

Critical Skills and Practice

Lab B: Serious Play

In this lab you will use LEGO Serious Play, a method that uses LEGO bricks to build 3D models of ideas and problems. The method was originally developed for business strategy work, but it also works well for practising communication and reflection skills. It has four steps: challenge, build, share, and reflect. In the challenge step you are given a prompt to build something. In the build step you construct your own model using LEGO bricks, working alone. In the share step you describe your model and your building process to the rest of your group. In the reflect step your group discusses what the different models reveal. You will run the four steps twice, with two different challenges. Building a physical model forces you to make your thinking visible in a way that talking alone does not. Sharing your model also gives you practice explaining your reasoning clearly to other people, a skill you will need throughout your degree and career. You build your model individually, then share and reflect in a group of 5-7 people.

1. Activity 1: Tower (45 minutes)

Challenge

Build the tallest tower you can.

Build (10 minutes)

Build your own model. You have 10 minutes.

Share (20 minutes)

In your lab group, each person takes a turn telling the story of their model. Describe:

- What your approach was when you started building
- How that approach changed, if it did
- Your reflection on your final build

Take turns. Each person shares for [number] minutes.

Reflect (15 minutes)

Reflect as a group on the following:

- What did the models have in common?
- Where did they differ most?

- Did people interpret "tallest" and "tower" differently?

2. Activity 2: Best Duck (45 minutes)

Challenge

Build the best duck you can.

Build (10 minutes)

Build your own model. You have 10 minutes.

Share (20 minutes)

In your lab group, each person takes a turn telling the story of their model. Describe:

- What your approach was when you started building
- How that approach changed, if it did
- Your reflection on your final build

Take turns. Each person shares for [number] minutes.

Reflect (15 minutes)

Reflect as a group on the following:

- What did the models have in common?
- Where did they differ most?
- Did people interpret "best" and "duck" differently?

3. Clean Up (15 minutes)

Please put all Lego pieces back in their box and return them to the lab demonstrator.

4. Wrap-Up (5 minutes)