



*the* CREATIVE TABLE  
*Quick Course*

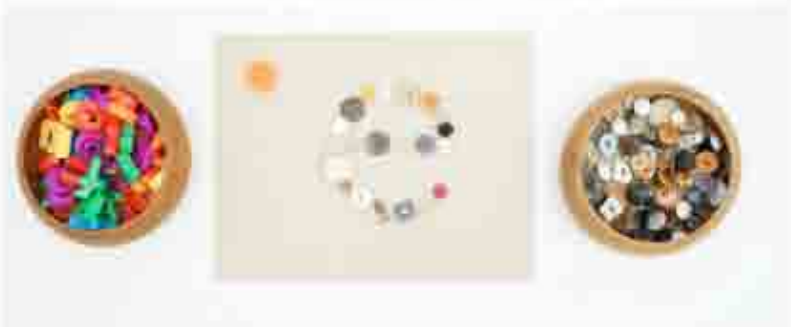
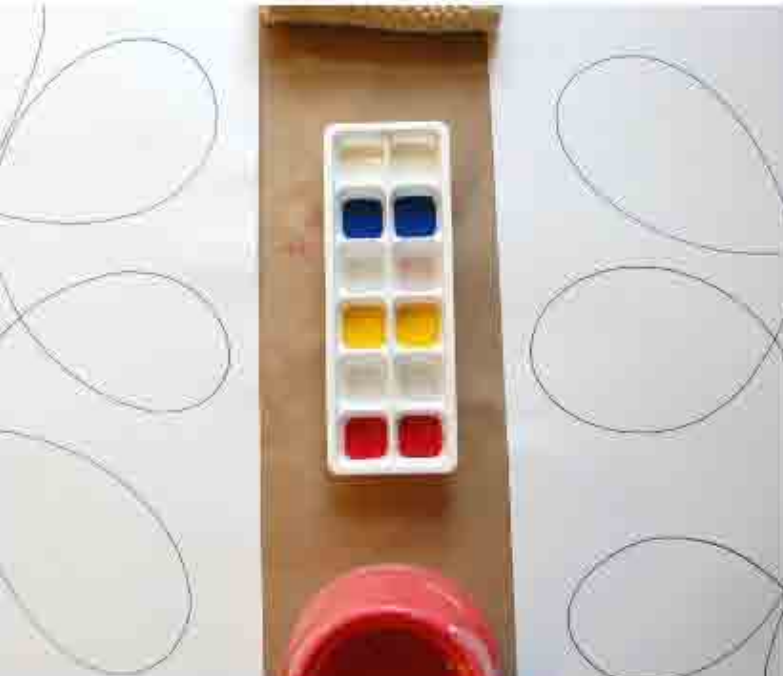
7 CREATIVE PROMPTS  
TO GET YOU STARTED

with kids ages 2-6



TINKERLAB®

[www.tinkerlab.com](http://www.tinkerlab.com)



# 1. THE PROCESS



## *Simple Invitations to Create for Active Families*

It's late in the day, the kids are restless, you have dinner to prepare, and TV is not an option. What to do?

Imagine that you take five minutes to gather a few basic supplies from the pantry and then another five minutes to set them up on a table for your child to discover.

Your child is intrigued by the unique materials and then plays freely to invent and create, all the while following her own growing ideas. Meanwhile, you might co-create nearby, provide ongoing support with open-ended questions, or seize the opportunity to make dinner!

This is the spirit of the Creative Table Project.

Not only does this kind of set-up help parents, but there are tremendous benefits to children as well.

When children are given free-reign to experiment with materials, they

- + learn about the physical limitations and possibilities of materials
- + gain confidence to realize their own ideas
- + are motivated to ask questions
- + are encouraged to experiment, test ideas, and fail forward
- + will pose and solve problems as they develop new understandings

Are you on board and ready to get started? Fantastic! On to step 2...

## 2. SET UP A TINKERSPACE

Congratulations! The first step is to commit yourself to supporting creative growth in your young child. Now it's time to take stock of your space and set it up for success.

To establish a welcoming space that celebrates the processes of experimentation, exploration, and creative thinking, follow these basic guidelines:

**1. Find a designated space for making:** this could be a play room, corner of your living space, kitchen table (with nearby storage so that you can still eat meals!), or a patio. Small spaces are not off limits! You can always carve out a corner with a small desk or child-sized table.

The space does not have to be grand, but it should be dedicated to making.

