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## Game Kit Exercise

At the end of this lesson students will be able to:	Gamestar Episodes related to this lesson:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explore the affordances of game components in a board or physical game</li> <li>• understand the association of design elements within a game system (goals, rules, space, components, mechanics, story, etc.)</li> <li>• iterate on a design within constraints</li> <li>• 'paper' prototype</li> </ul>	--

**What's on for today:**

In this activity, you'll make a game from a particular set of everyday objects in order to examine the relationship between physical game pieces and other components and game design patterns.

**What you need:**

- No one of these materials is magic, but this set does work well together as a whole, so we've noted specific features with each material. You can substitute some materials with others which would have that feature ... but when you change the components of the kit, the challenge will 'play' very differently!
- 1 marker (such as a Sharpie)
  - 3 paper cups
  - 1 small sponge cube - a square cut from a larger kitchen sponge works
  - sticky notes (a portion of a 1" small stack will do)
  - 7 inches of string
  - paper/board rectangle - half of one side of a manilla folder is good
  - a die - polyhedral is more interesting
  - 3 small binder clips
  - 1 big binder clip
  - 3 rubber bands

**Lesson**

**INTRO**

There are many elements in a game system: rules, goals, story, space, to name a few ... but one of the most fundamental are the materials that comprise the game. Soccer/Football would be a very different game if the ball were extremely heavy, or if the players had to use sticks to hit it. Cards provide a different kind of randomness than dice as well as a different play experience. Guitar Hero is very different from Dance Dance Revolution, though their underlying rules, goals, and mechanics are very similar. In this challenge, you'll start a game design from a particular set of components, mostly available around the house or in an office supply store. The components in the kit are chosen for how they can work together, but a broad variety of games are possible with them. What kind of game can you make when you can only use a few office supplies ... and what would you make if you iterated on your design using any materials you want?

**The Challenge**

Make a game that can be played by two or more people using only the materials in the kit described below under "Materials and Resources". Discuss how the design springs from and depends on the components used. Playtest the game and consider how the game could be revised using 'real' materials.

Laws of the Jungle  
They're Quite a Pair!  
Wave Craze  
A Fine Balance  
A Thank You Gift  
Recipe for Disaster  
The Slopes of Mount Everest  
A Board Game Surprise  
Game Mechanics Revolt

### Challenge Cards

#### Resources

Creating Content for Classes  
Classroom Set Up  
Premium Teacher Features  
Optional Reading Resources  
Assessment  
Quest Guide  
Comic PDFs

### How to Print/Save as PDF

For Teachers on [GamestarMechanic.com](http://GamestarMechanic.com)

The Team behind **Gamestar**

- 1 package of a small candy - we use a pack of Smarties because they work as a unit or are divisible
- 1 small 'better' candy - we use a Starburst
- 1 pointy eraserhead
- 1 sheet of color-coded label stickers - we use the sheets with circular stickers in four colors (usually red, yellow, green, blue) because these correspond with the paperclips
- 4-6 multicolor paper clips - we use a package from Staples that comes with six colors because the colors often correspond to the sticker colors)
- 1 gallon ziplock bag

#### Pacing:

45 minutes

#### Setup

Create enough kits for your whole group or class to each use a kit in groups of 3-5. Divide into groups and take a kit.

#### Design

Take 30 minutes to devise a game that can be played using only the materials in the kit. If you are running this with a class, apply a focus challenge such as making a game about a particular topic, or making a paper prototype of another game design project that you are working on. 15 minutes in, check the time and make sure that you are making a game that will be playable at the end of the 30 minutes. The requirements are:

1. Your game must be playable - a set of players must be able to take at least a couple of turns with the materials you have, and you must have a way to win the game.
2. You must write out an introduction to your game - the rules of the game or the framing/story.
3. You must give your game a name, even if it's a silly one, because that will call out to your players what the important parts of the game are or what the theme is.

#### Playtest

Take 5-10 minutes and have someone else play the game - if this is in a class, have several groups demonstrate their games and have other groups actually play a couple of turns or minutes in the game. Take another 5-10 minutes for playtesters to give notes back to designers.

#### Discuss

Discuss as a design team:

- Where your game concept originated. Was it a physical property of the materials, or some relationship between them, or another element of game design?
- If you were making a paper prototype of another game, how did you have to change your design to fit the materials that were given to you?
- What mechanics did the materials encourage, or make difficult?
- What are the proper components for your game. If you weren't restricted to paperclips and rubber bands, what would you use? Would those materials be as easy to find or make, and would the game play better with them?

#### How did it go?

At the end of this challenge, you should have:

- A completed prototype game design
- Notes on feedback and what you would next do to iterate on the game
- Notes on what you would do with the game

#### Comments

You have no permission to add comments.