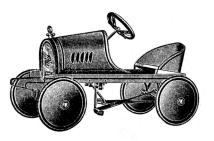# IMAGINE IF…
FINDING OPPORTUNITY

Choose an object or system:

Consider the parts, purposes, and people who interact with your object or system, and then ask:

In what ways could it be made to be more **effective**?

In what ways could it be made to be more **efficient**?

In what ways could it be made to be more **ethical**?

In what ways could it be made to be more **beautiful**?

Imagine If…

What Kind of Thinking Does This Routine Encourage?
This routine first encourages divergent thinking, as students think of new possibilities for an object or system, and then encourages convergent thinking, as students decide upon effective approach to build, tinker, re/design, or hack an object or a system. Ultimately, this thinking routine is about finding opportunity and pursuing new ideas.

When and How Can This Routine Be Used?
This thinking routine can be used to explore the possibilities of improving, tinkering with, or tweaking any object or system. Though this routine can be used on its own, we strongly suggest that it be used in combination with other Agency *by* Design thinking routines in order to best inform students of the ways in which they may improve upon a particular object or system. Here are some ideas and considerations for putting this thinking routine into practice:

- This thinking routine asks students to imagine new ways to improve an object or system by looking at the possibility space around an object or system through four different lenses. Specifically, it asks *in what ways can an object or system be made to be more effective, efficient, ethical, or beautiful?* While we find these four lenses helpful to consider, you and your students are encouraged to come up with others.
- When engaging with this thinking routine one's instinct may be to say to her students "the sky's the limit." While it is important for students to generate ideas within a wide-open possibility space, we've also found it helpful to place creative constraints on people's thinking. You may do this by limiting the variety of tools and materials students have access to, presenting certain functionality criteria, or identifying a particular population or user group. For example, in a chair re/design activity, students may be told they can only use cardboard and document fasteners, their new chair models have to be able to hold the instructor's weight, and their chairs have to be designed for people who commute to work on the subway each day.
- When considering how to redesign or hack an object or system, it is exciting to see students generate a list of wild, *blue-sky* ideas, but it is also important for students to be sensitive to the design of their objects or systems. To do this, we recommend educators have their students circle back to the other Agency *by* Design thinking routines as they search for new opportunities and brainstorm new possibilities. Likewise, if students get stuck and struggle to generate new ideas, circling back to the other A*b*D thinking routines may help them find opportunity and see new possibilities for their objects or systems.