



What Makes a Maker Space?

A Maker space is, in its simplest definition, a space where people make things. It's a place where learning is a continually unfolding experience with no rigid agenda: a process driven by wonder.

A Maker space should encourage creativity, with hands-on opportunities to design, experiment and invent. They are highly collaborative learning environments where students gather to tinker and explore using a variety of tools and materials.

These spaces should be every bit as unique as the school cultures they represent.

It's not about the tools: it's about the opportunity to make something entirely new.

Maker spaces share some traits with the traditional shop class, the science lab, home economics class, and the art studio. They don't need to be filled with expensive hardware like 3-D printers (though those are very cool!). It could be as simple as LEGOs and cardboard. Whatever materials are necessary to create a direct connection with a subject.

STEAM education, collaborative learning, inquiry-based instruction, project-based learning, differentiated instruction, and student-centered instruction are all aspects of the Maker movement: one that empowers students with the tools they need to best prepare for an uncertain future. Maker education is also a powerful opportunity in helping students with diverse learning styles to succeed.

College and life in general requires students to take risks, to problem solve on the fly, to innovate, and to be resourceful: making the most of what they have. Maker education fully embraces this kind of learning.

STEAM education is multidisciplinary and curriculum based: with students bringing different strengths and challenges to the table, and teachers creating learning experiences with certain educational standards and objectives to meet.

The Maker mindset takes STEAM and makes it even more hands-on, which tends to be particularly appealing to students (especially those with energy to burn).