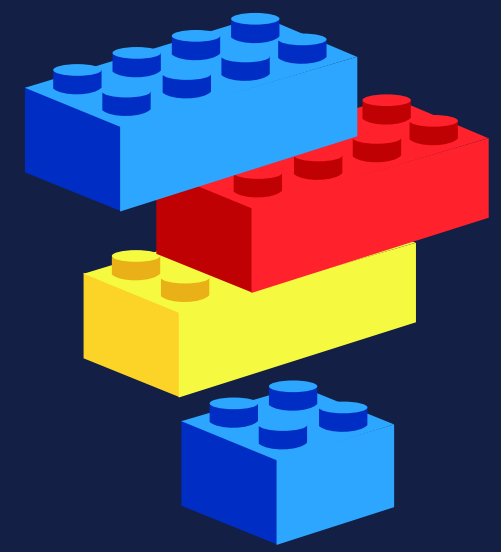
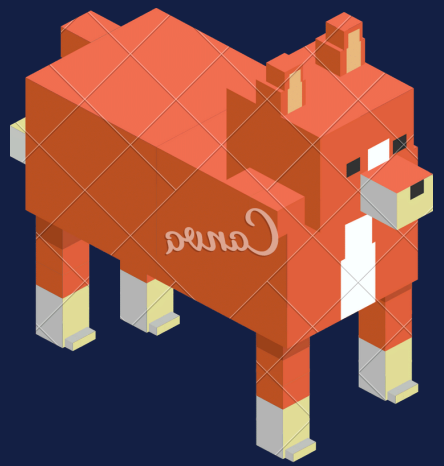
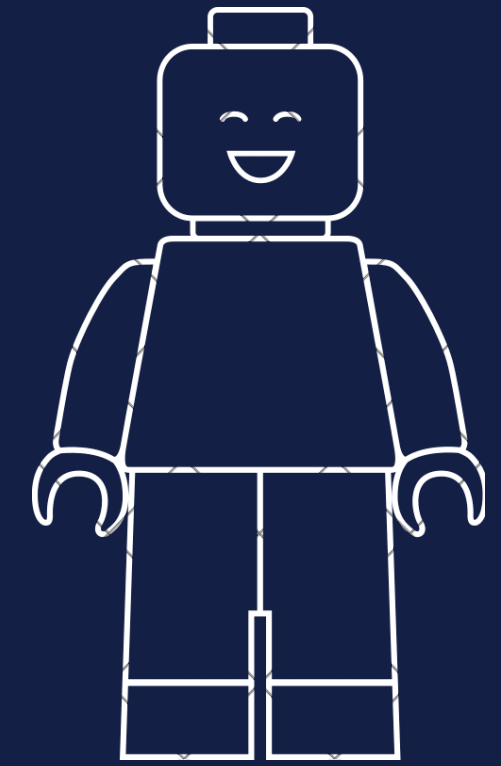


**INFINITE LEARNING:  
THE CASE FOR PLAY  
AT  
THE**  
*Academic Library*



Prepared by: Lilia Wright  
INFO 287

# Objective:

LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® (LSP) is a methodology used to unlock creativity and foster communication using LEGO bricks. The purpose of this brief is to make the case for creating LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® workshops and a LEGO® Play Station to encourage college students to explore, create, play, and build human connections within an academic library setting.

# Background and Methodology

LSP was developed in 1996 by the LEGO® Group owner Kjeld Kristiansen and two professors from IMD in Switzerland (LEGO, n.d.). They explored using LEGO bricks as an interactive tool to create and exchange ideas.

They discovered “the creative, reflective process of making something prompts the brain to work in a different way, and can unlock new perspectives” (LEGO, n.d.). The bricks represent concepts or situations and participants use storytelling to convey their thoughts on those concepts or situations.

# KEY Players in LSP:

## The Facilitator:

A person who prompts a group of people with build challenges, keeps track of time, and facilitates discussion ensuring all participants share their stories.



## The Participants:

A group of people participating in the building challenges and sharing their experiences. The number of participants can range between 3-20 people.



# The Process of LSP

## Phase 1: The prompt

The facilitator asks participants to build a basic model as a warm-up.

## Phase 2: Creation

The participants build their models within a couple of minutes.

## Phase 3: Sharing their creation

The participants share what their model represents through storytelling. The facilitator introduces another prompt with more complexity repeating the process.

# LSP in Action:

Liverpool Case Study by Dr. Aimee Blackledge who conducted a 3-hour workshop to aid” first-year postgraduate researchers develop and apply skills and mind-sets in creative problem-solving.”

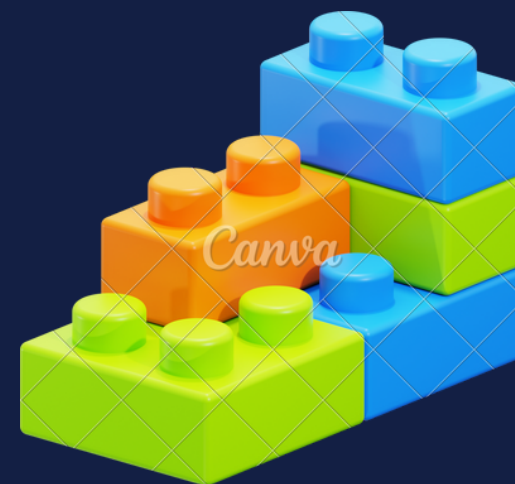
## Round 1:

Dr. Blackledge led participants to construct a basic model, and each participant shared what their model represented.



## Round 2:

Dr. Blackledge prompted participants to build a model of their immediate goals as a researcher. Each participant shared what their models represented.



## Round 3:

Dr. Blackledge prompted participants to build a model that reflects their current life situation. Each participant shared what their models represented.



## LSP in Action:

During the 4th and 5th Rounds, participants created models that represented obstacles in achieving their objectives. After they shared their stories, they conducted peer interviews to discuss what measures they took to address their current issues.

At the end of the session, participants created an action plan.

Participants learned how to identify and reflect on the challenges they faced. Participants enhanced their communication and collaboration skills while gaining the ability to view their current situations from new perspectives, fostering the development of creative problem-solving abilities.

# The case for PLAY:

LSP based on the thought “cognitive processes such as learning and memory are strongly influenced by the way we use our bodies to interact with the physical world.” This allows the brain to “reduce” its workload by giving meaning to tangible objects (LEGO®, n.d.).

“Where imaginations play, learning happens” (Thomas, D., & Brown, J. S. 2011).  
Playing allows people to engage in active learning.

“Play can have tangible outcomes on community building, student success, and knowledge creation” (Williams & Del Rio, 2022).



# Research

Alan Wheeler, a librarian at Middlesex University used Lego® Serious Play® in library workshops to instruct students on how to use library resources (2023). Students participated in active learning rather than sitting in a lecture. Wheeler also conducted LSP workshops based on individual subject areas such as political science and nursing.

Reeve et al. conducted a pilot workshop at De Montfort University with 37 first year undergraduate students and the students found the workshop beneficial (2021). Students were surveyed after the workshop.

From a participant: “I’ve learnt that other students are in the same shoes as me in terms of finding the workload high... everyone has to adjust to university life regarding studies, accommodation and social life” (Reeve et al., 2021). The LSP workshop provided a safe environment for students to express their feelings in a tangible manner and participants provided support to one another. Several universities have implemented LSP across various disciplines.

# Benefits

## Community Engagement:

LSP encourages communication and community engagement. “It is the engagement that happens between these individuals and how they work together that will transform collaborative spaces and the future of academic libraries” (Lotts, 2016). This also provides the opportunity for Library Staff and Students/Faculty to interact.

## Creativity and Innovation::

LSP allows participants to use their imagination and think through a problem-solving process.

## Well-being

Playing with LEGO® bricks reduces stress (Shields et al., 2020).

# Challenges:

## Time Constraints:

The typical LSP workshop is about 3-4 hours. The University of Cambridge has successfully been able to trim the timing down to 90 minutes (University of Cambridge, 2020).

## The Term Play:

Play can have a negative connotation in an academic setting.

Academic settings are traditionally perceived as “serious.”

## The Term Toy:

LEGO® bricks are considered toys and can have a negative implication. Toys are “meant for children.”

## How does LSP fit into the library's current mission?

Libraries are “center[s] for lifelong learning” (Stephens, 2014). Part of the UC Davis Library Strategic Plan is Goal 3.2, which states “develop technology, networks, and partnerships to strengthen research collaboration and foster interdisciplinary innovation on campus” (UC Davis, n.d.).

Lego® Serious Play® allows library users to tap into creativity, innovation, and collaborate in an unconventional way. The library is in a unique position to facilitate infinite learning. “People will visit the library, both in person or virtually, and discover something new and outside-the-box to satisfy their curiosity” (Stephens, 2014). Allowing library users to stay, explore, and play will encourage active learning.

# How does LSP fit into the library's current mission?

In addition to fostering collaboration, innovation, and creativity LEGOs are useful tools for stress relief. Several universities have used LEGO® bricks as a method to reduce stress during finals week.

Wednesday, December 11



**Lego-inspired Unicorn**  
Be a unicorn in a field of horses! Build your own dazzling, Lego-inspired unicorn masterpiece!

First come first serve.

Time: 10AM-2PM

The University of Nebraska Omaha implemented LEGO bricks as part of their De-Stress Fest at the library (n.d.). The University of Illinois Chicago listed a “build your own unicorn” with LEGO bricks as part of their DeStress Fest (2024).

# Steps to Implementation

“The library as creative classroom means we approach the learning opportunities we create with thought, user-directed planning, and insights from research” (Stephens, 2016).

**Based on research the 1st goal is to start small: Create a play area**

LEGO® bricks are placed on tables in the lobby with building prompts. The first floor is dedicated to group studying, removing noise as a potential issue. Students are welcome to build, take selfies, and tag the library on social media. Survey students for feedback with a paper questionnaire or a QR code to a web-based short survey.

## Training:

Librarians interested in facilitating LSP should attend training sessions and read about the LSP methodology. There is a cost associated with obtaining certification. There are also free webinars online through INTHREACE and LSP METHOD.

# Steps to Implementation

## Marketing:

Social media, newsletters, and library website.

## Connection:

Approach Faculty who may be interested in the library hosting an LSP workshop during a discussion course. There is the potential to invite first year undergraduate students to an LSP workshop.

## Evaluation:

LSP workshop and LEGO® play station area - review surveys and feedback from participants.  
Adjust workshops and play area as needed.

# Room for Growth:

## Opportunity for Engagement with Alumni:

LEEDS University Business School invited their Alumni to participate in a LSP workshop to share their stories post-graduation (2024). LSP can provide the opportunity to reconnect with Alumni.

## Small LEGO® Kits:

Kits can be checked out at the circulation desk and provide students the opportunity to take LEGO® bricks home for recreational use.



(LEEDS, 2024)



# Conclusion

The library is in a unique position to facilitate infinite learning. Several universities have already implemented LSP across various disciplines. Although LSP does possess some challenges, providing workshops and a LEGO® Play Station will encourage college students to explore, create, play, and build human connections within an academic library setting.



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