Mystery Boxes
Combine and Design

Mystery Box 1 **Mystery Box 2**

ELECTRICIAN

CAP

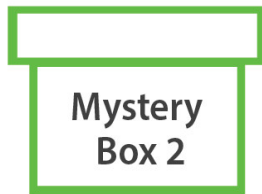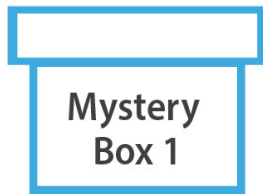**Step 1:**
There are two identical cardboard boxes which are labeled as Mystery Box 1(MB 1) and Mystery Box 2 (MB 2). The two boxes can be distinguished by the use of two different colours.
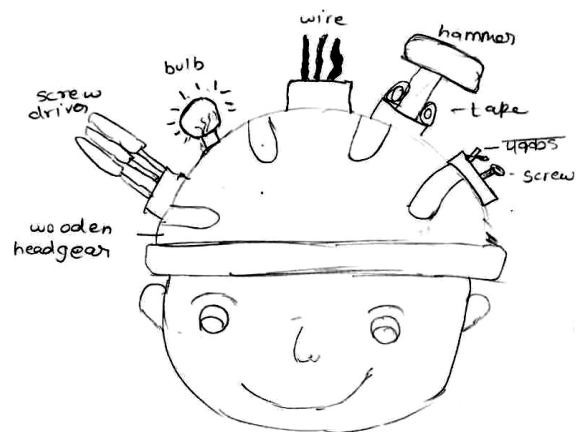
Step 2:
There are paper chits in both Mystery boxes. MB 1 has chits of different professions (Colour1) and MB 2 has chits of different objects (Colour 2).

Mystery Box 1 **Mystery Box 2**

Step 3:
In groups of 3 or more, come and pick one chit from each of the boxes.

Step 4:
Now, combine the two chits and design a new and useful *object* (MB 2) for the *professional* in (MB 1). For example- Design a useful cap for an electrician.

Note: Put the chits back in the respective boxes.

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The activity of Mystery Boxes works on the principle of lateral thinking – a creative thinking technique popularised by Edward de Bono. Lateral thinking provokes the emergence of creative and wild ideas by bringing together two unrelated words for comparison or combination (DeBono, 1990). An integral part of the "Design Thinking" process is defining a meaningful and actionable problem statement or generating a design brief.

The initial part of the Mystery Box exercise focuses on writing the design brief by combining two words. This aids in a deeper understanding of the design problem. The next part deals with designing a creative solution, a product, to solve the design problem.
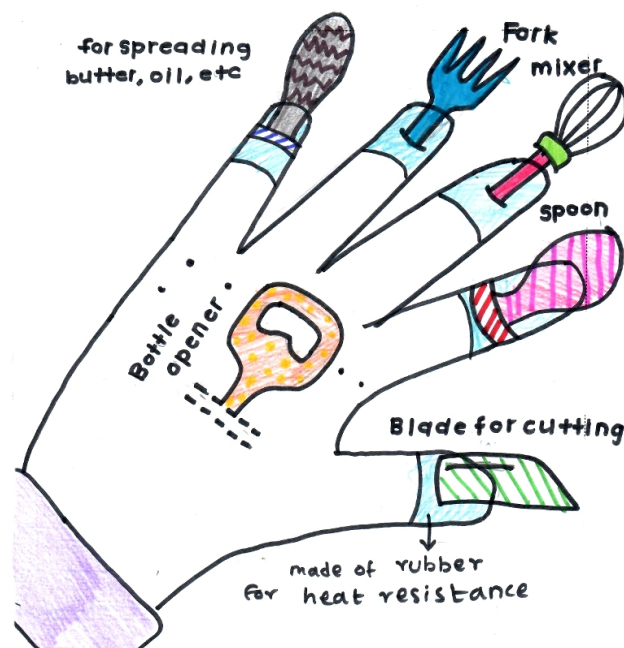
The sketches in this document are works of students, designed by them during National Science Day 2019

References:

de Bono, E. (1990). *Lateral thinking: Creativity step By step*. New York: Harper Perennial