STORY TIME

A CHALLENGE THAT WILL EXPLORE STORY MAKING AND TELLING

AIM: To plan and build a story with 3 parts

ITEMS NEEDED:
- Lots of LEGO pieces
- Base plates (either 32x32 or 16x16)
- Minifigures
- Pen and paper for planning

STEP 1: Plan - get students to plan their story first. They could draw pictures, or write down the information (for younger students you will need to help with this part).
Students need to plan at least 3 parts to their story:

1 - The beginning - set the scene or plot line clearly.
2 - The middle - what problem, challenge or task do the characters need to overcome? NOTE for older students they can plan as many middle sections as they need to create a complete story.
3 - The end - how does the story finish and how do the characters make it through their challenge?

STEP 2: Build!

STEP 3: Record the results. This could be through photos and a write up or via a video with narration of the story.

ALTERNATIVES & EXTENSIONS

This activity is an excellent way to allow students to present a story that is not written. This is especially great for students struggling to write or even visualise stories.
Above are the basic steps to follow for this activity, however, there are many ways to change this activity to suit different groups and learning levels.

Option 1: Recreating a Story. For this option, students will pick a book and build the story - you will need to spend some time planning for this - it could be written or verbal planning. Questions to consider include; What parts of the book are important to include? If someone from outside was to come in and see this, could they match your build to the book...how will you achieve this?
This can also be done as a whole class. For example, take "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" story by Eric Carle. Students can recreate each page of this story - starting with an egg on a leaf, then moving onto each of the days with the right number of pieces of food. Students would select a page of the story they like and build this. Once complete in turn they can either read the words that match their story or come up with their own creative version of what happens on their page.
EXTENSION: If you are working with older students this activity can still work with chapter books. After studying a full book students can group up and build an important scene that happens in their given chapter. Alternatively, after reading 1 chapter, get students to build what they felt was an important moment in that chapter. This is a great way to get ALL students involved in answering the question, rather than just the brave few who always put up their hand to answer the question.

Option 2: Turn the stories into something digital. Once the storyboards have been made you now have the perfect backdrop to work on filming and digital skills. Depending on where your students are at you can add minifigures and make a stop motion video with narration. You can get students to copy the build, adding 1 piece at a time, taking a photo of each step then turning this into a video of the building coming together. And of course, this could also be used for a classic storytelling opportunity where students will manipulate the minifigures by hand as they narrate the story and record.

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AIM: To plan and build a story with 3 parts

RICH EXPERIENCES

- **Recollection of a story -** recreating the main parts of a story helps children recap, comprehend, and understand the organisation of stories.
- **Imagination** - creating their own storyline requires a child to use their imagination and consider how their story may be interpreted through another medium other than written or drawn language.
- **Design and art** - story creating with bricks is art. The colour combinations, patterns, and how the bricks are assembled all contribute to the design and execution of the storyline.
- **Digital technology** - the use of narrating the story onto a device or using stop motion to record the story.

LINKS TO CURRICULUM

Te Whāriki

Mana reo- Communication
Children experience an environment where they experience the stories and symbols of their own and other cultures, by enjoying hearing and seeing stories and, retelling and creating them.
➡ This links to children understanding that symbols can be 'read' by others and that thoughts, experiences and ideas can be represented as words, pictures, and models.

Mana Tangata -Contribution
Children experience an environment where they are affirmed as individuals recognising and appreciating their own ability to learn.
➡ This links to children's ability to use memory, perspective taking, metacognition and other cognitive strategies for thinking, and the ability to make links between past, present and future.

New Zealand Curriculum

English
Students will use language features appropriately, showing some understanding of their effects including using oral, written and visual language features to create meaning and effect.
Students will organise texts, using a range of structures including organising and sequencing ideas and information with some confidence. (L2, L4)
➡ This links to students creating their storylines so there is a logical order to their builds and the visual representation can portray each part of the story.

Visual Arts
Students will share the ideas, feelings, and stories communicated by their own and others' objects and images (L2).
➡ This links to the variation in the stories created and told through this medium of bricks.

Digital Technology
Students will understand there is a relationship between a material used and its performance properties in a technological product (L2, L3).
➡ This links to students knowing which programme best records stop motion videos, narrative only recordings and the purpose and differences of each of these.

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WRITING PRACTICE

A CREATIVE WAY TO EXPLORE LETTER FORMATION AND RECOGNITION

AIM: To practice writing letters using LEGO as the medium

ITEMS NEEDED:
- Lots of basic LEGO pieces

SET UP:
1. Place the LEGO in the middle of the table or on a mat on the floor
2. Provide each student with 1 base plate to practice their writing on.
3. Optional: Paper & pen (or small whiteboards)

At its core, this activity is about presenting students with an alternative option to grow in confidence in their writing skills in a creative way.

Step 1: Provide students with a letter or word
Step 2: Get students to build this letter/word with the LEGO pieces provided

NOTE: If needed get students to write their letter/word on the paper/whiteboard to better visualise it.

