

A Toy's Life

Description:

Delve into your toybox with this fun exploratory workshop. Understand the different types of toys, research historical toys and discover why toys are so important. Get inspired to design and create your own toy!

Curriculum Links:

Social Sciences

"Understand how cultural practices vary but reflect similar purposes." Social Sciences Level 3

Technology

"Understand the relationship between the materials used and their performance properties in technological products." Technological Knowledge Level 1-4

Mathematics and Statistics

"Find fractions, decimals, and percentages of amounts expressed as whole numbers, simple fractions, and decimals." Number & Algebra: Level 2-4

"Conduct investigations using the statistical enquiry cycle." Statistics: Level 1-4

Setting the scene

Introduce the topic of toys and discover what knowledge your class has about this subject. Encourage your class to think about their toys at home. Below are some questions to help focus your discussion on different topics that are relevant to your class.

Topic

History

Discussion Questions

- What are some old-fashioned toys?
- What sort of toys did your grandparents play with?
- How many toys do you think your grandparents had?
- What are some differences between old-fashioned toys and new toys?

Sustainability

- How many toys do you think you own?
- What are your toys made from?
- What do you do with your toys when they break?
- Do you have toys that belonged to your parents?

Designing our own toys

- What are toys?
- Why do we have toys?
- What do we learn from playing with toys?
- Are toys only for children?
- What are your favourite toys? Why?



Historical Toy Bingo

You will need:

- *Old & New Toy Bingo* sheet
- Pens & paper

Start searching

In Victorian times children had very few toys, much less than you have today. Most children made their own toys from items they found around the house, rag dolls, paper windmills, wooden pegs, kites and sticks were commonly played with. Even the wealthiest children had very few toys such as tea sets, rocking horses, marbles, toy soldiers and porcelain dolls. These toys were highly treasured and passed down through families.

Ask the students to search around their house for modern versions of historical toys. Each time they find a match, circle that toy on the bingo card. If they circle four toys in a row, they have won the bingo! The row can be vertical, horizontal or diagonal, just like the game Connect Four.

Each of the toys on the bingo card are from the MOTAT collection. Encourage your students to explore the [MOTAT collection online](#).

Toy Scavenger Hunt

You will need:

- *Toy Tally* sheet
- Pens & paper
- Technology to take and upload photos

How many toys do you have?

Nowadays we have more toys than ever, and more time to play with them! We can produce lots of toys very quickly and cheaply using plastic.

Ask the students to complete a scavenger hunt of all the toys in their house.

- How many toys do you think you have? Make a guess and record your answer on the *Toy Tally* sheet.
- Now start hunting around your house, use the toys tally to record your toys as you find them.
- Once you have tallied all the toys, calculate the final number for each category, and the total number of toys you found. How close was your guess to the final answer?

Discussion Questions

After all the toys have been tallied, calculate your class totals and discuss the results together.

- What was the most common type of toy?
- What was the least common type of toy?



- Which rooms were the toys found in?
- How many toys were played with in the last week?
- Did they find toys they no longer play with?
- What did you do when a toy fit in multiple boxes?

Graph your results

Use the class results to calculate the total number of toys. Make individual bar graphs showing the types of toys that were found. Work together to graph the class results. This is a great time to calculate percentages, below are some examples to calculate:

- What percentage of your toys are digital?
- What percentage of your toys are plastic?
- What percentage of your toys are reusable (i.e. you can play with them again and again)?

Design and make your own toys

Set your class the challenge of designing and prototyping a new toy. This might be a board game, a skill game, building blocks, cars, dolls, or something entirely new! Encourage them to think about the following questions:

- Who is the toy for?
- What makes this toy special or different from other toys?
- What is the toy made from?
- How sustainable is the toy? Can it be re-used and recycled?

Report Back

You will need:

- Technology to record photos and movies

We love to hear from you:

- Tell us about your favourite toy and send us a photo
- Send us pictures of your toy tallies and graphs
- Send us drawings and photos of the toys you created

Resources

[Website: MOTAT Collections online: Toys](#)

[Website: Toys from trash by Arvind Gupta](#)

[Website: List of incredibly dangerous banned toys](#)



Old & New Toy Bingo

Search your house for modern versions of these toys. How many can you find?

Wooden Blocks



Skipping Rope



Doll



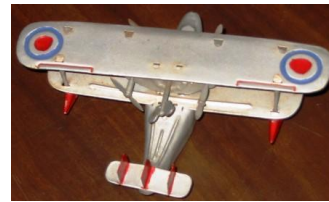
Puzzle



Buzzy Bee



Sea Plane



Train Set



Toy Soldier



Alphabet Blocks



Whistle



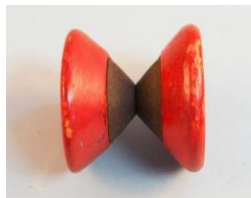
Bubble Blower



Dolls Pram



Yo Yo



Cup & Ball



Toy Boat



Matchbox Car



Toy category	Tally	Total
Toys that move		
Action figures		
Dolls & teddys		
Arts & crafts		
Building and construction		
Costume, dress-up, role play		
Puzzles and games		
Skill toys		
Digital games		
Educational and science kits		
Old toys, heirloom toys		
New Zealand made		
Other:		
Other:		
Other:		

Your name:

How many toys do you think you have?

Total Toys: