



READY, TEACH, DESIGN=



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **Ready, Teach, Design=**, an open access curriculum kit created for both educators in classroom settings and passionate creative professionals interested in introducing design and design concepts to historically excluded middle and high school youth.

Ready, Teach, Design= was created by Project Osmosis, in collaboration with the Diversify by Design (DxD) coalition and Amazon.

The Ready, Teach, Design= Difference

For over 20 years, Project Osmosis has been introducing design to underrepresented minority youth, while nurturing their creative confidence and talents through mentorship. This kit is more than a curriculum, it is the embodiment of the Osmosis philosophical principals: Dreams, Self-Expression, and Community — a deep belief that dreams come true, self-expression matters, and communities benefit from their youth's creativity.

Like most curricula, this kit contains sample lessons to bring into your classroom or community (and many more will be added over time). What differentiates this kit are its foundational components (driven by the Osmosis philosophical principles) that will enable you to:

- Enter the mentoring mindset (whether you're a classroom teacher or a creative professional)
- Create safe spaces where youth can reach their full potential
- Understand the critical relationship between decolonizing design and a society that serves all

Ready, Teach, Design= is comprehensive in its design. Both classroom educators and aspiring design mentors are given a new lens on how safe spaces are designed; how relationships with students can be re-cast; and how to present design that is culturally relevant and aware. It's a fresh, creative, innovative approach for engaging youth in a completely different way.





Why Design?

Design is all around us. Everything in the human-made world is designed in some way, shape, or form... absolutely everything! From the clothes we wear, to the vehicles we drive or ride on, to the phones and computers we use, to the places we live, they've all been touched by a designer. And the majority of people designing everything for us come from a narrow swathe of the population — designing from their perspective; from their lived experience.

While there have been strides made around inclusion in the various design disciplines, especially around gender parity, the industry as a whole has a very long way to go before it can be deemed diverse, let alone equitable. We know a critical inroad can be made by introducing historically excluded youth to design.

Enter Ready, Teach, Design=, a four-part instructional kit created to prepare educators and creative professionals to teach the principles of design to underrepresented young people at a critical time in their development. To kindle sparks of creativity and imagination, while equipping them with a new framework of learning that will enhance the way they approach and experience their other subjects. And, it just may be the first step on their journey to a career in design.



THE CURRICULUM KIT

Overview

In this toolkit, a person who works with youth is referred to as a mentor, whether they are a classroom educator or design professional. Your pathway to mentoring may look different compared to someone else's, and that's okay. It's your experiences that make you unique and your commitment and desire to serve that makes you qualified. Having a dependable and caring adult in a young person's life through mentoring, both within and outside of the classroom, can make all the difference in the world.

The curriculum focuses on four core modules. Three focus on preparing and guiding the educator/mentor, including:

- Mentor & Mentee Relationships
- Designing Safe Spaces
- Decolonizing Design

And the fourth, Design Education in Action, brings the magic of design to life for the youth.

Each of Ready, Teach, Design='s four core modules includes a curriculum guide (with learning objectives), a supplemental video, and a resource library. The kit also provides age-appropriate sample exercises, feedback surveys, and a community engagement resource (for design professionals). These tools will guide instructors on how to bring design-inspired enrichment activities and projects to historically excluded middle and high school age youth, without reinventing the wheel.





GETTING STARTED

We estimate it will take approximately 3–6 hours to review the kit’s contents and 1-3 hours to execute the program. Your mileage may vary depending on your area of expertise, background, and available time. The activities and age-appropriate sample exercises are designed for flexibility and can be executed in one workshop or over several program days.

For Educators in a Classroom Setting

Integrating art and design in any curriculum or programming can help youth become independent thinkers and problem solvers. Design thinking looks at problems and ideas from multiple perspectives, while encouraging youth to think independently, thus supporting autonomy in their learning experience.

For Design Professionals

Introducing design to historically excluded youth is not just the work of classroom educators. There are many professional designers — individuals and cohorts (such as association chapters, industry and agency teams, educators and students in college level design programs, etc.) from across the creative disciplines — who have much to offer middle and high school youth in their communities. Designers bring valuable lived experiences of their knowledge and practice by sharing their wisdom and creativity, while also providing support and guidance to youth.





THE CURRICULUM

Design is a creative activity. The atmosphere conducive to creating is somewhat different than that of a traditional classroom (think art studio vs. math class). And the interactions that happen in that space require a different perspective and approach than that of “traditional” education.

With Ready, Teach, Design=, we’ve crafted three modules for educators and design professionals (now mentors) to experience new ways of interacting with youth (now mentees) and to gain a deeper understanding of why the design industry lacks diversity and how they can be a part of the solution.

■ Mentor & Mentee Relationships

How do you cultivate trust and create a meaningful and impactful mentoring relationship with your aspiring youth or young designer? In any mentorship scenario, the mentor brings knowledge, experience, and support to the relationship to benefit the mentee. Additionally, the mentor has much to gain from the relationship, including access to a young person’s perspective. In this module, we’ll examine three models of mentoring: one-to-one, group, and virtual, as well as the benefits and challenges of each.

Materials: module guide, video, resource library

■ Designing Safe Spaces

How do you create equitable, safe spaces so youth can reach their full potential without fear of being judged on their social identity, race, religion, gender, sexuality, or ability? The learning objectives for this module will focus on creating safe, equitable experiences and lifelong meaningful connections for youth.

Materials: module guide, video, and resource library



■ Decolonizing Design

How can we decenter Western and Eurocentric standards of design so that all cultural backgrounds are at the forefront of innovation? By acknowledging what indigenous and historically marginalized designers and design practices can teach us, we give power to the most vulnerable. The learning objectives for this module will dive deeper into ways to honor the work and contributions of historically marginalized and indigenous design cultures and designers in their program curricula.

Materials: module guide, video, resource library





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Mentors are now ready to teach design! The last module in the curriculum dives right into introducing design and design concepts to mentees with hands-on exercises to engage their creativity and, perhaps, spark their interest in design.

■ Design Education in Action

How might we engage and inspire youth creative confidence and build on their unique curiosities and interests? In this module, we'll look at engagement strategies to inspire youth with age-appropriate customizable exercises and activities.

Materials: module guide, videos, exercises and activities, and resource library

Additional materials

Evaluation Surveys: An essential part of any curriculum is ensuring that it's accomplishing its goal. Using mentee and mentor feedback surveys aids us in understanding how effective Ready, Teach, Design= is at reaching the youth you serve or set out to serve. It also helps to incorporate strategic follow-up methods, so mentors can identify mentees who may want to pursue an education or career in design. And finally, it allows Project Osmosis and Diversify by Design (DxD) to continue to improve the experience.

Community Engagement Guide for Creative Professionals: In addition to the four core modules, Ready, Teach, Design= includes a Community Engagement Guide for Creative Professionals, with helpful information for engaging and working with schools and organizations in your community, in order to facilitate a Ready, Teach, Design= workshop.

FINALLY

As an industry, design is not alone in its lack of diversity and inclusion. However, because of design's role in society, it's crucial that real, sustainable change happens across the discipline now. Bringing design and its ways of thinking and innovating to youth is one of many first steps in that right direction.

Additionally, with the devastating budget cuts in the arts, Ready, Teach, Design='s no-cost kit provides essential tools to help mentors make the creative world of design accessible to youth. Utilize the learning objectives for each module as a template to create guided instruction and help youth discover their creative agency in your community.

So let's get started, together! And please email us at hello@dxd.design if you have any questions.





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ABOUT READY, TEACH, DESIGN= COLLABORATORS

Ready, Teach, Design= was developed by [Project Osmosis](#) and is brought to you by the [Diversify by Design \(DxD\)](#) coalition and Amazon.

About Project Osmosis

Educate. Expose. Engage. Self-expression.

Project Osmosis Education and Mentoring Initiative is a Chicago-based nonprofit art and design mentoring program whose purpose is to further design education for underserved minority youth. Its mission is devoted to mentoring the talents of youth, developing their creative confidence, and increasing design awareness. The Osmosis philosophical principles are expressed in three words: Dreams, Self-expression, and Community. Osmosis believes that dreams come true, self-expression matters, and communities benefit from their youth's creativity.

About Diversify By Design (DxD)

DxD is a coalition of diverse organizations and individuals working at the intersection of design, education, industry, and DEI to catalyze racial equity and justice in the design profession — from the ground up.

In an effort to address the extraordinary racial disparities within design, while building and expanding pathways for people of color in the field, DxD focuses on five critical, interconnected aspects of the design ecosystem: Youth Exposure, Education, Experience, Employment, and Empowerment. Through deep collaboration, the people and resources that DxD partners bring to the coalition is leveraged to activate measurable, systemic change. Change that the individual partners would be unable to deliver on their own.

About Amazon

In an effort to address the lack of diversity and inclusion across the design profession, Amazon is investing in the beginning of the journey through programs such as Ready, Teach, Design=.