ALTERNATIVES & EXTENSIONS

How you present this activity depends on the learning level and expertise of the students you are working with. This activity can be used as a full-class activity or in a one-on-one session.

OPTION 1: Letter recognition - This option is designed for students still learning to recognise and confidently form each letter in the alphabet.
For this option, you can have the letter already on the base and get students to copy it. You can have a list of letters for the students to practice (each student could have a custom list that is made for them based on their writing to focus on letters they regularly get incorrect). Or you could have the whole class/group involved and verbally give the group 1 letter at a time to build.
To help develop the understanding of these letters students can build creations that relate to that letter. For example A - Apple, Art, Ant, etc. F - Fish, Fly, Fan, Face, etc.

OPTION 2: Word practice - This option will see your students practice spelling words via a creative medium. This option could be included as a special LEGO word session for the whole class/group, or as a workstation students can use as they practice their spelling words, or in one-on-one sessions to support individual students in their word development and memory.

OPTION 3: Sentence fun! This option is all about creating words and seeing how/if they can fit together to make a sentence. Students will choose a word to create (this could be from a set list you give them or decide on a word themselves). Once all the words are written up out of LEGO on the base plates you can now have fun as a group creating different sentence combinations. Talk about the sentence meanings. What words or punctuation could be added to help it make more sense or change the meaning of the sentence?
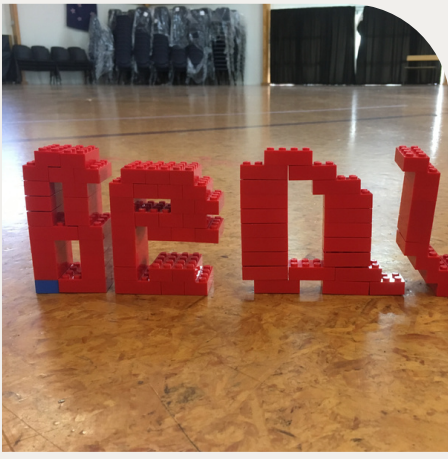
SPECIAL NOTE: Read through all the options and pick which is best for your students.
If you don't get it quite right the first time, make adjustments and try again. Remember to practice activities before presenting to help you develop your instructions, then get in there and try the activity alongside your students.

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AIM: To practice writing letters using LEGO as the medium

RICH EXPERIENCES

- **Letter recognition** - children learn to create letters using a different texture which will help solidify the formation of the letter when they are using their pencils or pens.
- **Spatial Awareness and shape recognition -** in the first few activity options the children are using their spatial knowledge to replicate the letter they are building.
- **Repetition** - children need skills they are learning to be repeated. This is a different way to cement basic writing skills, as the children consider the shape of the letter and how to build with LEGO to create the curves and straight lines to represent the letter/ word they are learning.
- **Tactile experience** - Drawing on the board before building will also give the student a visual of where the pieces need to go to form the letter or word. This tactile experience helps children who are sensory sensitive to advance in writing.

LINKS TO CURRICULUM

Te Whāriki

Mana reo- Communication

Children experience symbols and recognise these print symbols and concepts by using them with meaning and purpose.
➡ This links to children learning that writing is made-up of print symbols and by learning individual letters, hese can be combined to create words and later stories.

Mana aotūroa- Exploration

Children experience an environment where they learn to understand that trying things out, exploring, playing with ideas (as in how to form the letter out of bricks) and collaborating with others are important and valued ways of learning.
➡ This links to children exploring with this medium to make the letters of their name. That having help to do this is advantageous to helping them problem solve and sharing their ideas who have the same letters in their names will benefit everyone.

New Zealand Curriculum

English

Students will use language features appropriately, showing some understanding of their effects including writing legibly and with increasing fluency when creating texts and spelling most high frequency words correctly and shows growing knowledge of common spelling patterns (L2).
➡ This links to the formation of letters so they are readable, and the practice of spelling words using a different medium to solidify these words in their memory.
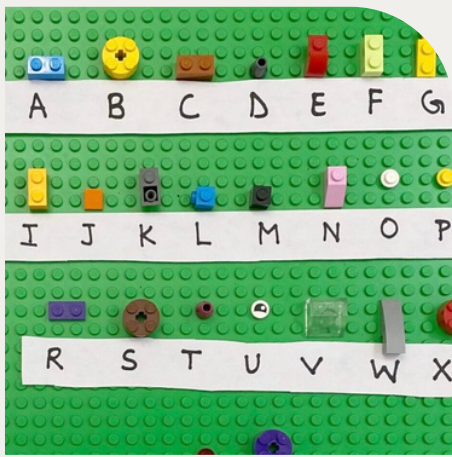Students will begin to organise texts, using simple sentence structures (L1).
➡ This links to the order of the words in the sentence and where they need to be placed to make a sentence that is comprehensive i.e.subject + verb + object.
➡

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CREATING CODES

A CREATIVE ACTIVITY FOCUSING ON MAKING AND BREAKING CODES

AIM: To create a secret message to be solved.

