



Tip Tuesday #8

Build Sessions, Divide & Conquer

Prior to Build Session Decide which projects. Look at the list of things that need to be completed in order to solve the problem (if you created a list). Which of those things does the team think they can finish in a longer 3-4 hour session. The team should choose 2-4 bigger projects to work on.

Decide on sub teams. Ask the team who wants to work together on which project(s). If you have one team member left out, ask them which team they want to work with or is there a project they want to work on by themselves. You can remind the team members of skills you've seen in Spontaneous practice, if they're having trouble deciding on a project.

Decide on materials needed. Ask these sub teams what materials will they need to complete their project(s). If purchasing items for the sub teams, be specific about what they want. It is best for a team member to go on the shopping spree and select the item(s). Older students can have their own box of supplies that they fill with what they know they'll need and keep at the meeting location or bring to every meeting.

Possible Building Materials Parents can't tell the team how to use an interesting trash item, but they can be collecting things like large pieces of cardboard, bubble wrap, etc. Prior to the build session, the parents can drop off these materials or have their child share with the team things at their home that the team can use.

Quick Models and/or Drawings Before working on what the team considers the "final draft," have them build/bring a smaller model constructed with inexpensive materials like paper or cardboard to demonstrate how they want it to work. Team members are much more willing to alter and change these smaller inexpensive versions than something they feel is their final version. For scenery/costumes-have team members draw more than one version.

Parent Help Depending on the age of the team members, it can be useful to invite additional help to supervise the sub teams. They can teach how to use tools on something that is not part of the team's solution. Safety should be a high priority. They can remind the team of the task at hand and the amount of time remaining. They can provide a special snack for these longer sessions. Set more than one break time on these longer sessions.

End with Something Fun Build sessions can sometimes be frustrating if things aren't working or team members aren't working together as well as they hoped. Have a fun way to end the meeting and/or a round of compliments for what was completed. Everyone helps clean up. Good luck! And remember to **HAVE FUN!**