

MEMORY GAME

The Story of Babar

In Grandma Elephant's Trunk:

Elephants really DO have an amazing ability to remember. Especially grandmother elephants who remember where to find critical sources of food and water each season and pass that knowledge on to their daughters and grandchildren. Human grandmothers also have much to share and teach, and they always seem to have something special in their bags. In this activity we imagine and act out ideas about what our grandmothers might pack in a trunk as we challenge ourselves to remember.

Materials Needed: A vivid imagination!

Directions:

Step 1: The Classic Memory Game

- Make sure everyone knows what we mean by this kind of trunk! We mean a large box with a lid that can be used for storing or carrying clothes and other things.
- The first person says and finishes this sentence: "I packed my grandmother's trunk, and in my Grandmother's trunk I packed BLANK" Example: A blanket.
- The second person repeats the sentence as the first person said it, then adds an item of their own. Example: "I packed my grandmother's trunk, and in my Grandmother's trunk I packed a blanket and a flute."
- The next person repeats the sentence adding a third item. Continue until everyone has had a few turns or has had enough. See how far you can go without forgetting anything.

"Elephants have long been known to teach their young the ancient knowledge they received from their elders of seasonal feeding grounds and when and how to get to them...Calves in herds led by older matriarchs that may remember where to get food during a famine have a better prospect of surviving."
– David Max Braun, National Geographic Society Newsroom

Bonus: For an extra challenge, the items should start with each letter of the alphabet in order. Example: An alligator, a banana, a crown. For people who know their letters and the sounds they make, this can actually make it easier to remember the items in order.

Step 2: The Elephant Version

- Play the game described in step one, however the sentence will be, "I took a trip with Grandma Elephant and in her trunk she had BLANK."
- Try to imagine some things that a grandmother elephant might have in her trunk. Be creative! You are making this story up, so you can't be wrong.
- For ideas and inspiration, think about the elephants in *The Story of Babar*, or read about real elephants in the wild (they are very different from the ones in the book). To get you started, here are some examples of what a grandmother elephant might have: Water, dirt, grass, strength, or love.

Step 3: Act-Out Unpacking the Trunk!

- Whether you are playing "The Classic Version" or "The Elephant Version", you can end your game with some acting fun. Once all of the items have been added, work as a group to pick up the imaginary trunk. How heavy is it?
- Work together to carry the imaginary trunk to a different part of your space, or lift it on to a real or imaginary table, truck, ship, or wagon.
- Take turns unpacking the trunk, one imaginary item at a time, passing each item around as you all say, "ooh, ahhh."

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Babar*

Closing:

- When all the items have been handled, end the game with a phrase such as, “The amazing elephant’s trunk!” or “We love you, Grandma.” Share with one another your favorite part of this activity.

Bonus:

- Turn your ideas into a physical memory game that you can play again and again by drawing two of each of the items on squares of paper. Turn all the papers upside down and mix them up, then take turns flipping two over to try to find matches.
- Take a photo of yourselves playing the game or draw a picture of an elephant packing a trunk to send to your own Grandma or some other wise, loving person in your life.
- Think about what you know about elephants in their natural environment, or do a bit of research to learn more. How is life for real elephants different from the way it is portrayed in the book? For example, in *The Story of Babar*, the king and other male elephants make all the decisions. Among real elephants, leadership looks very different, with experienced females making important decisions and protecting their family groups. What other differences do you notice? Read carefully and think for yourself. You can’t always believe everything you read in a book.