

# Play Kits

*Creating a play kit with simple, affordable materials to encourage imaginative thinking online or in person*

## Suggested materials

(Allow flexibility so learners can use what they have and do not need to buy materials.)

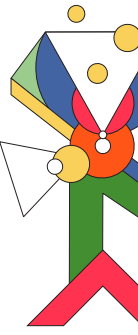
- ▷ Something to sculpt with (clay, wire, playdough, paper)
- ▷ Something to build with (LEGO bricks, wood, dominos, plastic cups, rocks, sticks, fasteners such as paper clips)
- ▷ Something to collage with (found and/or recycled materials)
- ▷ Paper and something to make marks with (markers, crayons, paints, pencils)
- ▷ A foundation or base to build/play on (e.g., a piece of cardboard, a plate, or a tray)

## Sample prompts

- ▷ Represent an idea that stood out to you from the chapter we just read.
- ▷ Create a model of... (e.g., the digestive system, erosion, a sustainable energy system...).
- ▷ Represent a time when you felt... safe/sad/proud/playful...
- ▷ Create a representation of the main idea(s) in this music or piece of art.
- ▷ Create something that expresses the meaning to you of... (e.g., bravery, collaboration, challenge, equity...).
- ▷ Use your play kit to help you solve a problem or think about a situation in a different way.

## Using the play kits

- ▷ Ask learners to bring their kits to class regularly (or have them nearby at home) so they have access to the materials as needed. They can use the kits to play with ideas, create models, and talk about their work. Playing with materials can help learners explore questions and represent ideas in new ways, making their thinking more visible to themselves and others.
- ▷ Prepare to be surprised by the new ideas that emerge! As much as possible, allow learners to choose which materials they want to work with to respond to a prompt. During or after creating, invite learners to share their ideas and creations with each other.



## More Than One Way

- ▷ Try using the play kits in pairs or small groups for collaborative expression.
- ▷ Use play kits as homework—play at home, take a photo, and share your photo with others in an online platform.
- ▷ If readily available, add tools (rulers, scissors, etc.).

## Notes

- ▷ Maggie Van Camp introduced us to the idea of play kits. She uses the kits to support her teacher candidates' learning.