Take a look at our Tinkering Spaces series on the TinkerLab blog and check out two of our favorite Pinterest boards for inspiration:

**Tinkering Spaces:** <http://tinkerlab.com/tinkering-spaces-makerspace/>

**Kid Spaces on Pinterest:** <https://www.pinterest.com/tinkerlab/kids-spaces/>

**Art Studios on Pinterest:** <https://www.pinterest.com/tinkerlab/art-studio-ideas/>

**2. Set up shelving or a cabinet** with materials that are easily accessible to your young maker. This is where you'll store paper, crayons, paint, brushes, collage supplies, and more.

If you have children of different ages and are concerned about giving younger ones access to potentially problematic supplies, keep those supplies on a high shelf or behind a locked cabinet. The window of time for this minor inconvenience will probably be short.

**3. Gather basic supplies.** Start with a few versatile materials that can be used over and over again in a variety of configurations. The list on the next page is a terrific place to start.



## 3. BASIC SUPPLIES

*This list of supplies will get you started on setting up a creative space for your young maker. Feel free to add other items that strike your fancy and visit our resources page for more products that we love: <http://tinkerlab.com/resources/> This list contains affiliate links.*

1. **Tempera Paint** (washable) <http://amzn.to/238HZ1X>
2. **White Construction Paper** (large size) <http://amzn.to/1SLvQv3>
3. **Paint Brushes** (5-piece set) <http://amzn.to/1Sx8aHU>
4. **Crayons.** Short crayons are good for supporting pencil grip for little hands Crayola Palm Crayons <http://amzn.to/25XPxqM>
5. **Markers.** Crayola Pip-Squeaks are good for little hands, and I like this on-the-go set <http://amzn.to/238KjWT>
6. **Liquid Watercolors** Sax Set of 8 assorted colors <http://amzn.to/1ZWhTgJ>
7. **White Glue.** Elmer's Washable No-Run School Glue <http://amzn.to/1TttD9W>
8. **Tape and Stickers.** Washi tape, paper tape, clear tape
9. **Scissors.** Blunt tip for little kids <http://amzn.to/232n4kD> Pointed-tip <http://amzn.to/238KnWG> Left-handed <http://amzn.to/1VmWD3b>
10. **Play Dough.** See the Best Play Dough Recipe: <http://tinkerlab.com/rainbow-play-dough/>
11. **Treasures:** Feathers, Sequins, Pom-poms. Be cautious using small objects with young children.
12. **Recyclables:** Cardboard boxes, paper tubes, yogurt containers
13. **Low-heat glue gun:** <http://amzn.to/1qmFzyz>
14. **Easel** and a roll of easel paper. The Melissa & Doug Deluxe Easel includes trays on both sides so that two children can create simultaneously, <http://amzn.to/1ZWkEyL> and IKEA Mala Eael is a great value, <http://www.ikea.com/us/en/catalog/products/50021076/>

## 4. A WEEK OF PROMPTS

Now you're ready to set up your prompts and create!

These process-oriented, experiment-based activities tap into elements of design, building, tinkering, and science, and they all use basic supplies and maybe a few extra goodies.

Click over to these activities on [www.TinkerLab.com](http://www.TinkerLab.com) for further information about each set-up. Spend a few minutes clearing the table, preparing and setting up supplies, and finally inviting your child to create. A favorite encouraging comment is, "I wonder what you could do with these materials..."

See the *Mini Course Supplies* on the next page for your full prep and shopping list.

### 7 DAYS OF CREATIVITY-BOOSTING PROMPTS

1. Gumdrops or Grape Sculptures

<http://tinkerlab.com/gumdrop-sculptures/>

2. Tape and Paper Bags

<http://tinkerlab.com/tape-art/>

3. Make an Animal Mask

<http://tinkerlab.com/art-prompt-how-to-make-an-animal-mask-out-of-paper/>

4. Paint and Looping Lines

<http://tinkerlab.com/creative-invitation-paint-and-looping-lines/>

5. Baking soda and vinegar

<http://tinkerlab.com/fun-science-experiments-vinegar-baking-soda/>

6. Stickers and Frames

<http://tinkerlab.com/creative-table-a-sticker-composition-with-frames/>

7. Playdough and tools

<http://tinkerlab.com/rainbow-play-dough/>

# 5. MINI COURSE SUPPLIES

## PREP AND SHOPPING LIST

- Gumdrops, Grapes, or Marshmallows, or balls of Playdough
- Toothpicks
- Tape
- Paper Bag/s
- Hole Punch
- Scissors
- Elastic String or yarn
- Permanent marker such as Sharpie
- Tempera Paint
- Paint Brushes
- Ice cube tray
- Container for cleaning brushes
- Baking Soda
- Vinegar
- Bowls in various sizes
- Colorful office stickers
- Card Stock or other heavyweight paper
- Playdough Ingredients: Flour, Water, Salt, Cream of Tartar
- Water





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with  
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