

# Reading across the miles



Theme

To provide sensory exposure  
Connect with a deployed loved one  
Valueing children's treasures

Books to read  
together

*Baby Faces* (Sesame Beginnings)

Reading the Bible  
together

Luke 2 (The Christmas Story)  
Matthew 2:1-12 (The story of the Wisemen)

Looking at the Book  
of Common Prayer  
together

Thanksgiving for the Birth or Adoption of a Child, p439ff

What we need to do  
this work together

2 8-1/2 x 11 inch pieces of felt  
yarn  
sandpaper, soft flannel, fake fur, cotton balls, a small rock,  
small piece of velvet or gold foil, a small mirror, family  
photos, patch cut from an old uniform  
sandwich zip lock bags  
notebook rings

Talking or writing  
together

Talk about being happy, sad, afraid. Per the directions on  
the next page, pull the items from the "feeling bag" and  
talk about each one.

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## Making something together

## Singing and Praying together



*Armed Services Edition  
Office of the Bishop for Federal Ministries  
The Episcopal Church  
[www.episcopchap.org](http://www.episcopchap.org)  
Lifelong Christian Formation  
The Episcopal Church  
[www.episcopalchurch.org](http://www.episcopalchurch.org)*

Sew the felt together to make a bag with open top. You can also punch holes down the sides and bottom of the felt and lace them together with the yarn. In the bag include the items from first page. The sandpaper reminds us of many Bible stories that took place in the desert. The soft flannel reminds us of the swaddling clothes Mary in which wrapped Baby Jesus, the velvet or foil reminds us of the Wisemen, cotton balls remind us of sheep, fake fur reminds us of Mary's donkey, rock reminds us of mountains. Use your imagination to put such sensory objects in the bag. A piece of your family member's uniform or other clothing will serve as a wonderful reminder. The mirror is for the child to see themselves as a Child of God.

For the photo album, place photos inside the sandwich ziplock bag. Punch a hole in the zip end of the bag and thread onto a ring (notebook ring purchased at office supply store). The photos can be changed out as you wish. Make one to send to your family member who is away.

Cut pictures of people from magazines who look happy, sad, afraid, mad, etc. Fold the pictures into different shapes (triangles, squares, stars, etc.) and make a game of guessing how the person in the picture feels and then unfold the picture.

For your family devotion, include your feeling bag and your "photo album" along with candle.

### Prayer for Those Absent

O loving God, who has given us family and friends; be with all those whom we love who cannot be with us, guard and bless them wherever they may be, grace them with joy, protect them from all evil, and bring them safely to us once again. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

(Anne E. Kitch, *The Anglican Family Prayer Book*)