

# USING LOOSE PARTS TO SPARK INQUIRY

Loose parts are materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, and taken apart and put back together in multiple ways. Loose parts can be used alone or combined with other materials. There is no set of specific directions for materials that are considered loose parts.

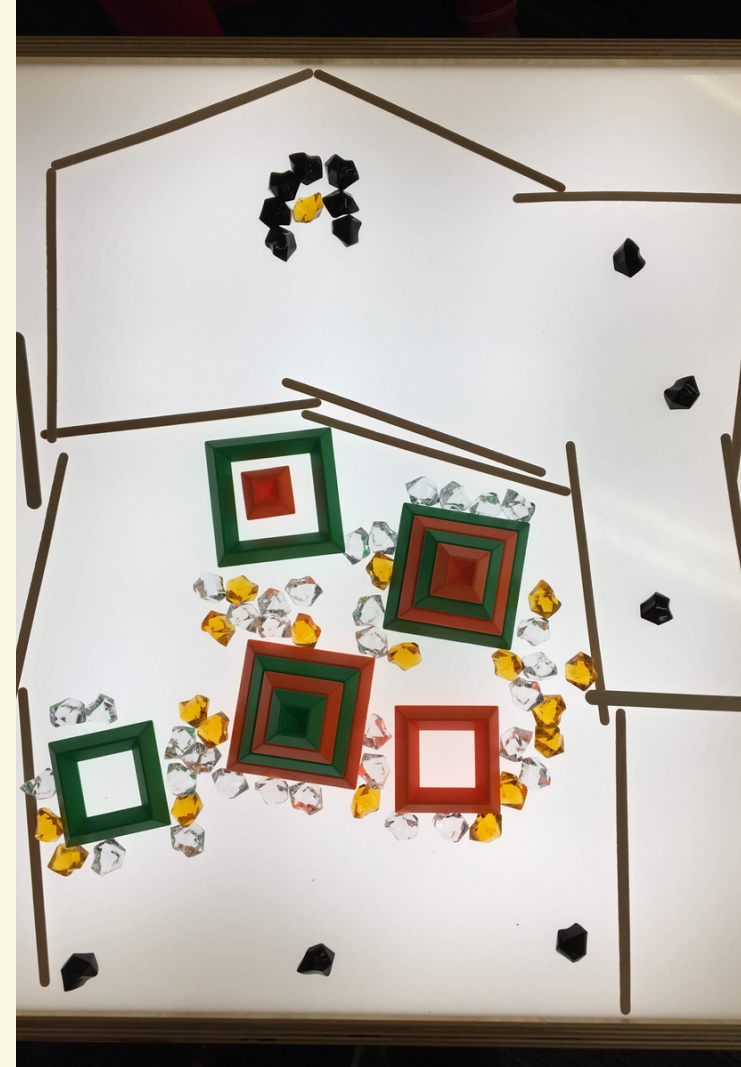
The child is the direction.

<https://extension.psu.edu/programs/betterkidcare/early-care/tip-pages/all-loose-parts-what-does-this-mean>



Using loose parts to start an inquiry gives the students voice and choice into the direction of the inquiry and educators can understand their prior knowledge of the topic being studied.

Before starting, look to the curriculum to see which expectations might be uncovered during the course of the inquiry and begin to write the Essential Questions that will guide the inquiry. Choose the materials you think will engage and inspire the learners to create and communicate about their learning.



Students have access to both a loose parts station and various invitations in the Library Learning Commons. They often come to explore, play and show their learning. Loose parts provide many students with an opportunity to showcase their learning in a visual way that highlights their creativity and reasoning skills.



How might you use loose parts in your library?

- To illustrate an important scene from a text
- To create 3D maps and engage in geoliteracy skills
- To assess students' prior knowledge of a topic
- To offer a low-tech maker opportunity
- To provide a calming zone where students can engage in play and different textures
- As an exit ticket to share the learning from an activity
- And more!

