

## A Framework for Maker Education Webinar Q & A Log

Questions from live Demco webinar, as answered by presenter Mark Schreiber

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**Q: Our makerspace will be based in the library, but every inch of space is used. Do you have ideas for me?**

A: We hear this quite often, and we've seen a variety of ideas implemented in schools.

1. Find a small section of shelving (this may involve weeding) to designate as your makerspace collection. You can store items in their packaging, or place them in labeled plastic bins and lids.
2. Create a [mobile makerspace on a cart](#). This is often a starting place for schools testing out the concept. One of the benefits is that the cart can be tucked behind your circ desk or stored in an office or closet. Also, it can easily be wheeled into a classroom or other school space. Many people will choose carts that have locking doors to safeguard the collection, especially if it contains more expensive robotics and circuitry components.
3. Create 2-4 maker stations that you leave in place for a month or two. The station can be where students access materials they then take and use at your library tables. These stations could be housed on the tops of lower height shelving. Depending on your schedule, students can rotate through them during library time, before and after school, or during lunch and/or free time. This model is very dependent upon your students, your library's schedule, and staffing.
4. We have seen lots of labeled [plastic bins and totes](#) in closets brought out as needed and placed on tabletops.

One of the practical things to consider is if there will be projects that span more than one class period that will need to be stored between work sessions. We commonly see boxes, bins, and totes labeled with student information stored on shelves.

As with many things, you will start with a plan and system, which will very likely need modification as you learn and evolve.

**Q: Should makerspaces be in a classroom or library?**

**A:** We believe making should happen in both classrooms and libraries. However, an emerging practice is for the makerspace to have its roots in the library because every student in a school (especially elementary) spends time in the library. However, as mentioned in the webinar, making is meant to be integrated across disciplines and support the classroom lessons, often as the result of close collaboration between the classroom teacher and librarian.

**Q: There were several references to straws and cardboard during the webinar. Can you please remind me of the product names?**

**A:** Strawbees® and Makedo™ are quickly becoming two favorite low-tech tools.

[Strawbees](#) has a unique set of connectors to easily make 3D creations using straws. Makedo is a set of tools and screws used to cut and fasten one of the most commonly available and imagination-centered building materials—cardboard. [Caine's Arcade](#) has sparked a renewed interest in cardboard-based building.



**Q: I hear a lot about coding, but it is a little scary for me because I know nothing about it.**

**A:** There are two very popular products to teach kids coding. [STEM Code & Go Robot Mouse](#) is for teaching young kids (age 5+) the basic premise of coding in a game setting. Using cards, you “program” the mouse to get to the cheese.

[Ozobots](#)® is fun because you can teach basic principles of coding using 4 colors. The bots are pre-programmed to read designated color sequences. Once familiar, you can level up using the OzoBlockly app for Android and iOS devices.



**Q: You mentioned littleBits™ as one of the higher tech products. There are lots of kits—any recommendations where to start?**

**A:** One of the most popular littleBits™ kits is the [STEAM Student Set](#). It contains a good variety of bits and accessories and comes with a 72-page student invention guide. This is one product librarians often feel intimidated by, but littleBits includes great resource materials with their kits. Learn more from Colleen Graves’ blog post, [“littleBits™, Design Thinking and Design Challenges for Libraries.”](#)



**Q: What does a makerspace look like? How are they furnished?**

**A:** Spaces vary greatly, and much of that is dependent upon the types of activities you expect to host in your makerspace. If you’ll be using a mobile cart or stations to start, your library or classroom’s furnishings will be put to task. Everyone says the process is more important than the product. However, space is said to be the [third teacher](#), having a big influence on student mindset. The following are links to two school makerspace environments and one public library teen space, all rich with ideas.

- Read [“6 Schools + 6 Makerspaces = 1 Big Win”](#) to learn how Massapequa School District approached renovating their libraries to support their renovated approach to learning.
- The [Ray W. Huegel Elementary School’s](#) library renovation implemented Library Media Technology Specialist Monica Millen’s vision of spaces for all types of learning activities.
- Find inspiration in a [virtual tour of The Mix, San Francisco Public Library’s ultimate teen space](#), based on the learning



*“We knew if we were going to renovate the learning, we had to renovate the space.”*

— Ed Kemnitzer



theory of [HOMAGO](#), giving teens a space to hang out, mess around, and geek out, while allowing them to explore information and technology and design and create.

Demco is here to help you. Whether you have questions about making activities and products, or a rough space sketch on a napkin, we're ready to turn it into reality. Visit [demco.com](http://demco.com) and search "Makerspace" for more information, or call us at 800-356-1200.