



Listening Time:



32:17

SEASON 3, EPISODE 1

Imagination Time!

Using our imaginations might seem like a basic part of childhood, but imagination plays an important role in childhood and in life. Imagination helps people build creativity and independence. Kids learn that they can form their own ideas rather than waiting for others to tell them the answers. Using our imaginations also builds problem solving skills and social skills. Often, children work together as they are imagining — growing empathy and learning to collaborate with others.

As grown-ups, we should look for opportunities to encourage children to imagine — and give kids the opportunity to take the lead. And WE should keep using OUR imaginations.

In this episode, three kids — Shaelan, Sameia and Hunter — discuss the power of imagination with Todd and then journey together to the Land of Qook-a-lackas at the invitation of the Qook-a-lacka Mayor, who needs help imagining a new playground for the Qook-a-leekies.

Coming soon: A companion interview, in which Todd chats with the award winning creator of "Not a Box" and many other classics, Antoinette Portis. We highly recommend her books as an intro to how we can cultivate imaginative play in young children. Also, check out the activities suggested on her [website](#).



Design a Playground for Qook-a-leekies

K-3rd Grade



Goals

- ♥ Inspire creative problem solving
- ♥ Develop imagination skills
- ♥ Cultivate out-of-the-box thinking

Instructions



Play the Episode

If the class has not yet listened to the Little Kids, Big Hearts "Imagination Time!" episode, start by listening! It's wherever you listen to podcasts. Learn more (or listen) at playsparkler.org/podcast.

Materials



Get Ready! Here's what you'll need:

- ♥ Paper, crayons, markers and/or colored pencils
- ♥ Optional: Make it 3D with clay, blocks, cardboard or other recycling objects, or magnetiles
- ♥ Your imagination!

Activity



The Mayor needs help designing a new playground! You can pause the episode at about 16 minutes and invite everyone to design their OWN version of the Qook-a-leekie's Playground along with Shaelan, Sameia and Hunter.

Some tips for getting started:

- ♥ There are no rules In the Land — gravity, safety and logic are not necessary!
- ♥ Students can work in teams to collaborate or work separately.
- ♥ Remember to name your playground!
- ♥ Ask the group to brainstorm snack Ideas to be served at the playground's concession stand.
- ♥ When everyone is finished imagining, invite the students to share their playgrounds with the group.



Little Kids, Big Hearts Podcast

Learning Extensions

Object Improv

Inspired by Antoinette Portis' Books

K-3rd Grade



Goals

- ♥ Encourage self-expression
- ♥ Practice quick thinking
- ♥ Cultivate imagination and playfulness

Instructions



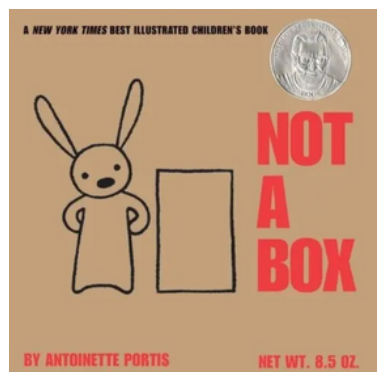
Play the Episode

If the class hasn't yet listened to the Little Kids, Big Hearts "Imagination Time!" episode, start by listening! It's wherever you listen to podcasts. (Soon after the release of the episode, you'll be able to tune into the bonus interview with **Antoinette Portis**, who shares her inspiration for her books.



Read the Books!

If you have not already done so, read the books "Not A Box" and "Not A Stick" by Antoinette Portis together!



Discussion



- ♥ What are some of your favorite ways to use your imagination?
- ♥ If you could invent anything, what would it be?
- ♥ Why do you think using our imagination is easier for kids than grown ups?
- ♥ Is there something in your home you always like to pretend is something else?



Little Kids, Big Hearts Podcast









Learning Extensions

Materials



Get Ready! Here's what you'll need:

A few random objects that can be “transformed” into other objects. Kids can bring things from home or you can find things in the classroom. Consider:

-  A ruler
-  A tissue box
-  A chair
-  A paper towel roll
-  A marker
-  A white-board eraser
-  A box
-  A stick

Activity



It's imagination time! Here's how to play Object Improv with the class!

1. Group your objects so it is clear which ones are being used in the game.
2. Ask for a volunteer. Ask the child who is chosen to choose an object from the pile.
3. The class gives a cue of “3-2-1 Action”!
4. The volunteer then uses their object to silently act out what they've transformed their object into! The object can be ANYTHING BUT what the actual object is.
5. The rest of the kids will guess what the object has become: “It's a sword! It's a house! It's a fire engine...!”
6. When someone guesses correctly, that child will take over and transform the SAME object into something completely new from their own imagination.
7. Once an object has been used 4 or 5 times, swap out the object for a new one to work with!
8. Have fun!