickers, magazine cut-outs, paint, gift wrap, and more. The possibilities are endless. Have fun!



STEP 3: FILL 'ER UP!

Pick different things that represent your answers to the questions in Step 1. These can include objects, pictures, music, food, different scents, and things that have a particular texture, such as sandpaper, cotton, or even a few fluffy duck feathers! The idea is to use items that will help you share things about yourself using more than just words.

Once you have everything assembled, practice using your Box to introduce yourself and share your story with others.

As you're sharing, look for things you have in common with the people you're introducing yourself to. For example, if you used a cat toy to talk about your fur baby, ask your audience who else has a cat. If you have a menu from your favorite restaurant in it, use it to find out if anyone else likes to eat there.

Remember, your *About Me Box* is a work in progress. That means you can change the container, swap the contents, or add new items whenever you want because life changes, and it's about you!

