



# Design a Snack Center

Food, cars and kids. What a mess. Between juice boxes, thermoses, cracker crumbs, and trying to safely find and distribute foods to the backseat, it's a moving disaster area. Maybe you can enlist the help of your kids in coming up with a way to improve the process of snacking in the car.

## Materials needed:

Marker  
Colored pencils

**Goal:** Come up with ideas for a snack center in the car

*Wouldn't it be good to have food and drinks in a place where you can get at them easily? Can you design a snack center for your car? Would it sit on the floor or on the seat? You would want to insulate it so cold drinks stay cold. Would you make slots so you can slide in cans or juice boxes? How about including a container for your favorite chips or cookies? Do you need two containers to accommodate different snacks? Will you want a place to store napkins to clean up greasy fingers?*

*If you stop at fast-food places and get meals to go, do you have a problem balancing the bag of fries, your burger, and your drink while you open the ketchup packet? What type of lap or seat tray could you make that would hold your food and make it easier to eat?*

Think about these questions and use the space below to draw four different views of your invention: 1) from the top, 2) from the bottom, 3) from the left side, and 4) from the right side. Now, ask your child to combine 2 things to make something better.

1) View from the TOP	2) View from the BOTTOM
3) View from the LEFT	4) View from the RIGHT



# Backseat Fun

**Materials needed:**

Pens

**Goal:** Come up with a game to play in the backseat.

*Do you ever get bored on long drives? Why not create a game to play in the backseat? You could make a game board out of cloth and use Velcro to hold the game pieces to the board. Players could roll up the game when they are through playing and still have all the pieces in the right places when they start again. What should be the objective of the game? It could be related to cars, highways, or finding your way to Grandmother's house. Or it could require you to recall license plates or bill board signs.*

Write down your thoughts:

My game:	
Objective of the game:	
How can you play the game? What are the rules?	
If I wanted to build a model of my invention What materials will I need to create my model?	
What equipment will I need to use in order to make my model?	
What steps will I have to take to invent my model?	
What problems could come up?	
Who will be my invention coach or buddy? What can they do to help me?	

**Now discuss your idea with your travel mates!**



# Car Smart

**Materials needed:**  
Colored Marker  
Pencils

**Goal:** Design a back seat organizer

On long car trips, do you take all sorts of stuff like music CDs, books or magazines to read, and games to play on the seat beside you? By the end of the trip, the seat probably looks like a tornado hit it. What the backseat drivers of the country need is a seat organizer! Make a container that will not slide off the seat and will hold the right amount of stuff to take on a car trip. If you add handles to it, you will be able to haul it out of the car and into your house or motel.

Use the space below to help you share what your invention looks like. *Is it large or small? What are its measurements? Does it have sharp angles or is it bumpy or wavy? Is it soft or hard? Will it be used by kids or grown-ups, or both? Is it made of metal, wood, plastic, fabric, or some other material?* Think about these questions, then use the space below to draw four different views of your invention: 1) from the top, 2) from the bottom, 3) from the left side, and 4) from the right side.

1) View from the TOP	2) View from the BOTTOM
3) View from the LEFT	4) View from the RIGHT



# Found in a Bag

**Materials needed:**  
Bags with "found" objects

**Goal:** Combine different items to create a new invention

***Look at the objects in the bag you just got and get ready for some fun!***

Think how you can combine these objects together to make a fantasy or make believe new object. You could unscrew and take apart items into components. Put on your creative thinking caps and invent something new! Maybe a brand new toy, something that could help you store your pencils at school, maybe just an artistic piece! There is no right or wrong answer here. Let the imagination rule.

You could use tape, glue and a piece of cardboard to assemble the new invention and make it a permanent object.

There are many versions of things you can do with junk. Your broken jewelry, odd clips and screws are golden objects to stimulate thinking. Begin collecting junk right away. Use those plastic shoe boxes to store it. You could even sort the junk into their own "categories" like man-made and natural, all the long things, all things metal and nonmetal. Design under constraint is good, but very free form explorations is even better. Just making junk collages is a great beginning.