

Making a Bag of Words

CompText

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Figure 1: Some paper bags: Image by Bolsapubli wikipedia licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license.

1. We will give you a short essay on a colorful pieces of paper. Do not read it! Cut it apart into paragraphs.
2. Then cut it the paragraphs into individual words.
3. This will take a while. While you are cutting, you can:
 - (a) Chat about the weather.
 - (b) Talk about why you are taking this class.
 - (c) Etc.
4. When you are done (or as you are cutting) you can play with the words. Make little piles, catagorize the words, whatever comes to mind.
5. But at some point, put all the words in your bag.
6. What can you tell about an essay once it has been turned into a bag of words? What could you tell about a collection of essays, each of which has been cut up and put into a bag?
7. What issues, practical or conceptual, might arise, when working with bags of words?