



Think Make Create

LABS

# The Makerspace Playbook

Issue #18: March 2023

## TMC ON THE MOVE: SPRING INVENTORY

The mobile TMC Lab is a wonderful way to bring high quality STEM learning to rural afterschool programs. The mobility and wide variety of supplies it carries are essential to its success, but how do we manage inventory in such mobile world? One way to do this is by having a system in place to know what is being used, what is low, and what needs to be replaced.

The totes in each TMC Lab should be labeled by the type of supplies it holds. You can provide inventory sheets and how much of each supply should be in the tote. This way those who manage buying new supplies know what is running low. Another strategy we can use is planning ahead. Using lesson plans helps us to know how much/how many supplies will be used and how quickly they need to be replaced. You can use these strategies with pen and paper or keep your inventory list digitally.

Whatever you may use, be sure to keep your inventory organized and check it frequently to be sure you have the supplies you need.

*~Julie Boyle, Nebraska Extension*



## Idaho TMC Partners with Schools for STEM Nights

School STEM nights are starting to grow in numbers, post-pandemic, and each look a bit different depending on the school district. In Idaho, 4-H and the Department of Education have partnered to make resources more available to communities by supporting family STEM nights held at the local school. Our Think Make Create Lab hosts work with school partners to bring in the TMC hands-on activities that students and families enjoy, in addition to \$500 for any expenses the school may have in hosting the event. This partnership has increased excitement for offering making and tinkering STEM activities and allowed the schools a little bit of ingenuity when planning how the funds would be used. Some schools chose to go a bit traditional by purchasing curriculum or display boards for all the students. But others purchased meals for the teachers, provided a potluck for attending families, supplies for edible aquifers, or in the unique case in Calder Elementary (see our Program Spotlight from #16/Dec 2022-Jan 2023) the funds sponsored the whole event!

As outreach partners in STEM education, we have a unique opportunity to support in-school education through our informal programming. By participating in school STEM nights, we can share our activities and expertise in hands-on STEM education and increase the opportunities our youth have to grow and discover. In the last year, we have reached 2,500 youth. With a few more months still left in the 2023 school year, we look forward to reaching that many more through the wonderful world of making and tinkering and Think Make Create Labs.

*~Claire Sponseller, Area Extension Educator, University of Idaho Extension 4-H*

# Give It A Try: Kapla Blocks

Though simple in their concept, [Kapla](#) blocks are a little more challenging when you actually go to design and build. Luckily, there are some books to help inspire when tinkering with these blocks. Our favorite part is that they are attractive to youth and adults and they are versatile enough to work well in small group instruction or at a larger, community event. They are adaptable and challenging to all levels of experience and come in different kit sizes to accommodate all levels of budgets. What will you build first?

~Claire Sponseller, Area Extension Educator, University of Idaho  
Extension 4-H



Idaho is inviting all states to join them for TMC Shop Talk, a one-hour networking and educational sharing opportunity for all those using Think Make Create Labs.

## SHOP TALK

TMC

Wednesday, March 15th  
12:30 pm MST | 1:30 pm CST  
<https://uidaho.zoom.us/j/86857743379>

## Put it Into Practice: Content Standards

Content standards are the knowledge and skills that students should have gained by the end of each grade. However, very seldom do out-of-school providers use them.

My question is: "Why not?"

Both in-school and out-of-school education have the same target audience. Our goal as out-of-school educators is to help our youth grow and thrive. Why not use content standards to set our youth up for success by using the same language and terminology that they may take back to the classroom? Using standards does not have to be difficult. Incorporate only one or two standards per lesson; build them into your learning goals and use them to help introduce new terms and definitions. By focusing on phenomena, skills, and cross-cutting concepts, turn your activities that were only hands-on, into minds-on as well!

~Claire Sponseller, Area Extension Educator,  
University of Idaho Extension 4-H

## You're Invited!

Join Idaho's **TMC Shop Talk**, a networking opportunity for educators using Think Make Create Labs, a mobile makerspace program.

The meeting lasts no more than an hour and typically follows the same agenda: introductions, program highlight, resource share, leadership update, and Q&A.

Idaho participants would welcome the opportunity to talk and meet with educators in other states. This is a great chance to network and learn how we can keep our programs exciting.

**Join us by zoom on Wednesday, March 15 at 12:30pm MST / 1:30pm CST.**

<https://uidaho.zoom.us/j/86857743379>

Questions or need technical help, email Claire at [csponseller@uidaho.edu](mailto:csponseller@uidaho.edu).

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