DESIGN YOUR OWN TOY (Visual Arts/STEAM)
Grades CD–3

Objectives:

1. Students will use and combine materials, techniques, and processes to create artwork.
2. Students will combine elements of art to construct 2D or 3D artwork.
3. Students will identify and describe characters and ideas through creative expression.

Materials:

- *The Velveteen Rabbit* board book by Margery Williams Bianco (read aloud here)
- Drawing paper or construction paper
- Pencils, crayons, markers
- Glue
- Scissors
- Pipe cleaners
- Yarn
- Fabric scraps or felt
- Cotton balls
- Buttons, beads, or pom-poms
- Optional: "Design-a-Toy Planner Sheet"

Directions:

- Tell students, "When you come to the Gaillard Center you will watch the performance, *Velveteen*, which was adapted from the popular book, *The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams."
- Explain that the book is about a young girl named Lulu who has just moved in with her grandmother and is adjusting to a big change in her life. To comfort her, Gran gives Lulu a special toy, the Velveteen Rabbit, which soon becomes her dear friend.
- Share with students, "As Lulu and Velveteen grow together through imagination and play, the rabbit begins to wonder what it means to become 'real.' Along the way, Velveteen meets other toys and dreams of living outside with real rabbits and learns what it means to become 'real.'"
- Next, discuss that the toys in the story learn what makes them special or unique. Ask students, "What makes a toy special or unique?" "Do you have a toy that is special to you?"

Activity directions:

- Read *The Velveteen Rabbit* board book by Margery Williams Bianco (read aloud here).
- Explain that today's workshop combines art, engineering, and imagination, and that students will design their own toy and bring it to life, just like in the story of *The Velveteen Rabbit.*
- Ask students, "Have you ever thought about how toys are designed?"
- Share with students that toy designers use creativity, engineering, and art to create toys that are fun, interesting, and sometimes even interactive. They often think about:
    - What the toy looks like
    - What materials it is made from
    - How it moves or functions

  Step 1: Plan your toy (Optional: Use "Design a toy planner sheet")
    - Students brainstorm or sketch their toy idea
        - Name of the toy
        - What it looks like (shape and size, patterns and textures, special features)
        - What materials it might use
        - What it can do (move, stretch, roll, etc.)

  Step 2: Create your toy
    - Students use the provided materials to build their toy as either:
        - A 2D design (drawing/collage)
        - A 3D model (constructed toy)
    - Set a timer (15–20 minutes) for designing

  Step 3: Share & gallery walk
    - Students display their toy designs.
    - Allow time for a gallery walk, where students observe and compliment each other's work.
    - Encourage students to share:
        - "My toy is called…"
        - "It is special because…"
        - "I used these materials because…".

Conclusion:

- Explain that just like in *Velveteen*, toys can come to life through imagination and creativity.
- When students attend the performance at the Gaillard Center, they can look for:
    - How toys are represented on stage
    - How costumes, props, and design help tell the story

SC College and Career Ready Standards:

- **VA.CR.NH.2** – Use and combine materials, techniques, and processes to create artwork.
- **VA.CR.NM.1.2** – Combine elements of art to construct 2D or 3D artwork.
- **ELA.AOR.1.1** – Identify and describe characters and ideas through creative expression.
- **ELA.AOR.1** - Evaluate and critique key literary elements that enhance and deepen meaning within and across texts.

Design a Toy Planner

Name of toy	
What is your toy inspired by? (a toy you own/want, a character, your imagination)	
Size/shape	
Color(s)	
Patterns or textures	
Special features	
What can it do? (move, stretch, roll, fly etc.)	

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