



Urban Montessori
CHARTER SCHOOL

Foil Challenge: Create an Eating Tool

What: A rapid-cycle challenge to introduce TK-3rd graders to design thinking.

Why: To communicate the broad strokes of a design thinking challenge, and to give practice using a specific tool or material (in this case aluminum)

When: Prior to any deeper design thinking work, or any time you want to run a one-off challenge.

Prerequisite Skills: The ability to communicate about food and ask questions about food. The ability to fold and mold aluminum

Who Needs to Be There? At least 2 students and 1 teacher, and up to a full classroom of students.

How This Activity Works: Students interview one another in pairs about their favorite foods. They then use a square of aluminum to design a tool for eating this food.

Materials Needed: Aluminum and note paper (optional). You may modify the materials as desired.

Duration:

10 minutes Participants are put into pairs and asked to interview each other about two favorite foods. You can provide a piece of note paper. Ask everyone to pick one food that also has some family or cultural significance for them.

2 minutes After partners have interviewed each other, explain that they will spend a fixed amount of time designing a prototype of a custom eating utensil for their partner based on their favorite foods. They shouldn't really interact during this process.

2 minutes Give each person a square of tinfoil. You can emphasize that almost anything can be used for a low-fi prototype, and that they'll be surprised at what they can do with it. Everyone designs. You tell them when to stop.

4 minutes Partners present their designs to each other.

4 minutes You could have whole group share out, with people showing the utensil designed for them.

10 minutes Debrief, either as a whole group, or by putting partners into foursomes. Can have people talk about the interview experience, how it felt to have something design something especially for them, what the speed prototyping experience felt like, what learnings they had as they prototyped, etc.