

Project Name

Visible Transparency Design Challenge



Project Description

MCD is reimagining and redesigning its space to get ready for upcoming exhibitions. From an exhibition space designed to highlight the textile works of *Mode Brut* to one which best displays the works of [Living with Scents](#) and [The Object in Its Place: As Designed by Ted Cohen](#), we're transforming the same space to fulfill a new function. Lovingly named *Visible Transparency*, MCD seeks to demystify periods of exhibition transition and invites visitors to observe the process on-site!

The Education Department is re-organizing and cleaning up our workspace and repurposing materials for new projects and applications in 2022. Reflective of the materials we have on hand, this project revisits our signature design challenge and invites participants to prototype new designs from familiar materials.

Swing by the museum to pick up a Design Challenge MakeArt Kit or browse your own closets, recycling bins, craft supplies, sheds, and garages to find your own

materials!

Recommended Age Level

Recommended for ages 5+ with adult supervision.

Suggested Materials (1+ of each category)

- **Metal elements:** Washers, hex nuts, paper clips, metal brads, key chains, old keys, etc.
- **Tubes:** Paper or plastic straws, pipes, paper towel rolls, etc.
- **Bendy objects:** Pipe cleaners, wire, or twisty ties, etc.
- **Wood:** Toothpicks, sticks/twigs, tongue depressors, popsicle sticks, etc.
- **Materials to tie:** String, yarn, floss, twine, etc.
- **Textiles:** Fabric, felt, pom poms, cotton balls, etc.
- **Elastics:** Hair tie, rubber bands, elastic ribbon, etc.
- **Cylinders and spheres:** Buttons, spools, bottle caps, corks, etc.
- **Containers:** Tupperware, plastic lids and boxes, lids, clean food boxes, etc.
- **Paper products:** Recycled cardboard, scratch paper, tissue paper, old magazines, etc.
- **Adhesives:** Glue, tape, paste, etc

Image Gallery







Alt Image Text

Using the design thinking process to prototype a valentine and necklaces.

- Materials sorted by color
- A valentine made of repurposed cardboard, cotton swab, pipe cleaners, fabric, rubber band, cork, and beads.
- Prototype 1: Necklace design featuring tulle, necklace, mesh board, fabric scraps, cardboard cylinder, and rubber bands.
- Prototype 2: Simplified necklace design.
- Prototype 3: Simplified necklace design.
- Prototype 4: Simplified necklace design.

Instructions

- Explore the properties of your materials. Think about how the different materials relate to or differ from one another. Organize the design elements by:
 - Color or pattern
 - Texture
 - Material type (fabric, paper/cardboard, plastic, rubber, etc.)
 - Size
 - Interest in the object
- Decide what kind of object you want to design.
 - Something wearable (i.e. necklace)
 - Something functional (i.e. basket)
 - Something sentimental (i.e. valentine)
 - Something sculptural (i.e. statue)
 - Something structural (i.e. building)
 - Something mobile (i.e. bicycle)
 - Something entertaining (i.e. board or lawn game)
 - Something functional (i.e. phone holder)
- Determine who you are designing for. Are you designing for yourself or friends and family? How does who you design affect your process?
- Define: Brainstorm 3-5 designs based on the function you chose for your object and what you know about the person who will receive it.
- Ideate: Write down or sketch your ideas and play with your ideas to begin imagining the object's form.
- Prototype: Intentionally combine design elements to begin giving form to your ideas.
 - Think about which materials you are using and why. What role does each material play in the design?

- *TIP*: You don't have to use every element in your design. How can you edit your piece to create more impact?
- Test: How well does the prototype work? Is it aesthetically pleasing? Test the design and record your observations or collect feedback from the person you're designing for.
 - *EXAMPLE*: When we brought our original necklace design to the subject, their feedback was for multiple simpler pieces as opposed to our original more complicated design. So we disassembled, went back to our design elements, and created three new necklace prototypes.
- Name the object. Take a photo or video and post it to social media. Tag #SFMCD, #VisibleTransparency, and #MCDatHome to share it with the museum.

Creative prompts for more...

- Challenge a friend! Both you and a friend separately collect a set of materials and trade what you find to design something for each other.
- Write object types on slips of paper (i.e. function, wearable, sentimental, etc.) as well as customer types (i.e. parent, friend, boss, neighbor) and pull one of each out of a hat to challenge yourself to design something unexpected.
- Use the design process to solve a problem. Do you have a wobbly table or a window that lets a draft in? Prototype an object to craft a solution!

Related Resources

- Can you tell what material each design element is made of, how it was made, and where it came from? Research the history of your materials. For example, learn the story behind [corks](#), [pipe cleaners](#), or [tape](#)!
- Convert your love for craft and design into a job. Keep your eyes open for exciting [opportunities](#) to join the MCD team!