Play Lab Report – Identifying Design Attributes   Name:

<u>Related reading</u>: Donald A. Norman, Chapter 1: "The Psychopathology of Everyday Things," in *The Design of Everyday Things*, New York: Basic Books, 2013, 1-36.

<u>Inventory your assigned toy.</u>
Name and describe each part in as much detail as you can.

	Tips
	• *You may have to "invent" some terminology to describe your toy's features (use descriptive terms like notches, grooves, ridges, joints, etc.)*
	• *Use the measuring tape/calipers to note sizes/dimensions.*
	• *Note number of pieces and number of each type of piece.*
	• *Don't forget to include details about material(s), colors, textures, etc.*

<u>Photo(s)</u>
- Arrange the parts of your toy clearly and take a picture of the pieces you have inventoried. Annotate the picture to indicate specific parts or details referred to in the following sections.
- Take close-ups of any relevant single pieces or small details (such as features that enable pieces to connect).

<u>Describe the toy's affordances.</u>
What are the things can it do?

	Tips
	• *Use concrete language (e.g., Instead of saying "You can build almost anything!" refer to specific possibilities for building, such as: "Each circular piece has eight holes around its diameter, allowing up to eight posts to be inserted at 45-degree angles.")*
	• *Remember that affordances are relationships (not properties).*

<u>Describe the toy's anti-affordances (constraints).</u>
What can't it do? What does it prevent or discourage?

	Tips
	• *An anti-affordance is not necessarily a drawback or flaw. Rather, constraints can be productive limitations that enable a system to have coherence.*
	• *For instance, how might properties like flexibility or rigidity be assets? How might being able to build in*

	particular directions (and not others) determine the kinds of structures possible?

Describe the signifiers.

What actions is a user supposed to take with the toy? What implicit and explicit signals in the toy's design communicate the "right" way(s) to use it?

	Tips • *Focus on the toy's physical features (not instructions or depictions of play on packaging).* • *Consider how the toy's affordances and anti-affordances (noted above) collectively specify specific forms of engagement (i.e., "because the toy has x property, the user can do y.")*

Describe the toy's overall "map."

What kinds of correspondences help clarify cause and effect with the toy? What kinds of relationships are implied between user and the resulting play?

	Tips • *Mapping often involves spatial correspondences.* • *Do elements of the toy seem to "line up" in particular ways?* • *Do the relative sizes and shapes of components/pieces indicate particular forms of interaction?*

Feedback

What are the ways that you know that you are playing with the toy "correctly"?

	Tips • *Feedback can be multisensory.* • *Does the user hear a "click" or a "snap" to verify play?* • *Do the elements of the toy feel differently when handled or combined "correctly"? (Think: solid, wobbly, loose, steady, etc.)* • *Does the toy look "right" or "wrong" in some way (level, flush, crooked) to confirm the user's actions?*

Conceptual model

Describe the overall "logic" or "flow" of playing with the toy. How would you describe the toy and how it works to someone who has not experienced it in person?

	Tips ● *For this section, try to synthesize some of the details generated in the above sections. How do many of the concrete details described above help to form an overall "picture" or understanding of the toy?*

Design notes

If you could make one core change to your assigned toy (adding an additional part, modifying an existing part, etc.) what would it be, and why? How would this change alter or enhance play? *(Answer this question in 150 to 200 words).*

Process reflection

Write a 150 to 200-word narrative describing how your group worked with the toy.

	Tips ● *What choices seemed natural? What role(s) did each group member adopt? Did you encounter challenges or obstacles at either the individual or group level?*

Photo(s)

   ● Take a picture of the "result" of your group's play. What did it look like when you were done playing/examining? Did you "make" anything?