

Hey Lindsay! We are beginning to put together STEAM kits to circulate too – we are calling them Maker Kits. I'd be interested in hearing what you hear from other people if you don't mind sharing! So far, we are planning an Ozo Bots Kit, a Raspberry Pi Kit, a Polaroid Photography Kit, a 3Doodlers Kit and a Mystery Kit, which will be simple STEM projects that we switch out after each circ – you know, stuff you can find on pinterest, with materials we already have on hand. Oh, and a Duct Tape Kit. So far we only have the Duct Tape Kit materials, but we don't have a container for it to circ in yet. We will be paying for it from our budget, but we are waiting for the board to approve Maker as its own budget line item so we aren't quite ready to move forward full "steam" ahead! ;)

Hi Lindsay!

I saw your message about STEM kits, and thought that I would pass along what I could to help!

We have had STEM kits at our library for a couple of years, and have learned so much in that time. Right now, we have quite a few Snap Circuits kits, magnetic tile and wooden block building kits, K'Nex kits, matching kits for basic math skills, and we are starting to experiment with circulating microscopes as well. Most of our kits are bought as a set that comes with an activity book, and we either package them in a plastic bin (<http://www.target.com/p/iris-stack-pull-modular-latch-box/-/A-51030126>) for easy stacking, or if we are lucky, we can buy a custom storage case like this one...https://www.amazon.com/Snap-Circuits-Custom-Storage-Case/dp/B0015YM8QO/ref=sr_1_4?ie=UTF8&qid=1472653969&sr=8-4&keywords=snap+circuits+kit+box. We put a guide on the inside of the cover that shows our patrons how many of each piece is contained in the kit (pictures attached). We do count the pieces in each kit after they are returned as well, which for certain kits is extremely easy, and for others, quite a job! Our volunteers have been great about going through our larger kits and making sure that the pieces are all there.

So far, the biggest challenge for us has been managing lost pieces in the kits, and now we are leaning toward acquiring kits that allow us the option of ordering replacement parts (both K'Nex and Snap Circuits sell individual pieces to many of their kits), and for those that don't, we try to save kits that are out of commission due to having too many missing pieces, and salvage them for replacement parts later on, which has been an absolute lifesaver, I have to say. STEM kits circulate for three weeks, holds are allowed, and we don't have a checkout limit specifically for the kits.

If there is anything else you would like to know about, feel free to e-mail me as your project progresses!

Hi Lindsay,

Good luck and congratulations! We circulate makerspace kits at both libraries which include everything from arts and crafts to science kits. We have several circuit kits that snap together and let the kids add in fans and lights and such. We check out a microscope and telescope. Knitting, crochet, and other fiber arts kits (like felting) check out well. The rock tumbler takes longer than the 3 weeks we check them out but we renew that one. The microwave glass fusing kit goes well too. Fly tying has been popular with kids when we have had classes. We have several kits for drawing (little mannequin and books). Games and puzzles have also checked out well. Um, right off the top of my head that's what comes to mind. Most of our kits include a book and/or instructions. We check out for 3 weeks with \$1/day fine for

overdue and require that they be returned to the desk not through a book drop. Missing pieces are charged depending on replacement cost.

Hi Lindsay,

In our cooperative, we decided to try out some sample maker kits that libraries can check out for programming. This is different from what you are doing, but there are some similarities, such as how to package them for circulation so they can go in delivery and not be damaged. Since this co-op does not have an ILS, I needed to find a system for reservation and circulation. I found Librarika, a free web-based ILS for very small collections. We are not circulating to the public and we have yet to figure out what to do if there is damage, as we do have investment in them. We also bought two Maker-Bot Replicator Minis. We will use them as demos at the libraries that want one. Some of the YA groups might develop a program with them. I have to take them around myself - they don't go in delivery.

I made a page of resources and I just put some photos there of some of our kits.

<http://mml.org/maker%20space%20resources.html>

I would be interested to stay in touch and share ideas and resources, even though your kits are for patrons and mine are for library staff doing programs with them.

Hi Lindsay,

At my last library I had the Snap Circuits Extreme SC-750 set in the teen room for them to check out. I also had a smaller set at home for my own children. It was a wonderful electronics exploration tool, and I thought it was durable and highly useful for the kids, not to mention great fun! The only parts I struggled to keep hold of were the propeller and the single snaps. Having a stock of replacements for those items would be beneficial.

Please post to Michlib-L when you complete the kits—I would love to know what you decided to use and how they are working.

Hello Lindsay,

The decision here at main library for years was no circulating multi-piece kits, in accordance with the philosophy of the librarian then in charge of children's media. We have two exceptions:

1) The Hooked on Phonics and Hooked on Math sets, which contain flip cards, books, parent guides, CDs, etc. They are located behind the children's reference desk. There is a circulating set and a reference set for K, Gr 1 and Gr 2. The circulating set of Kindergarten Hooked on phonics promptly disappeared, confirming for some the wrong-headedness of circulating kits. The remaining circulating and reference sets of Hooked on Phonics and Hooked on Math still remain intact, three years later. Because these kits are behind the children's reference desk with small signage, patrons know of their existence via the catalog. WorkFlows designation is "NEW BOOK", so they are

available to city patrons. They circulate and are returned at the Children's reference desk. Replacement cost is \$20 per item and \$200 for complete kit replacement.

2) Duplo board book sets (book and duplos to make the characters in the book). The policy is that they are stored behind the children's reference desk and checked out and returned at the children's reference desk (even if they are being used in the children's department only and not taken home), and pieces counted at time of check out and at time of return. Missing piece charge is \$1 per piece.

I hope you and your community will fully appreciate the opportunity you enjoy of having these kits in your circulating collection, and made freely available to your patrons!

Hi Lindsay!

We are about to put out bags at the Sterling Heights Public Library that we are calling SMART bags (Science, Math, Art, Reading, Technology).

They are clear plastic tote bags with a front pocket. Each bag has a theme and contains a mix of five fiction and non-fiction picture books, a puzzle or educational toy based on the theme, and a binder with a dry erase marker. Each binder has 10 reproducible worksheets in plastic sleeves (counting, mazes, tracing letters, matching, etc. on a pre-school / kindergarten level) along with suggestions for further activities including art and science projects, fingerplays, snack ideas, and other activities for parents / caregivers to explore with their children. An introductory letter in the binder invites patrons to reproduce the worksheets or write on them with the dry erase marker.

We have not put them out yet for the public (hoping to put them out this week!) and I hope they will be a popular collection! We plan (for now) to treat them like any other item except they will have a "new" status for six months so they are only holdable in our co-op for our library's patrons and we have a note on the bag asking that they be returned inside (not in the bookdrop) and only returned to our library.

I would love to hear the feedback you've received from other libraries to see if there are any tweaks we may want to make to our collection, would you mind sending the info you've received?