

MAKERSPACE ACTIVITIES THAT ENCOURAGE WRITING, READING & CREATIVITY

~ A nErDcampmi session by Jess Keating & Debbie Ridpath Ohi ~

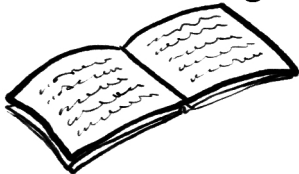


Q. What is a school makerspace?



The term usually refers to hands-on activities that “support academic learning and the development of a mindset that values playfulness and experimentation, growth and iteration, and collaboration and community.”

(Source: “The Maker Movement In K-12 Education” in Edweek.org)



Q. What are some benefits?



- Encourages student engagement and reflection.
- Hands-on exploration.
- Opportunities for divergent thinking.
- Inspires curiosity & further investigation.
- Provides a connection between lessons and the real world.
- Encourages deeper thinking, innovation (instead of rote memory).
- Collaboration and community building.
- Breaks the habit of wastefulness.

A child who claims to hate writing may be a maker, and making could be his or her gateway into writing.

(Source: *Intention: Critical Creativity In The Classroom* by Amy Burvall & Dan Ryder)

KEY POINTS:

- Students learn more from the process of making than from the end result.
- Failure is part of the process. It’s how we learn and grow.
- Encourage tinkering, open-ended messy play, experimentation.
- Not all writers are makers. Some students might just want to sit and *write*.
- Every makerspace is going to be different.
- Once students know what others are doing, they will start relying on one another for support and expertise rather than being dependent on a single teacher. <-- Builds community.
- Promote ways to share and exhibit the work.
- Make time for purposeful reflection.

(Major source for above: *Make Writing: 5 Teaching Strategies That Turn Writer’s Workshop Into A Maker Space* by Angela Stockman, Hack Learning Series)

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Makespace Supplies

MAKE SPACE: tables, empty wall spaces, whiteboards, individual foam boards, tacks, scissors, chalkboards, painter's tape, poster paper.

PROVIDE CONTAINERS for ideas: index cards, sticky notes, index cards, paper scraps, chart paper, file folders, paper rolls, flip charts, lined paper, composition books, a digital camera.

ADHESIVES: Painter's tape, ticky tac, stapler, clips, repositionable glue sticks, hot glue, scotch tape, spray adhesive.

Ways to reduce expenses:

Encourage students to seek the supplies they need on their own.

Upcycling and repurposing.

Be willing to see what's possible instead of what is. Focus on how something works, NOT on how it looks.

Resources

Links to online resources: DebbieOhi.com/makerspaces

MAKE WRITING: 5 Teaching Strategies That Turn Writer's Workshop Into A Maker Space - by Angela Stockman (Hack Learning Series)

HACKING THE WRITING WORKSHOP: Redesign With Making In Mind
- by Angela Stockman (Hack Learning Series)

Intention: Critical Creativity In The Classroom
- by Amy Burvall and Dan Ryder (EdTechTeam)

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ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS:

(Modify as needed to accommodate different ages and contexts)

IDEA GENERATION:

Story bag with visual or written story prompts inside, students take turns adding to the story, inspired by prompt. • Photo collage inspiration board. • Record all potential writing ideas on sticky notes & randomly display on open space, then student(s) review all notes for potential connections between ideas, cluster ideas, generate labels for each cluster, then organize these categories.

LANGUAGE, SENTENCE BUILDING:

Get building bricks like Lego, stick on tape or labels, add words or phrases with a marker.. • Cut out words and phrases from old magazines & discarded books, create poetry and prose. • Play with small changes to words and create works that embed these word remixes. • Phrankenwords (from *Intention: Critical Creativity In The Classroom*): create a brand-new word by mashing up two or more vocabulary terms; provide a definition and use that new word to tell a story.

POETRY

Students contribute words or phrases (perhaps on a theme) to a central word bank; each students then creates a poem from this crowd-sourced collection. • Same as previous, except the words/phrases are cut out from old magazines or books. • Blackout Poetry: students asked to take key words from a text and then present those ideas in an original poetic composition (*Intention: Critical Creativity In The Classroom* suggests that the new original work should reveal a deeper understanding of the original text) •

FICTION & NON-FICTION WRITING

Use post-it notes to brainstorm plot ideas, longer story arcs, beginning/middle/ends, possible twist endings. Story starters: bag of objects, take turns pulling out objects and adding to the story. • Brainstorm lists of characters, settings, time, what happens (one possibility: have all students contribute to this crowd-sourced creative story bank). • Taxonomy mishmash: invent new creatures, describe their habitat, life cycle, etc.

“Approaching writing as a continuous process forwarded by efficient movement from one step to the next often fails to help writers discover anything new about themselves or their work. If they are to remain invested, novice writers need to reap far greater rewards. Deep process satiates, and tinkering is what enables it.” - Angela Stockman, *Make Writing*

WHAT IS TINKERING? “Tinkering with writing involves messing around with one small excerpt or one experience in the process, testing various strategies or approaches before committing to any one of them, and often experiencing happy surprises along the way.” - Angela Stockman, *Make Writing*