



ARTS INTEGRATION AT HOME

THIS IS NOT A...

Through these arts integration activities we want to offer a few simple, creative, educational, and arts-based ways to spice up your distance learning. The directions for the activity are shared in two ways - for caregivers/teachers and for kids who can read so they can do the activity independently. Have fun, and feel free to share what you do with us.

- Sarah Coleman

Tips for how to utilize these strategies:

- Use this strategy today, or print it out for a later date.
- Feel free to use a strategy more than once. Repetition will help students become familiar with the directions and then be able to take more ownership of sharing what they know through the activity.
- Play them for fun - you don't have to stick to talking about school information.

THIS IS NOT A...

This is Not a... is an active way for students to a) use their imagination and b) practice showing/telling descriptive details. This improvisation strategy helps students be in the moment, inviting them to say the first thing that comes to mind without the pressure of a right or wrong answer. All you need to play is one non-breakable, hand-held object. It can be a wooden spoon, a roll of tape or whatever else is lying around the house. Go find something and then come back to read the rest of the instructions.



I learned *This is Not a...* from Katie Dawson, a professor at UT Austin. You can see a longer description of the activity (and a video) in the link below from the [Drama-Based Instruction](#) website created by Drama for Schools at The University of Texas at Austin.

This is Not a... <https://dbp.theatredance.utexas.edu/content/not-0>

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THIS IS NOT A...

DIRECTIONS FOR CAREGIVERS/TEACHERS

Take the non-breakable, hand-held object, look at it for a few seconds, and then fill in the following statement with your own ideas.

“This is not a _____, this is a _____”

After you say the statement, pantomime using the object how you described it in your statement. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

EXAMPLE

I am holding a roll of tape. I would say, “this is not a roll of tape, this is a large, high-powered telescope that lets me see all the stars in the sky.” Then I would hold up the roll of tape to my eye, adjusting it like a lens and looking through it toward the sky.

Students can continue to use their imaginations or you can add the ideas the students come up with. The theme might be from a book that the student is reading, an object from a certain time in history, or something you might use in a certain environment (e.g. the ocean). You can also challenge students to use a color or adjectives in their description.



Follow up questions

1. What were some of the ideas you came up with?
2. How did it feel to improvise, or come up with ideas quickly? Did it get easier to improvise or come up with ideas quickly? Why or why not?

Follow up questions allow kids to practice [reflection and metacognition](#) (thinking about one's thinking) both of which are key parts of effective learning.





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THIS IS NOT A...

DIRECTIONS FOR KIDS

This is Not a.. is a fun way to use your imagination while practicing adding descriptive details. This is an improvisation activity which means that the goal is to say the first thing that comes to mind. There is no right or wrong answer!

How to do this activity

1. Find a non-breakable, hand-held object in your house. It can be a wooden spoon, a roll of tape, or a paper towel roll.
2. Hold the object, look at it for a few seconds, and then fill in the following statement with your own idea.
3. "This is not a _____, this is a _____"
4. After you say the statement, pantomime using the object how you described it in your statement.
5. Pass the object to the next person. They will come up with a new idea for the same object.

It might feel hard to come up with many ideas in a row but you can do it. It's like so many other things - you have to practice improvising to get better at it.

6. You can keep playing with no guidelines or you can add a theme or topic you are learning about
 - a. A historical time period (e.g. The Civil War)
 - b. An environment (e.g. the ocean)
 - c. Adjectives
 - d. Descriptive details (colors and the five senses)

EXAMPLE

I am holding a roll of tape. I would say, "this is not a roll of tape, this is a large, high-powered telescope that lets me see all the stars in the sky." Then I would hold up the roll of tape to my eye, adjusting it like a lens and looking through it toward the sky.

After you act out the story, answer the following questions.

What were some of the ideas you came up with?

How did it feel to improvise, or come up with ideas quickly? Did it get easier to improvise? Why or why not?