ITEMS NEEDED:
- A big variety of LEGO pieces
- Base plates (if you do not have base plates, then an a4 card or paper can work too)
- Paper, Pen, sticky tape

SET UP:
1. Place the LEGO in the middle of the table or on a mat on the floor
2. Provide each person or team with 2 base plates

Step 1: Decide if your students will work individually or as part of a team

Step 2: Get students to find a different piece of LEGO to represent each letter in the alphabet and place these out on the paper or base plate. If using a base plate this is where you will need the paper to write each letter and stick on. This is now their code key to breaking all the coded messages they will now make.

Step 3: Using the code they have developed make words or sentences that other students or teams will need to solve using their code key.

ALTERNATIVES & EXTENSIONS

NOTE: When using this activity make sure that your collection of LEGO pieces has at least 26 different pieces and these pieces are available multiple times.

There are an exciting variety of ways to use this activity - these options are not the only way to use it, so have some fun and extend beyond this activity sheet.

OPTION 1: Use this activity to practice spelling words

OPTION 2: Use this activity as a way for you to give instructions to the class - for example, students will come in after break time and will need to decipher your code to find out what activity they are to do for the afternoon.

OPTION 3: Use this activity to make fun messages that others in the class/group will decipher.

OPTION 4: Use this activity to create a treasure or scavenger hunt. This is a great way to include a whole class of students - or even use it in a mentoring situation where an older class of students prepares this for their younger buddy class. Students will pair each group up.
- Each team will need to discover a hiding place somewhere on the school grounds where they will place a game or activity (this activity could be a fitness exercise with instructions to do 10 burpees, or get a ball 5 times in a hoop. Or it could be a small book to read, or a game to play like snakes and ladders, or build a tower with 50 LEGO bricks & time how long it takes to do this).
- Students will then develop their LEGO code and write up their clues to get to their hiding spot with that code.
- Once all clues are complete, and games/challenges hidden in those spots, the game can begin. Teams will need to solve each team's clues, find the hiding spots, and complete the challenge/game.

NOTE: This option will take considerable planning and preparation on the student's behalf. With regards to their 'hiding' spot, please get teams to check with you that their choice is safe and sensible before proceeding.
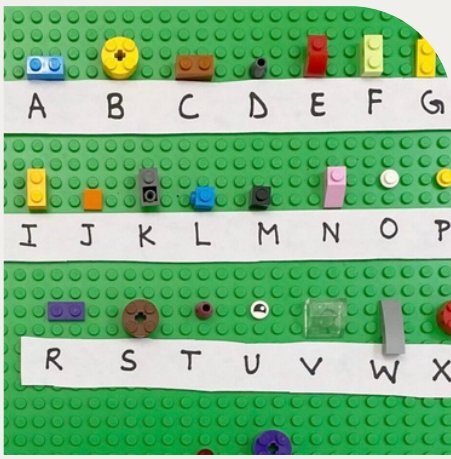
CREATING CODES

A CREATIVE ACTIVITY FOCUSING ON MAKING, AND BREAKING CODES

AIM: To create a secret message to be solved.

RICH EXPERIENCES

- **Creativity** - the range of pieces and coding styles that children can use in this activity is endless. It is an activity concept that expands from the simplistic breaking of code words to the complex creating of a treasure hunt.
- **Collaboration** - Making the code clear to others to decipher, working together as a team to come up with the code and clue, finding and completing the codes and activities together all require team work. This is an excellent activity for those who may be hard of hearing as the code (visual prompt) is what is giving the instructions.
- **Problem solving** - thinking about the complexity of the code and how easy it will Beto solve. Also considering how many pieces are available to work with so students can complete the code without having missing pieces. If some of the shapes or colours are similiar being able to clearly differientiate between them (think of those who are colour blind).
- **Real world coding** - make connections to codes used in the past to send messages e.g. morse code, and new technology coding e.g. computers and gaming

LINKS TO CURRICULUM

Te Whāriki

Mana reo- Communication
Children discover language develops in meaningful contexts where children have a need to know and a reason to communicate.
Children recognise print symbols and concepts (coding) and use them with enjoyment, meaning and purpose
➡ This links to kaiako encouraging the use of both verbal and non-verbal communication approaches used by each child.

Mana tangata - Contribution
Children are encouraged to learn with and alongside others using a range of strategies and skills to develop their awareness of the strategies they use to learn new skills and generate and refine working theories.
➡ This links to children problem solving, collaborating, and compromising, while enjoying the fun of creating something for others to enjoy and use.

New Zealand Curriculum

English
Students will show a developing understanding of how texts are shaped for different purposes and audiences (L3).
➡ This links to students knowing who will be breaking their code and how easy or complex they need to make it.

Social Sciences
Students understand how time and change affect people's lives.
➡ This links to understanding that codes change over time and the purpose of what they mean to different people can influence what happens in their lifetime.

Ako Leadership

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