

BLOCK PLAY:

The placement of additional materials in the construction area is an excellent way to set up provocations that challenge, scaffold and extend children's learning.

An intentionally designed block center encourages students to construct meaning of their world, to encounter problems and discover multiple solutions, to interact and share with others, to extend their creativity and to reflect on their discoveries.

Ideas for Additional Materials that encourages...

... socio-dramatic play skills which increases a wide-range of cognitive and developmental skills:

- hard hats
- empty food containers
- steering wheel
- small animals, people, vehicles
- doll house furniture
- hoses or tubing
- fabric
- rugs
- buckets, baskets, crates
- plastic lids
- kitchen utensils
- egg cartons
- chess pieces
- sticks
- towels for land, water, etc.



... *exploration of life sciences:*

- artificial plants,
- plastic animals and
- accessories to build habitats for the animals



... *understanding of physical sciences:*

- balance scales
- pulleys
- mirrors
- pipes



...engagement in literacy

- clipboard with markers and paper
- tongue depressors for attaching signs
- books about construction
- pictures of buildings with which the children are familiar
- basket of crayons, scissors, markers, paper, tape, etc. to make and decorate signs to add to the structures and to design a “blueprint” or map of the structure
- “wood cookies” with letters
- tiles with letters to make signs for structures
- environmental print signs to add to buildings
- street signs
- magnetic or foam letters



... discovery of spaces and geography

- maps
- road signs
- materials to make road signs
- flat pieces of lumber to use for bridges and roofs
- blue prints



... exploration of math concepts



- pipes and other materials for ramps
- objects that are three-dimensional such as tin cans
- round cork pads for plants
- tape measures, rulers, yard sticks
- large dice
- items for counting, classification, symmetry, patterning etc. as well as other imaginative uses...

- thread spools
- tiles
- gems
 - switches and knobs
 - keys
 - canning lids
 - corks
 - colored cubes
 - screw and bolts
 - teddy bear counters





... appreciation for the Earth and environment:

- acorns
- shells
- rocks
- pinecones
- twigs
- tree stumps
- wood cookies
- seeds



***Note:** The above lists are simply suggestions. Obviously, no teacher will ever put out all these accessories at once. However, the larger your supply of odds and ends, the better you will be able to help the children in the block corner when they begin to need accessories for specific purposes or as a provocation for further exploration and problem-solving.*