

First Week of Makerspace

A 5-Day Lesson Plan for Building a Maker Mindset

Overview

This first week establishes the culture, routines, and mindset for your makerspace. Focus on community-building, exploring materials, and celebrating creative problem-solving over perfect results.

Day 1: Welcome & Community Agreements

Objective: Build a safe, creative community

Materials: Chart paper, markers

Activities:

- **Welcome Circle (10 min):** Introduce yourself and share your excitement about making together
- **What is a Maker? (10 min):** Show examples of makers (inventors, artists, builders) and discuss
- **Community Agreements (15 min):** Co-create rules together (e.g., 'Try new things,' 'Help each other,' 'Clean up together')
- **Tour the Space (10 min):** Show where materials are stored, cleanup stations, and safety equipment

Day 2: Exploring Materials

Objective: Get comfortable with basic maker materials

Materials: Cardboard, tape, scissors, straws, string, paper clips

Activities:

- **Material Exploration (15 min):** Let students touch, bend, cut, and experiment with materials
- **Mini-Challenge (20 min):** 'Build the tallest tower using 10 straws and tape'
- **Share & Reflect (10 min):** Gallery walk to see everyone's creations, celebrate different approaches

Day 3: The Design Process

Objective: Introduce Ask, Imagine, Plan, Create, Improve

Materials: Chart paper, design journals or paper

Activities:

- **Design Process Overview (10 min):** Explain each step with examples
- **Practice Challenge (25 min):** 'Design a paper airplane that flies the farthest'—emphasize testing and improving
- **Reflection (10 min):** What did you learn from testing? How did you improve your design?

Day 4: First Real Challenge

Objective: Apply design process to a structured challenge

Materials: Paper, tape, paper clips, small object (e.g., ping pong ball)

Activities:

- **Introduce Challenge (5 min):** 'Build a container that protects an egg (or ball) dropped from 3 feet'
- **Plan (10 min):** Sketch design ideas in journals
- **Build (20 min):** Create prototypes
- **Test (10 min):** Drop test! Celebrate both successes and 'productive failures'

Day 5: Showcase & Reflection

Objective: Celebrate learning and set goals

Materials: Student projects from the week

Activities:

- **Mini Maker Faire (20 min):** Students present their favorite creation from the week
- **Reflection Discussion (15 min):** What did we learn? What do we want to make next?
- **Goal Setting (10 min):** 'This year in makerspace, I want to learn how to...'

Teacher Tips for Week 1

- **Go slow:** Resist the urge to rush into complex projects. Building culture takes time.
- **Model curiosity:** Say 'I don't know—let's figure it out together!' often.
- **Embrace mess:** Making is messy. That's okay. Build in cleanup time.
- **Document learning:** Take photos of student work to track progress.
- **Celebrate failure:** When something doesn't work, ask 'What can we learn from this?'

Find more challenges and resources at maker404.com