

APPENDIX D

LANGUAGE USE

These examples are intended as springboards for experimenting with language use, in response to a variety of situations. A general rule of thumb is to search for language that discourages single-word responses (e.g., yes, no, OK, sure) and/or motivates action and engagement. We encourage you to use this as a point of personal reflection or as a spark for discussion among all those contributing to the space. What additional situations and possible language might you consider?

| SITUATION | LANGUAGE IDEAS |
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| A child is frustrated with their project or stuck with a particular challenge. | <p>“It looks like you’re really struggling with this. What kind of help do you need? I wonder if someone else has encountered the same problem. Let’s check.”</p> <p>“I hear your frustration. I would be frustrated too after so much work. Would you like to take a break and come back to it? Perhaps you can help others with the battery connection you got working earlier?”</p> <p>“That doesn’t make any sense to me either. How cool is it that we have this mystery? I wonder what’s going on? When you figure it out, can you tell me so that I can share it with everyone? If not, we can all work together to figure it out.”</p> |
| You’d like to invite conversation and learn more about a project. | <p>“Whoa, that’s a crazy number of LEDs and wires! I see some LEDs are on, while others turn off when you plug that one in. What are your ideas about what’s happening? This would be handy as an example of how complicated this all can be. How would you feel if I shared it?”</p> <p>“That’s an awesome and surprising use of felt, leaves, and wire. What’s the story about how and why you chose these materials?”</p> |
| You want to reinforce engagement, persistence, and a community of shared support. | <p>“Wow, you really stuck with this and worked through all of those problems. Would it be OK if I sent others to you for help with this kind of thing?”</p> <p>“Have you drawn any of these setups? I’d love to be able to share them with everyone.”</p> <p>“Can I take a picture of this to use as an example if someone gets stuck? What else do you think might be helpful to share?”</p> <p>“I notice you’ve worked incredibly hard on this and have still taken time to help others when they’ve been stuck. I wonder about where you got your inspirations and who might have helped you. Did any ideas come to you when you were helping with other projects?”</p> |
| A young maker is having a hard time getting started with open-ended explorations. | <p>“I hear that you’re having a hard time getting started and would prefer an example. I do have some if you’d like, but how about waiting a bit and seeing what others are trying out? Perhaps something will inspire you. Try just messing around first, just playing and having fun. I’ll check back with you in a bit to see how you’re feeling.”</p> <p>“I do have something that I’d like to show later as a possibility. Can I show it to you first and see what you make of it? I could use your help figuring out what kinds of things it might be useful for. I’d love to have you share it and your ideas, if you like.”</p> |